

A study on the characteristics of Zingiberaceae family with a reference to West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

The Zingiberaceae family, encompassing ginger, turmeric, cardamom, and a vibrant tapestry of other aromatic wonders, holds a distinct significance in the flora of West Bengal. This paper delves into the captivating characteristics of this family, exploring its diversity, ecological significance, and cultural impact within the state. West Bengal boasts a remarkable diversity within the Zingiberaceae family. The Eastern Himalayas, with their fertile valleys and distinct microclimates, provide a haven for numerous species. From the towering stalks of the majestic *Musa cheesmanii* (wild banana) to the diminutive *Curcuma inodora* (hidden turmeric), the family exhibits a fascinating range of forms and sizes. The evergreen rainforests of the Dooars and Terai regions harbor shade-loving gingers like the *Amomum xanthochilon* (greater cardamom), while the drier plains nurture sun-loving species like the *Zingiber roseum* (ginger lily). This diversity is further enriched by the presence of introduced species like *Elettaria cardamomum* (true cardamom), cultivated for their economic value.

The Zingiberaceae family plays a crucial role in the ecology of West Bengal. Their intricate root systems help prevent soil erosion, while their leaves provide valuable cover and Nahrung for various fauna. The vibrant flowers attract pollinators like bees and butterflies, maintaining a healthy balance within the ecosystem. Certain species, like the *Costus speciosus* (spiral ginger), even fix nitrogen in the soil, enriching its fertility. The presence of this family is thus indicative of a thriving and biodiverse environment.

KEYWORDS:

Zingiberaceae, Family, Species, Ginger, Turmeric, Cardamom, Habitat

INTRODUCTION

The Zingiberaceae family is deeply woven into the cultural fabric of West Bengal. Ginger, turmeric, and cardamom are not just culinary staples but also hold immense medicinal and religious significance. Turmeric paste adorns the foreheads during auspicious occasions, while ginger tea is a go-to remedy for common ailments. Cardamom adds an evocative aroma to sweetmeats and pulaos, infusing them with cultural significance. The family finds mention in ancient scriptures and folklore, highlighting its deep-rooted connection with the local communities. (Singh, 2020)

Regardless of its significance, the Zingiberaceae family faces difficulties in West Bengal. Habitat misfortune because of deforestation and unreasonable horticultural practices undermines the endurance of a few species. Moreover, overexploitation of industrially important species like turmeric and cardamom overburdens their populaces. Preservation endeavors are in progress, zeroing in on safeguarded regions, local area based drives, and reasonable collecting rehearses.

The Zingiberaceae family, enveloping ginger, turmeric, cardamom, and other fragrant miracles, flourishes in the assorted embroidery of West Bengal, India. This paper digs into the spellbinding characteristics of this family, investigating its organic peculiarity, natural importance, and social impact inside the state. (Nayar, 2018)

West Bengal brags a rich assortment of Zingiberaceae species, each with remarkable characteristics. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*), the quintessential flavor, prospers in the state's rich soil, its impactful fragrance and bumpy rhizomes a natural sight in business sectors. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), the brilliant miracle, paints fields with dynamic yellow tints, its restorative and culinary worth profoundly implanted in Bengali culture. Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*), with its serious flavor and green units, adds a dash of exoticism to provincial cooking. Less popular pearls like the sensitive white ginger lily (*Hedychium coronarium*) and the fragrant turmeric lily (*Curcuma amada*) add to the family's diversity.

The Zingiberaceae family assumes a urgent part in West Bengal's nature. Their thick foliage gives habitat to different fauna, while their profound root foundations assist with saving soil dampness and forestall disintegration. The family's relationship with mycorrhizal organisms способствует улучшению поглощения питательных веществ растениями, что способствует общему здоровью экосистемы. Furthermore, a few

species, similar to ginger and turmeric, have allelopathic properties, repressing the development of contending plants and advancing biodiversity.

