



About the book

The book *Wild Balsams of Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalaya: A Pictorial Handbook* is a ready reckoner of 45 species (41 wild, 2 naturalized and 2 cultivated) of Balsams (*Impatiens*) found in the Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalaya, India. All the species are presented with updated nomenclature, ample photographs of habit of plants, flowers, dissected floral parts from field and an identification key. The book also includes checklists of wild Balsam species from neighbouring countries- Nepal and Bhutan, with photographs of few notable species. The book is presented from a historical perspective in terms of taxonomy of Balsams in the Himalayas.

This book will be useful for researchers, also will serve as a perfect guide for conservationists, foresters, horticulturists, nurserymen, plant-enthusiasts, policy makers, students and for people in tourism sector. This book will bridge a crucial gap in understanding this intricate and beautiful group of flowering plants of the Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalaya in a single outline.



Directorate of Cinchona and Other Medicinal Plants
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Government of West Bengal

BOTANICAL SURVEY OF INDIA
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
Government of India



WILD BALSAMS OF DARJEELING AND SIKKIM HIMALAYA
A Pictorial Handbook

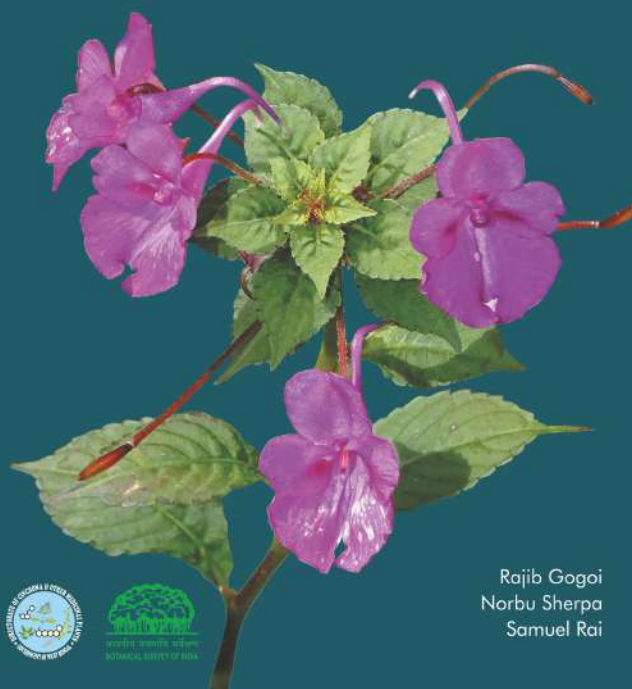


2021



WILD BALSAMS OF DARJEELING AND SIKKIM HIMALAYA

A Pictorial Handbook



Rajib Gogoi
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An initiative under



Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav



Online Book Release

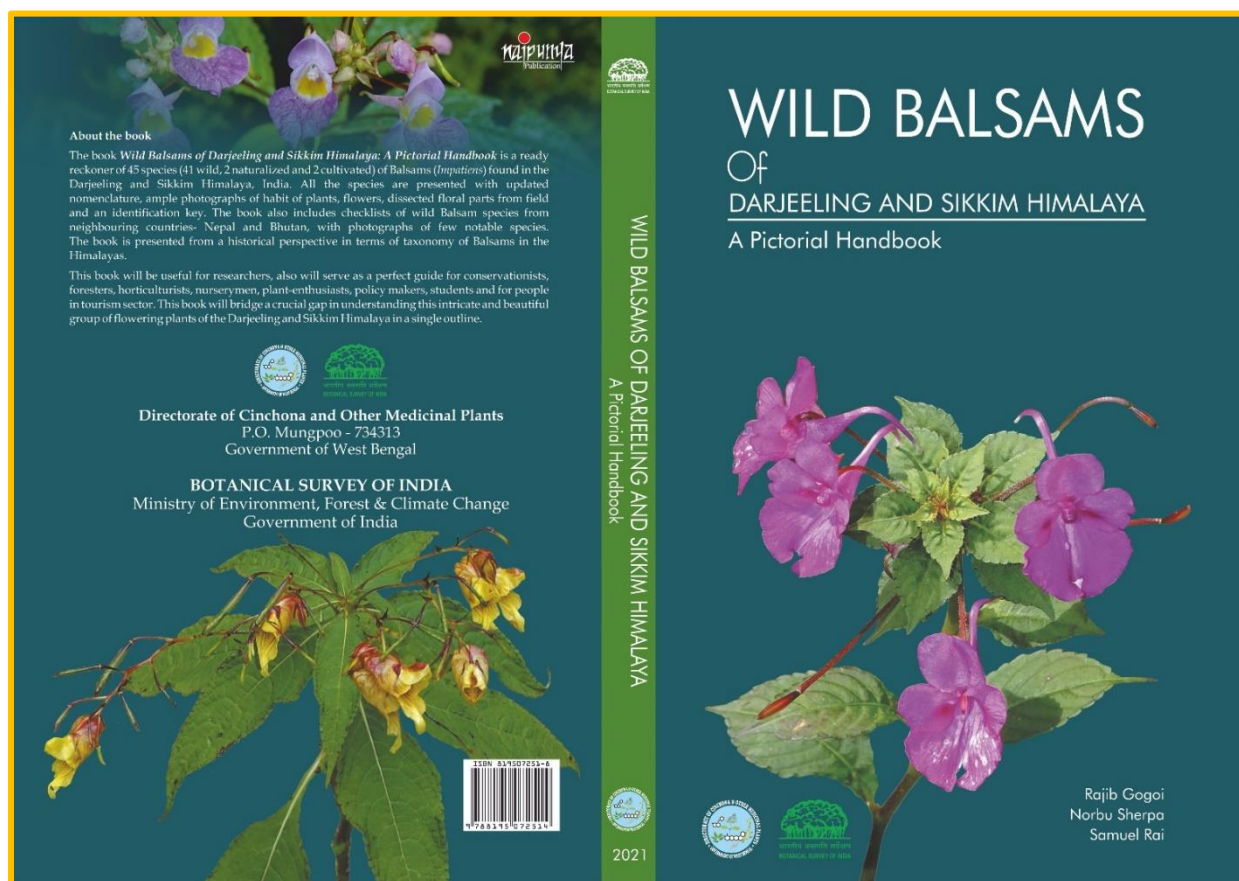
“Wild Balsams of Sikkim & Darjeeling Himalaya - A Pictorial Handbook” .

07 September 2021

**Botanical Survey of India
Sikkim Himalayan Regional Centre
Gangtok**

An online book release was done under the auspices of **AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV** commemorating 75 Years of Indian Independence. The book *“Wild Balsams of Sikkim & Darjeeling Himalaya-A Pictorial Handbook”* was published by Botanical Survey of India, Sikkim Himalayan Regional Centre, Gangtok, MOEF&CC, Government of India (BSI) in collaboration with Directorate of Cinchona and Other Medicinal Plants, Government of West Bengal (DCOMP).

The online book release function was held on 07-09-2021 and presided by the Chief Guest, Dr. A.A. Mao, Director, BSI. The theme lecture given by Dr.S.S. Dash, Scientist E & Technical Section in-charge, BSI was on the topic “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav and Botanical



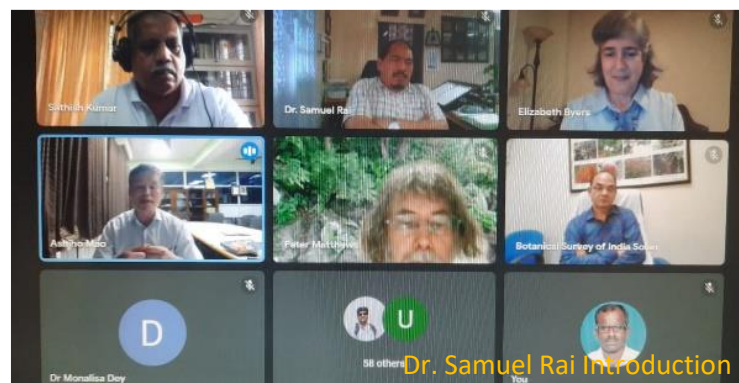
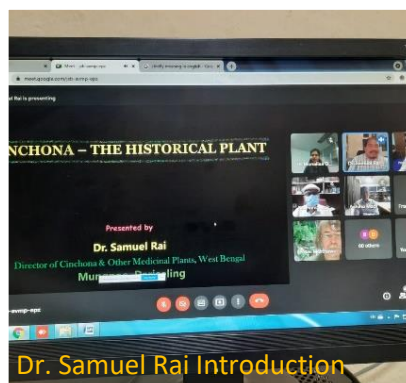
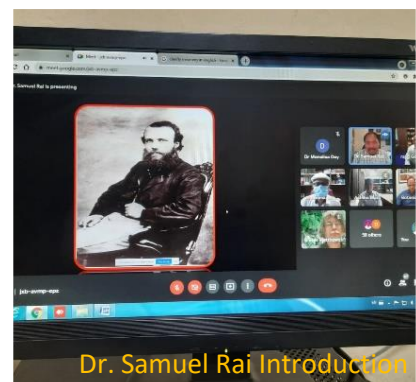
Survey of India”. He elaborated on the strides BSI had taken since independence in the field of plant survey and taxonomic inventorisation.

