



Raami and Shaami's amazing "Wood Roses"



The overflowing giggles and the vigorous applause, soon ceased as the class teacher entered. She found Raami and Shaami, the twin sisters being flocked by the other students in the class. Everyone's face was glowing with glee. The girls hurriedly returned to their seats when they saw their teacher and soon the class order was restored. The Teacher enquired the reason behind their Merriment.

One of the courageous girls stood up and said, "...Raami and Shaami were showing to us a strange flower. It is such an uncommon one and all of us were listening to them teacher..."

The teacher turned to Raami and Shaami in anticipation of a reply from them. Raami and Shaami stood up and said in affirmative, "...That is true teacher, last weekend we had gone for a short trekking at Devarayanadurga hills. It is a pilgrim centre in the midst of a forest area. We had collected some attractive and strange looking objects there and we were sharing our experience with our friends teacher..."

Nodding her head, the class teacher said, "...What are those strange objects?... let me

see, if they are worth their strange looks, I urge you to contribute those things to the school's science museum..." Agreeing to her teacher, Shaami said, "...That's a good idea teacher, the objects we collected, my father told, are the flowers. This flower is an uncommon one and not found in the urban localities. The interesting thing about this is, it can be preserved for many months

even after it is dried. My father told that such dried flowers are collected and sold in the florist shops and boutiques in the Cities...Look at these flowers teacher...". Saying so she pulled out from her bag a small bundle of dried flower stalks. Once again, all the students tried to peek at it while still sitting in their seats.



The teacher with a tinge of disbelief on her face took the flowers in her hand and looked at it. They were like artificial flowers made out of wood shavings and starched paper. With much reluctance and hesitation, she sniffed the petals to find that the flowers lack any fragrance. Yet the flowers were attractive. She looked at it again and again and asked the twin sisters, "...Is this a natural flower grown on a plant?..." Raami jumped out

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Wood roses

My family and my names:

I belong to Sweet potato family
(Convolvulaceae)

Botanists call me:

Argyrea cuneata

While my local names are:

English:

Purple Convolvulus

Kannada: Achhegida,

Kallana hambu

Marathi:

Bondwail, Mahalungi

How do I look?

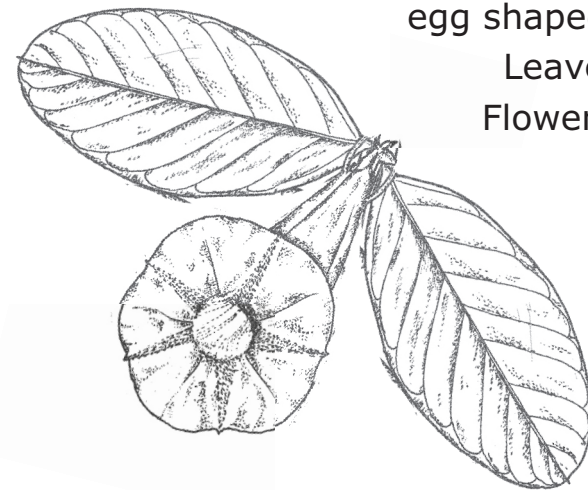
I am an attractive climbing shrub
growing up to 1.5 m in height.

I secrete copious quantities of
milky Sap when I am injured.

My leaves are Bright green and
egg shaped with short stalks.

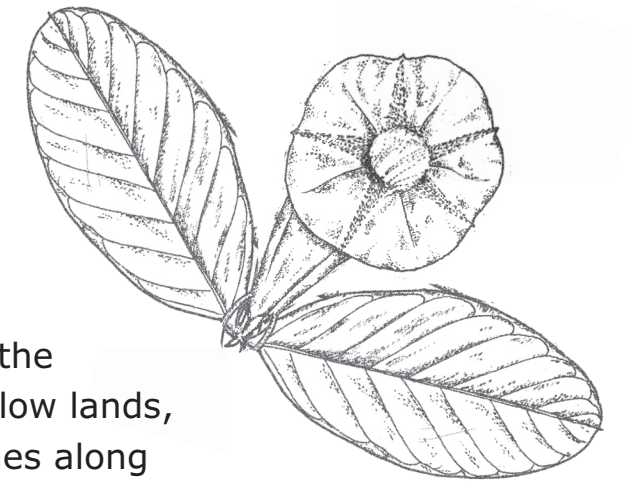
Leaves on the underside have soft hair.

Flowers are identical with the small bells in their
size and shape. They are bright purple in colour
and appear in dense clusters. Bumblebees and
Beetles are my insect friends and they regularly visit
me to Carry back the nectar. The dried fruit is
made of a whorl of woody sepals and a marble
sized centre.



Where can you see me?

I am commonly seen in the
wilderness, in the fallow lands,
open fields and sometimes along
The wayside fences.



How am I useful?

The flowers are
used for decorations.
The dried fruits are used for
flower arrangement in
vases. They are sold as
"wood roses" or everlasting
flowers. The leaves are
reported to be
effective in diabetes. Leaf
paste is used to stop
bleeding. Flowers also
yield a Purple dye.

How can you grow me?

It is easy. You can grow me by
sowing the seeds.

of her seat and said in a confirming tone, "... that is what which attracted us teacher, it is indeed a natural flower, We have seen the flower in its original form on the plant. No doubt in it's genuineness teacher, It is just natural. My father mentioned to us that it is called Everlasting flower...". "Oooo!..." the room filled with several exclamatory sounds.

"...How was the plant to look?...", The Teacher tried to know more about from Shaami.

Shaami said in a confident tone, "...It was a kind of bush with drooping and climbing shoots teacher. There were egg shaped leaves all over. Flowers were bell shaped and deep purple. My father told that it is a relative of Sweet potato"..... Shaami Paused for a while to recollect the other features of it and continued. "...My father also said that these woody flowers are in fact the dried fruits of the plant. The petal like

objects are the dried sepals while the central dome like structure is the core of the fruit, which contains the seeds. He also told that this is called Wood rose..."

"...Is it Wood rose or Rosewood?...", the teacher asked at once. "... NO teacher, It is Wood rose and not Rosewood...", Shaami corrected. "Oooo!..." there was one more round of exclamatory sounds in the classroom.

Finally, the teacher appreciated the enthusiasm and the observations made by the twin sisters. Later Raami and Shaami wholeheartedly donated the bundle of wood roses to their school museum amidst the loud applause from their friends.

While coming back from the school on that evening, the beaming sisters slipped into their own world to find out more from the plant (what did the twin sisters find out from the plant? Turn to page14)

Crossword

Across

2. Medicine applied through nostrils. (10)
4. One of the oldest Indian Medical Traditions. (8)
7. Microfined molecules when burnt, which is used as a drug. (3)
10. The dye used to colour the sacred robes. (7)
11. I am a familiar form of drug but neither a solid nor a liquid; I am not even a gas yet I am usually kept in a closed container otherwise, I disappear. (4)
12. The quality of the prescribed medicine, you also feel the pain if your friend misreads this! (5)

Down

1. The first step of ascertaining the cause of a disease, a doctor does. (9)
3. The white ooze from a wound which smells bad. (3)
5. Calendar, almanac, stars, planets and other celestial bodies fall under this. (9)
6. The God of medicine according to Indian tradition. (11)
7. My property of relieving fever is called. (11)
8. This mythological person in Ramayana carried the herbal hillock. (7)
9. I am a form of medicine, which is popped. (6)
11. One of the six tastes, you usually dislike. (6)

Story line: **Suma T.S.**
 Crossword: **B.S. Somashekhar & Suma T.S.**