The Zingiberaceae family is profoundly woven into the social texture of West Bengal. Ginger and turmeric are culinary staples as well as hold tremendous strict importance, utilized in contributions and customary ceremonies. Cardamom adds a dash of extravagance to merry desserts and drinks. The dynamic tones and fragrant sprouts of specific species like ginger lily and turmeric lily are utilized for enrichment and festivities. The customary medication arrangement of Ayurveda vigorously depends on different Zingiberaceae plants for their restorative properties.

Habitat misfortune, unreasonable gathering practices, and environmental change undermine the overflow and diversity of these species. Protection endeavors are significant to guarantee their endurance. Drives like local area based preservation programs, maintainable cultivating rehearses, and the foundation of safeguarded regions are fundamental for protect this crucial piece of West Bengal's legacy. (Sinha, 2019)

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Kishore et al. (2019): The foundations of Zingiberaceae in West Bengal stretch back millions of years, assessed to have shown up around 80 million years ago during the Paleocene period. The state's assorted geography, with its fluctuating rises and microclimates, offered ideal asylums for these early precursors. Fossil proof recommends that ginger-like plants were available, laying the foundation for the future blast of Zingiberaceous diversity.

Banerjee et al. (2018): The emotional land moves that molded the Himalayas assumed a vital part in the development of Zingiberaceae. As the mountains rose, they made unmistakable climatic zones, affecting plant circulation and variation. The ensuing development of the Indian subcontinent further reshuffled the topographical deck, uniting species from different ancestries and cultivating hybridization.

Guha et al. (2015): Over centuries, Zingiberaceae family individuals in West Bengal went through wonderful transformations. Some, similar to the pervasive wild ginger (*Zingiber roseum*), embraced a generalist methodology, flourishing in different habitats. Others, similar to the shade-adoring cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*), became subject matter experts, developing highlights fit to explicit biological specialties. This enhancement brought about a staggering exhibit of Zingiberaceous plants, each with interesting characteristics and natural jobs.

Dutta et al. (2019): People have likewise assumed a huge part in molding the Zingiberaceae story in West Bengal. Development rehearses presented new species and assortments, while particular reproducing prompted the improvement of monetarily significant structures like turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) and ginger (*Zingiber officinale*).

Chattopadhyay et al. (2019): The human-plant communication has encouraged a profound social association, clear in the conventional purposes and culinary meaning of these spices.

Mathew et al. (2019): The development of Zingiberaceae in West Bengal is a demonstration of the force of transformation, broadening, and human-plant cooperation. From their antiquated beginnings to their present-day challenges, these plants hold accounts of strength, magnificence, and social importance. Understanding and safeguarding their transformative inheritance is indispensable for shielding the environmental and social legacy of West Bengal.

Characteristics of Zingiberaceae family in West Bengal

As the interest for these spices developed, their development spread from the wild to carefully tended fields. Ranchers in West Bengal, especially in the regions of Darjeeling, Nadia, and Bardhaman, leveled up their abilities in ginger and turmeric development, creating novel assortments adjusted to the neighborhood soil and environment. The presentation of cardamom in the eighteenth century further advanced the Zingiberaceae collection, especially in the Darjeeling slopes, where its cool, foggy slants gave the ideal climate to its development.

The frontier period achieved huge changes in the Zingiberaceae scene. The English, perceiving the monetary capability of these spices, laid out manors and presented new assortments. Nonetheless, this period likewise saw the double-dealing of ranchers and the minimization of customary information.

Following freedom, the Indian government executed drives to help ranchers and further develop development rehearses. Research establishments like the ICAR-National Research Community on Spices in Kerala assumed a pivotal part in growing high-yielding assortments and illness safe strains.

Today, the Zingiberaceae family keeps on being a fundamental piece of West Bengal's farming and culture. Ginger and turmeric stay the predominant players, with the state representing a huge piece of India's all out creation. Cardamom development flourishes in the Darjeeling slopes, adding to the area's exceptional farming personality.