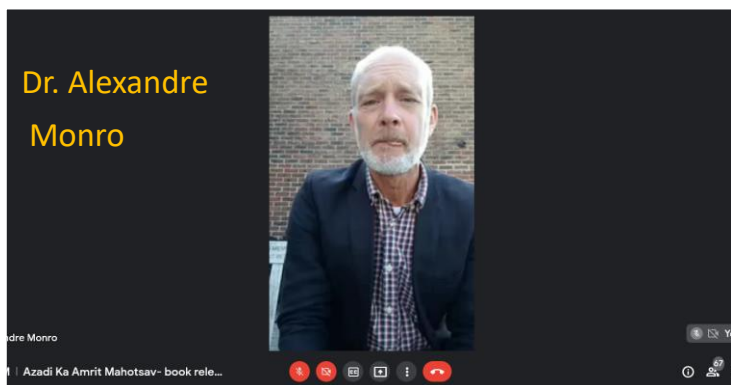
Dr. Rajib Gogoi, Scientist E & Head of Office, BSI SHRC, Gangtok and lead author of the book introduced the audience about this book. In his speech he said that Balsams or *Impatiens* Riv. ex L., are a group of plants that grow wild in the Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalaya and they produce exceptionally beautiful flowers, with a high economic potential in the horticulture market. He highlighted that there are about 1000 species globally and 270 species in India. This work was carried out by the lead author as part of BSI’s mandate, undertook exploration and documentation of the Taxonomy and Diversity of Wild Balsams (2017-2020) in Sikkim and Darjeeling Himalayas and identified 45 species which grow in Darjeeling and Sikkim region.

Dr. Samuel Rai, Director, DCOMP, Darjeeling, the co-author of the book also elaborated on the process of publishing the book and also he outlined the history of the institute, its cultivation of cinchona and its progress to other plants like cardamom, orange, strawberry and recently, coffee. He also noted that both BSI and DCOMP were sister organisations in pre-independence period and that a fruitful collaboration could still be possible after even hundred years of existence of individual organisation.

The Guests of Honour included Dr. Wojciech Adamowski, Białowieża Geobotanical Station, UW, Poland, an internationally renowned expert in Balsams; Dr. Henry Noltie, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, UK, who has extensively worked on the flora of Bhutan and Sikkim; Prof. Peter J. Matthews, Osaka University, Japan; Dr. Elizabeth A. Byers, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, USA; Dr. Alexandre Monro, RBG, Kew, UK; Mr. Saroj Kasaju, Nepal; Dr. Sathish Kumar, Former Scientist, TBGRI, Kerala; Dr. Usha Lachungpa, former Principal Scientist, Sikkim forest department.

The Director BSI, Dr. A.A. Mao, released this book in presence of the above illustrious plant taxonomists/subject experts from India and across the world. Dr. Mao, in his speech, emphasised that this book being a pictorial guide empowers the end user in identifying the species and is more user friendly than regular books of taxonomy. This book is one of a kind from BSI and that it should be the norm rather than exception in future publications. This was also echoed and affirmed by the subject experts present, stating that it would inspire amateurs to take up taxonomic work when the natural beauty of plants in the wild is given in a presentable format. Rajib Gogoi, Norbu Sherpa of BSI & Samuel Rai of DCOMP are the authors of this book that would be useful locally in Sikkim/Darjeeling Himalaya to identify the plants and help in preparing Peoples Biodiversity Registers it was opined in the programme. This book would certainly augment conservation priorities of policy makers and aid students, nature lovers, and promotion of tourism and most importantly use of the Balsam species for economic generation in Horticultural sector.





Dr. A.A. Mao, Director, BSI - Releasing the Book

