

## EXTENDED DISTRIBUTION OF RARE AND LESS KNOWN *RANUNCULUS CANTONIENSIS* DC. IN UTTAR PRADESH

PRAMOD KUMAR, SANJAY MISHRA and SATYA NARAIN

Duthie Herbarium, Department of Botany, University of Allahabad, Allahabad (U.P.) 211002, India.

E-mail : sanjaymishra\_alld@yahoo.co.in

*Ranunculus cantoniensis* DC. of family Ranunculaceae, a rare and less known taxon so far reported only from terai region of Uttar Pradesh, is now reported for the first time from Gangetic plain of the state showing its extended distribution. Brief description along with citation and illustration are provided for easy identification.

**Keywords:** Extended; *Ranunculus cantoniensis*; Rare.

*Ranunculus cantoniensis* DC. of family Ranunculaceae is commonly known as bristly buttercup, bristly crowfood and pennsylvania buttercup. This species is found near ponds, ditches and wet meadows. During botanical exploration in eastern Uttar Pradesh, the authors collected some specimens from Ghzipur district. On critical examination it was identified as *Ranunculus cantoniensis* DC., a rare and little known taxon so far reported from terai region of Uttar Pradesh by Duthie<sup>1</sup>, and Singh<sup>2</sup>. Both of them reported this species from same locality i.e. Lakhimpur Khiri.

Therefore, the present finding of the species shows its extended distribution in the Gangetic plains of the state. Up to date nomenclature, detailed description, illustration, phenology etc. are provided here to facilitate easy identification of the species in field. The specimens have been deposited in the Duthie Herbarium (DH), Department of Botany, University of Allahabad, Allahabad.

*Ranunculus cantoniensis* DC., Prodr. 1 : 43. 1824; Hand. Mzt. in Act. Hort. Gotob. 13 : 165. 1939; Hara in J. Jap. Bot. 18 : 459. 1942 et 30 : 322. 1955; Mukerjee in Bull. Bot. Surv. India 2 : 102, 1960. *R. napaulensis* DC., Prodr. 1 : 39. 1824. *R. trilobatus* D. Don, Prodr. Fl. Nepal. 194. 1825 (non Desf. 1978). *R. chinensis* Bunge, Enum. Pl. Chin. Bor. 3. 1833; Hook. f. et. Thoms., Fl. India 1 : 38. 1855. *R. fibrosus*, Wallich ex Hook. f. and Thomson, Fl. Ind. 37. 1855. *R. pensylvanicus* Hook. f. and Thoms. in Fl. Brit. India 1 : 19. 1872 (non Linn. f. 1781); Duthie, FUGP. 1 : 22. 1903. *R. riparius* Edgew. in Trans. Linn. Soc. 20 : 18. 1846. (Fig. 1).

Erect hairy annual herbs, 30-60 cm tall. Stem 2-3 ft., hollow, erect, branched, patently hairy. Leaves pinnately compound, 4-12 cm long, 4-8 cm wide, radical leaves long-petiolate; petioles broad and sheathing at

base, lamina three-partite; segments deeply divided, the terminal one 3-parted and lateral ones 2 or 3 parted, linear; cauline leaves sessile with sheathing base; leaflets hairy, lobed and coarsely toothed. Flowers solitary, yellow,

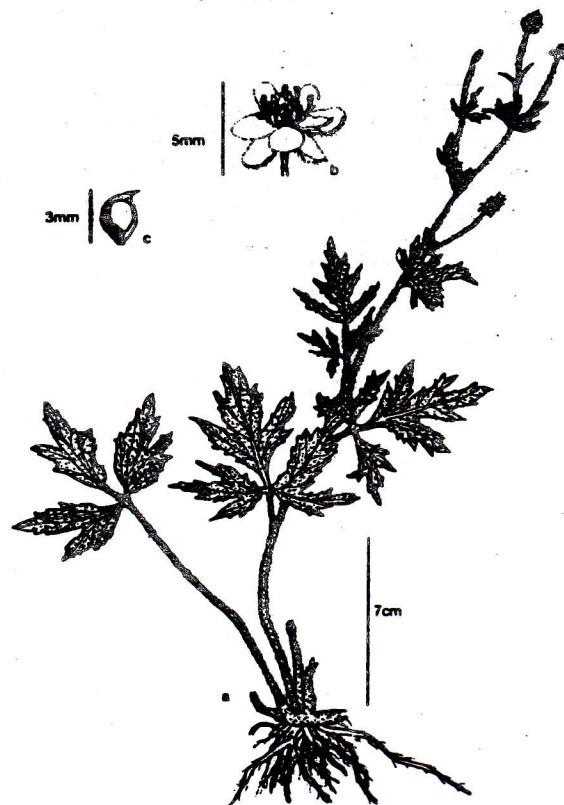
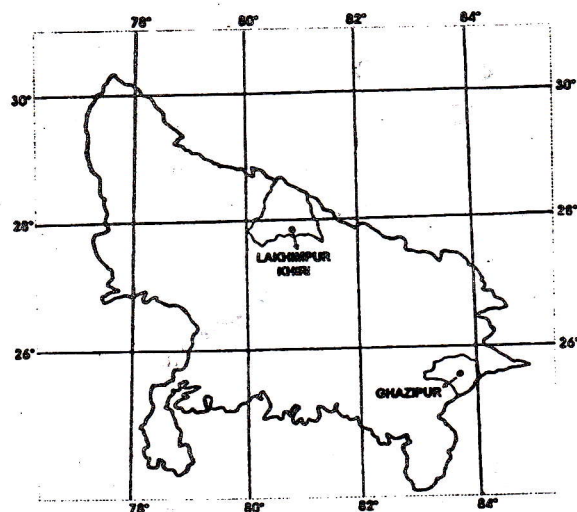


Fig.1. *Ranunculus cantoniensis* DC. a. Habit sketch of plant; b. A Flower; c. An Achene.



**Map 1.** Map of Uttar Pradesh showing extended distribution.

pedicels terminal. Sepals 5, yellowish-green, reflexed, 4-5 mm long, deciduous, sparsely hairy; petals 5, pale yellow, shorter than the sepals, 2-3 mm long; stamens 15-20, anthers less than 1 mm long; receptacle pilose, 2 mm long in flower, 5-13 mm long in fruit. Achenes 50-100 in an ovoid-

cylindrical to cylindric head; achene flattened, obovate, 2-3 mm long, smooth and glabrous with an intra-marginal rib; beak stout, deltoid.

Flowering and fruiting : March-May.

Habitat : near ponds, ditches and wet meadows.

Distribution : World : Nepal (Terai region), Butan, North China, Pakistan, Korea, Japan and North America. In India : N. W. Himalaya to N. E. India, Jammu and Kashmir, Himanchal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Maghalaya.

*Specimen Examined* : India, Uttar Pradesh, Ghazipur District, Saidpur Tahsil, Bhimapar village, 29. 05. 2006. Pramod Kumar, 24172 (DH).

#### Acknowledgement

The authors are thankful to Head, Botany Department, University of Allahabad, for providing laboratory facilities. The authors are also grateful to Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for providing research fellowship to one of the author (SM).

#### References

1. Duthie J F 1903-1929, Flora of the Upper Gangetic Plain and of the adjacent Siwalik and Sub-Himalayan Tracts. Calcutta.
2. Singh K K 1997, Flora of Dudhwa National Park. Dehradun.