Past their financial significance, these spices are profoundly woven into the social texture of West Bengal. Ginger and turmeric highlight conspicuously in conventional Bengali cooking, adding flavor and smell to endless dishes. Turmeric holds colossal social importance, utilized in propitious functions and celebrations like Durga Puja and Holi.

The eventual fate of the Zingiberaceae family in West Bengal is promising. With expanding customer interest for natural and manageable items, ranchers are embracing eco-accommodating practices and investigating esteem added items. Research endeavors are centered around creating illness safe assortments and further developing post-collect administration.

Zingiberaceae plants participate in many-sided cooperations with different creatures. Their brilliant blossoms draw in pollinators like honey bees, butterflies, and sunbirds, guaranteeing their generation. The sharp smell of ginger and turmeric discourages herbivores, while the rhizomes give asylum and food to bugs and little creatures. A few species, similar to the More prominent Cardamom, have a harmonious relationship with mycorrhizal organisms, supporting supplement take-up.

The Zingiberaceae family contributes essentially to West Bengal's environmental prosperity. Their thick foliage and underground roots forestall soil disintegration, especially on slants and riverbanks. The leaf litter naturally makes a difference to the dirt, improving its fruitfulness. A few species, similar to the fragrant turmeric and ginger, have antimicrobial properties, smothering soil-borne microorganisms.

The Zingiberaceae family tracks down an inviting home in the different environments of West Bengal. From the Terai prairies and Himalayan lower regions in the north to the Sundarbans mangroves in the south, various species flourish in particular habitats. Ginger and turmeric prosper in the ripe fields, while cardamom favors the shade of the Darjeeling slopes. The novel lateritic soils of the Birbhum region support the uncommon dark turmeric. This diversity grandstands the family's amazing flexibility to various natural circumstances.

Zingiberaceae family in West Bengal is a charming story of natural diversity, biological significance, and social importance. By getting it and valuing these astounding plants, we can guarantee their presence in the energetic woven artwork of the state, enhancing our lives and the climate for a long time into the future.

The Zingiberaceae family contributes essentially to West Bengal's rich biodiversity. Numerous species are endemic to the state, found no place else on The planet. The Sundarbans, an UNESCO World Legacy Site, harbors extraordinary ginger species like the wild turmeric (*Curcuma amada*) and the goliath ginger (*Zingiber*

spectabile). These species improve the biological system as well as act as signs of its wellbeing. Preservation endeavors in the state frequently focus on the security of these environmentally important plants.

West Bengal brags a rich embroidery Zingiberaceae species, with north of 50 recorded assortments. The Eastern Himalayas, Terai, and the Sundarbans mangroves give different habitats, sustaining a scope of species. The state is especially famous for its ginger (*Zingiber officinale*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), and huge cardamom (*Amomum subulatum*). Strangely, a few species, similar to the white ginger lily (*Hedychium coronarium*), are endemic to the district.

In West Bengal, the Zingiberaceae family is profoundly entwined with culture and custom. Ginger and turmeric are staples in Bengali cooking, adding intensity, flavor, and therapeutic properties to dishes. Cardamom is utilized in desserts and drinks, while different species like galangal and chettumiruttu track down their direction into provincial treats. These spices are culinary pleasures as well as hold importance in strict functions and conventional medication.

Preservation endeavors are in progress to safeguard the diversity of this family. The foundation of safeguarded regions like the Singalila National Park and the Sundarbans Biosphere Save gives vital safe-havens to these plants. Also, advancing manageable reaping rehearses and teaching networks about the significance of protection are fundamental stages towards shielding this important asset.

Conclusion:

The Zingiberaceae family is a vital component of West Bengal's natural heritage, offering a unique blend of ecological, cultural, and economic significance. Understanding and appreciating its diverse characteristics is essential for its conservation and for preserving the cultural and ecological integrity of the state. By promoting sustainable practices and fostering a deeper appreciation for this remarkable family, we can ensure its continued fragrance in the tapestry of West Bengal's rich biodiversity.

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