

A NOTE ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *ASPENIUM INDICUM* SLEDGE, VAR. *OBTUSUM* (BIR) COMB. NOV. IN WESTERN HIMALAYA\*

During the course of investigation on the flora of Mandakini Valley, one of us (BNM) came across an interesting *Asplenium* collected from Guptakashi, and Phata, District Chamoli, Uttar Pradesh, India. After detailed study (BIR, 1964) it was proved to be *Asplenium indicum* Sledge var. *obtusum* (Bir) comb. nov., a variety which has not been recorded in the published literature on the pteridophytic flora of Western Himalaya. Besides var. *obtusum*, the var. *proper* (Coll. No. BNM 3629b) also occurs in the area. The variety has been described by BIR (1962, 1964) as *A. planicaule* Wall. var. *obtusum* from Birch Hill Forest, Darjeeling. It extends up to Singhik in North Sikkim, Shillong and Cherapunji in Meghalaya and Orissa.

The present report of its occurrence from Chamoli district of Garhwal Himalaya provides an additional information about its distribution in the country. It is thus clear from the above that the plant has a wide range of distribution and the fact that it has not been recorded from several other areas is probably due to fact that it has often been confused with *Asplenium indicum* Sledge (= *A. planicaule* Wall.) with which the var. *obtusum* is closely allied. A close examination, however, shows that the latter can easily be distinguished from the var. *proper* by its broader pinnae with obtuse apex, blunt apices of the incision, well developed smaller basiscopic and superior acroscopic lobes (cf. BIR, 1964). ***Asplenium indicum*** Sledge in *Bull. Brit. Mus. (nat. hist.) Bot.* **3** : 264 (1965) var. *obtusum* (Bir), comb. nov.

*Basionym*—*A. planicaule* Wall. var. *obtusum* Bir in *Bull. bot. Surv. India* **4** : 3 (1962) & in *J. Ind. bot. Soc.* **43** : 561 (1964).

*Specimens examined*—Guptakashi  $\pm$  1400 m BNM 3629a ; Phata  $\pm$  1500 m BNM 4968 (CDRI) ; Gaurikund (Chamoli)  $\pm$  2000 m, M. A. Rau 43574 (BSD).

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B. S. TRIVEDI

*Department of Botany, Lucknow University, Lucknow*

B. N. MEHROTRA AND B. S. ASWAL  
*Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow*

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