



Pseudotrachypus ancistrodes, a new combination for *Meteoriopsis ancistrodes* (Meteoriaceae)

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ABSTRACT

The present study attempts to define the current status of *Meteoriopsis ancistrodes*, which has been identified as a new addition to the South Indian bryoflora. The taxon has been variously treated by different workers from time to time, resulting in its initial placement under *Pseudobarbella ancistrodes*. Subsequently, in a taxonomic revision of the Meteoriaceae, *Pseudobarbella* was transferred to and synonymized under *Pseudotrachypus*. Thus in the present contribution *Meteoriopsis ancistrodes* is proposed as belonging in *Pseudotrachypus*, with the new combination *P. ancistrodes*. Diagnostic characters along with illustrations of the species and distinction from closely related Indian taxa, with which it may be confused, are discussed.

Key words: Bryoflora, *Pseudotrachypus ancistrodes*, South India, synonym

INTRODUCTION

Meteoriopsis M.Fleischer ex Brotherus (1906: 825) was circumscribed by Brotherus and included five species: *M. ancistrodes* (Renauld & Cardot) Brotherus (1906: 825), *M. divergens* (Mitten) Brotherus (1906: 826), *M. reclinata* (Müller Hal.) M.Fleischer ex Brotherus (1906: 826), *M. sinensis* (Müller Hal.) Brotherus (1906: 826) and *M. squarrosa* (Hooker) M.Fleischer ex Brotherus (1906: 826), the latter being the type species. Meanwhile *M. squarrosa* was reported from South India (Sedgwick 1910: 941, Dixon 1914: 64, Dabhade 1998: 103). A detailed study on the taxonomy of Indian mosses by Chopra (1975: 351) reported four species of *Meteoriopsis*, of which *M. ancistrodes* was previously reported from Garhwal (western Himalaya). Later on two other species; i.e., *M. squarrosa* and *M. reclinata*, were reported from South India (Srinivasan 1974: 28, Nair *et al.* 2005: 157). Gangulee (1974–78: 1352) reported four species of the genus from different parts of India. According to the checklist of Indian Mosses (Lal 2005: 88) *Meteoriopsis* has five species in the country, of which *M. squarrosa*, and *M. formosana* are distributed in western Himalaya, eastern Himalaya and Nepal; *M. squarrosa* is also reported from South India. *Meteoriopsis reclinata* shows its distribution in western Himalaya, eastern Himalaya, South India, central India and Nepal, whereas *M. ancistrodes* is restricted to western Himalaya and *M. divergens* to eastern Himalaya.

During the revisionary study made by Noguchi (1976: 338) for Asiatic species of Meteoriaceae, *Meteoriopsis ancistrodes* was treated at the varietal rank as *M. reclinata* var. *ancistrodes* (Renauld & Cardot) Noguchi (1976: 338), whereas Manuel (1977: 587) and Norris & Koponen (1985: 44) excluded *M. ancistrodes* from *Meteoriopsis*, placing it in *Pseudobarbella*, due to pluripapillose laminal cells, spreading leaves with a long piliferous, flexuose leaf acumen. Manuel (1977: 587) made the new combination *Pseudobarbella ancistrodes* (Renauld & Cardot) Manuel (1977: 596), with *P. assimilis* (Cardot) Noguchi (1947: 81) as the type species of the genus. Gangulee (1974–78: 1340) reported three species of