

# An Annotated Checklist of Indian Pteridophytes

This work is the first fully documented summary of Indian Ferns and Fern-Allies produced since the 19th Century Handbook of Ferns of British India etc. by Beddome in 1883. It is based on very detailed and exhaustive study of Indian collections in all relevant herbaria world-wide and on extensive field-work and collection in India and adjacent countries over a period of some 5 decades by the senior author and more recently by Dr. Kholia. It also includes work done by ATREE and Dr. Gandhi of IPNI on trawling and listing names and literature, much supplemented by the first author.

The nomenclature has been revised in detail and full synonymy, often previously unknown in the region, is included. The types of all accepted taxa are given, including previous and many new lectotypifications where necessary to bring a conclusion to problem-names. Following this, a completely revised distribution is given State-wise for India, derived from specimens actually seen and confirmed or re-identified by the first author. The world-wide distribution given is also based almost entirely on verified specimens, or sometimes on re-assessed reliably authoritative literature. This is followed by detailed notes on the species' nomenclature and taxonomy and essential correction of many incorrect records that have only served to mislead workers in the area. Hybrids and excluded species are detailed at the end of each genus. Each family has the main modern literature and relevant older literature cited and discussed in the text and listed at the end, many newer works being little known to workers in the region. While families are placed in proper taxonomic order, genera and species are alphabetical as the most accessible arrangement.

The detailed and careful, up-to-date research that went into the preparation of this work are unprecedented in South Asia, and many of the corrections and revisions also apply to China and the many problems in pteridophyte accounts in its recent Flora.

A major revision concerns the classification used here for families, genera, species and subspecies, which is an updated taxonomic one, morphologically- and cytologically-based, with reference, but much-needed revision, not merely precedence, to ever-changing molecular cladonomic work and the PPG -1 cladistic families and genera. Few workers so far have had sufficient experience to expound and revise the problems and illogicalities of recent confused molecular-cladonomic schemes with their conclusions made only from the origins of apparent genetic lineages, but with insufficient attention to the rise of fundamental morphological differences and resulting coherent groups. The result is a refreshing, revised and more holistically based reaffirmation of more important and recognisable genuine families and genera.

As explained in Part 1 and in a previous Outline checklist (Fraser-Jenkins 2008), the origin of the present work was in an agreed plan to revise and re-model the late Dr. R.D. Dixit's ground-breaking Census of the Indian Pteridophytes (1984). Dr. Dixit was unfortunately taken from us before it could be prepared together, but the present work is hoped to live up to expectations in providing the most complete and accurate handbook of Indian ferns since the time and earlier concepts of Beddome. It is intended to be the template paving the way for eventual preparation in India of a complete fern-flora with keys and descriptions.



**Part 1** dealt with the earlier families, including lycopods and other fern-allies, eusporangiate ferns and earlier leptosporangiates to Pteridaceae and Vittariaceae, as well as the more advanced and complex families Aspleniaceae and Thelypteridaceae. Photographs were provided mainly with the intention of illustrating the many genera, as complex genera such as Aleurtopteris and Pteris had already been well illustrated in the first author's recent works in India.

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**Part 2** now deals with the big, critically complex families, Woodsiaceae (the athyrioids) and Dryopteridaceae (including tectarioids), and two small families in the area, Onocleaceae and Blechnaceae. The emphasis is more on the many highly involved, critical and widely misunderstood species of the two large families and many more species have therefore been illustrated photographically in an effort to help their accurate recognition. A number of them have never been illustrated photographically before. In addition an Appendix has been provided with many revisions, largely concerning more recently published papers, but also correcting errors in vol. 1 - an important duty of scientists that is often badly neglected or avoided in the region. It also concerns corrections to the species listed in a further very recent alternative, but poorly conceptualised and often mistaken molecular-cladonomic scheme, opposed to PPG - 1 for different reasons.

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**Part 3**, in large part already prepared, is intended to deal with a few smaller families related to Dryopteridaceae and also to Davalliaceae and the complex Polypodiaceae, along with the separate Family Grammitidaceae, and Salviniaceae. It is expected early in 2019.

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