ABSTRACT

Taxonomic studies play a very important role in the conservation of biodiversity. The present study is a comprehensive systematic and ethnobotanic analysis of the Rubiaceous flora of Kerala state. Regular field trips were conducted to various parts of Kerala to collect the plant specimens and its uses, visited major herbaria and also reviewed relevant literature. Based on the collected data a comprehensive systematic treatment was prepared, which contain the indented dichotomous key separately for genera and species. The detailed description for genera and species were also given which includes author citation and relevant notes like name changes, uses and specimen examined. The illustrations and photographs of many species including type specimens are also included for easy identification. The study reveals that there are 263 species of Rubiaceae in 61 genera seen distributed in the state. Several species of the family are endemics, this reaches up to 64% and 31% are under rare and threatened category and 11 species form new record to Kerala state.

Key words: Rubiaceae, Phytogeography, Systematic treatment, Taxa, Genera, Western Ghats, Species, Endemism, Ethnobotany, Habit, Habitat, Status, Herbarium, Flora, Taxonomy, Type specimen.