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**REDISCOVERY OF A RARE AND LITTLE KNOWN FERN *PTERIS MULTIFIDA* POIR. (PTERIDACEAE - PTERIDOPHYTA) FROM UTTAR PRADESH**

**Shashank Kumar Singh, S. Dominic Rajkumar\*, Shobhit Kumar  
Srivastava and Ravi Pratap Gautam**

Department of Botany, St. Andrew's College (PG), Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

**\*Corresponding author email Id:** [dominicraj कुमार1@gmail.com](mailto:dominicraj कुमार1@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

The Genus *Pteris* Linn. is a pantropical genus. *Pteris multifida* is a very rare species found in a few localities in India. In Uttar Pradesh also it is a rare and endangered plant collected after 52 years.

**KEYWORDS:** Rediscovery, Pteridaceae, *Pteris multifida*, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, India.



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## INTRODUCTION

The family Pteridaceae is well known group of ferns found in the Pantropical regions. About 44 species have been (Chandra, 2000) recorded in India. About 15 species are reported from Western Ghats, South India (Manickam and Irudayaraj, 1992) and about 14 species reported from Assam (Borthakur *et al.*, 2001). Nayar and Geevarghese (1993) have reported 14 species from Malabar regions. *Pteris multifida* is a very rare species in India and has been recorded from very few localities. It was published as new record for India by Singh (1939). In the present study area Uttar Pradesh *Pteris multifida* was collected from Meerut by Mehra and Verma (1960). After for a long gap of 52 years this plant was collected from the Kusmi forest, Gorakhpur.

This species can be very well be differentiated from similar species like *P. cretica*, *P. dactylina* and *P. stenophylla*. In *Pteris multifida* the terminal and the upper pair of pinna are strongly decurrent exhibiting a winged rachis. Khullar (1994)

is of the view that *P. cretica*, *P. dactylina* and *P. stenophylla* are similar to *Pteris multifida* but for the above mentioned fact of winged rachis. The study area Uttar Pradesh (Fig. 1) is bounded by Nepal on the North, Uttarakhand on the North- East, Himanchal Pradesh on the North –West and Bihar on the East. They are situated between 23° 52'N and 31° 28'N latitudes and 77° 30'E and 84° 39'E longitude. During the recent exploration of Kusmi forest range of Gorakhpur *Pteris multifida* (Fig. 2.)was collected.

## DESCRIPTION

*Pteris multifida* Poiret, in Lam. Encycl. Bot. 6: 714 (1804).

Rhizome creeping and short, scaly. Fronds dimorphic, thin, sterile fronds: stipes up to 26 cm long, stramineous.

Lamina bipinnate, broadly ovate; pinnae 2-3 pairs, upper ones decurrent resulting in a winged rachis on each side. Fertile pinnae much longer and narrower. Sori marginal, continuous along the margin.



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### SPECIMENS OBSERVED

Kushmi forest, Gorakhpur.  
14.12.12, 90m, 436, 447. All the specimens are deposited in Centre for Plant Species Biology, Department of Botany, St. Andrew's College (PG), Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Figure: 1 Map of the study area – Uttar Pradesh**

