

DROSERACEAE

Drosera peltata Thunb.

Common / Local Names: Shield Sun Dew, Pale Sun Dew (English); Mukhajali (Hindi); Chitra (Punjab).



Drosera peltata Thunb.

Courtesy: S.R. Yadav

Descriptions: Perennial herbs, 5 - 50 cm long, with basal tuber, tuber 4-6 cm long, stems slender, erect, leafy, glabrous. Leaves dimorphic, basal leaves ephemeral, resolute; cauline leaves numerous, alternate, 0.25 - 0.4 x 0.15 - 0.25 cm, semilunar-deltoid, suborbicular, margins with spreading gland-tipped cilia 1-3 mm long, upper surface with short stalked glands, brownish green; petioles 4-11 mm long. Racemes subterminal, 2-5 cm long, 2-10 flowered; bracts cuneate to oblanceolate or subulate; pedicels slender, 2-9 mm long. Sepals 5, united near base, 2 - 4 x c. 1.5 mm, lanceolate to ovate, apex fimbriate, glandular. Petals 5, 4-6 x 2-3 mm, obovate-orbicular, spatulate, apex round-truncate, white. Stamens 5, 2-4 mm. Ovary c. 1.5 mm across, subglobose; styles 3, c. 0.8 mm long; stigmas 2 or 3 fid. Capsules c. 2 mm across, subglobose, 3-5-valved, enclosed by persistent sepals and petals. Seeds c. 0.4 mm, ellipsoid-ovoid to globose, veined.

Fl. & Fr.: May - October.

Habitat: On open places, road sides, nearby

streams, on the hills, ascending up to 3000m.

Pollen: 22 μ in diameter, exine echinate, although the spines less echinate [Venkatasubban, Proc. Indian Acad. Sci. B 31(6): 308-330. 1950].

Chromosome: n = 20 (Venkatasubban, 1950).

Distribution: India - Throughout the country in hills, ascending up to 3000 m.

Propagation: *D. peltata* can be propagated by its tubers. It requires wet, cool winters which is its active growing season.

Notes: The specific epithet is Latin for "shield shaped", a reference to the shape of the cauline leaves. Due to its large range and varied habit, *D. peltata* has accumulated a number of synonyms and infraspecific taxa, including varieties and subspecies. Most subspecies have been reduced to synonymy.