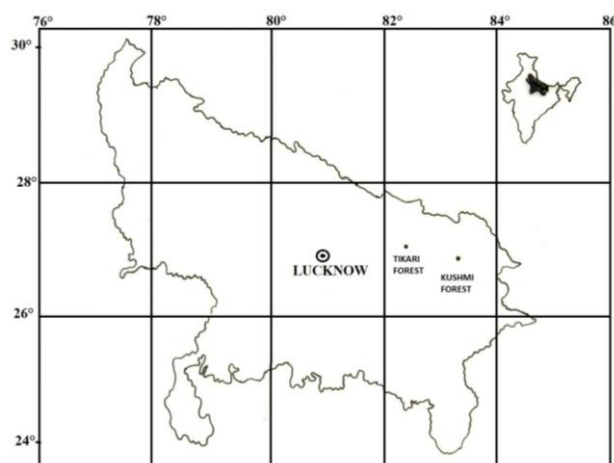
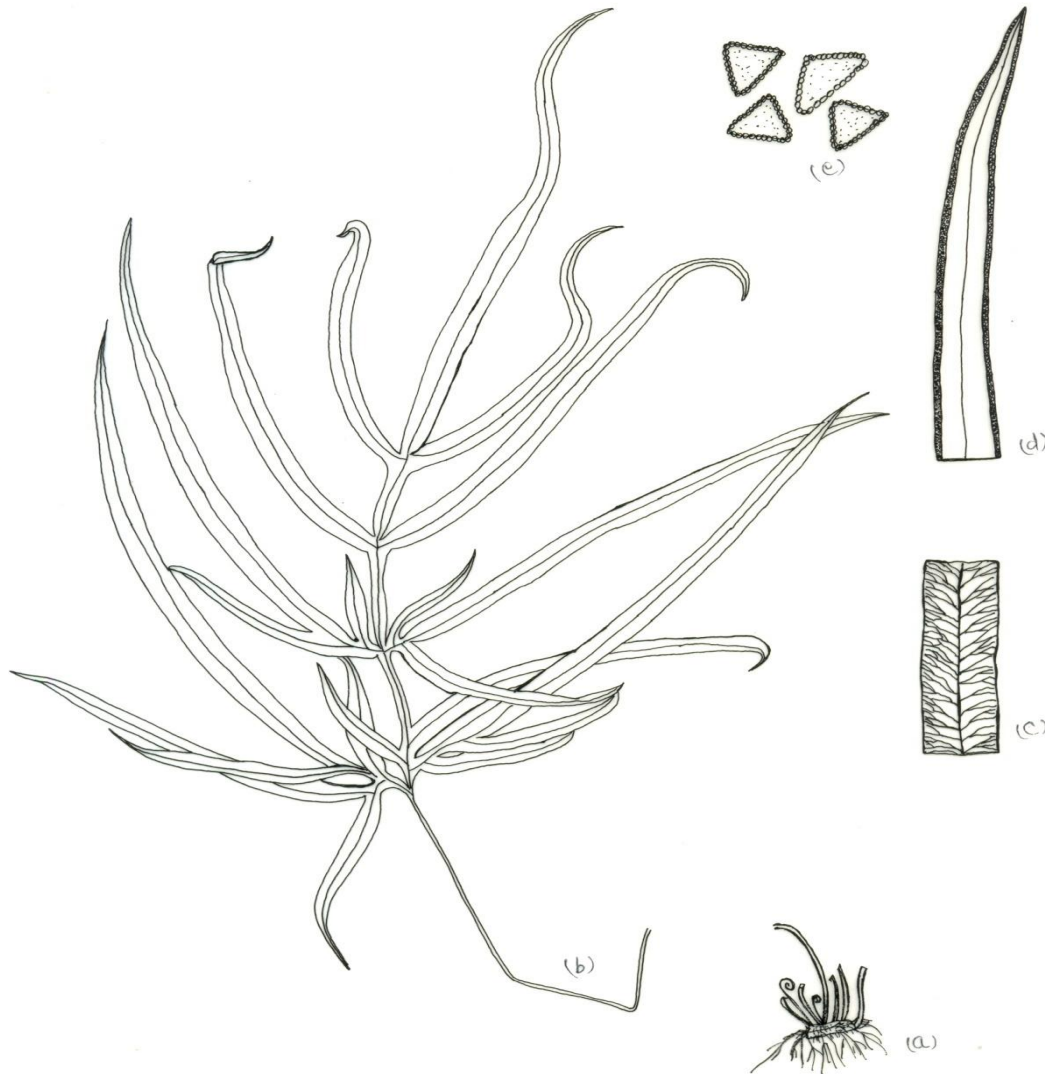




Figure: 2 Habit of *Pteris multifida* poir



- a. Rhizome
- b.. Frond of *Pteris multifida* poir.
- c. Rhizome scale
- d. Portion of the pinnule enlarged showing venation and sori arrangement