



# Research and Reviews in Plant Science

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## **Worship of *Lygodium flexuosum* (L.) Sw. Schrad and *Drynaria quercifolia* (L.) J. Sm. in the field of Botany**

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### **Abstract**

The present chapter highlights the ethnobotanical significance and traditional worship practices associated with two fern species, *Lygodium flexuosum* (L.) Sw. Schrad. and *Drynaria quercifolia* (L.) J. Sm., commonly found in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. These pteridophytes are not only ecologically important but also hold medicinal and cultural value in local communities. The study documents their botanical characteristics, habitat distribution, and various ethnomedicinal uses such as treatment of wounds, jaundice, rheumatism, intestinal worms, and piles. Additionally, *Drynaria quercifolia* is noted for its ornamental and fodder value. Field observations indicate that both species thrive in moist, shaded environments and on tree trunks. This work emphasizes the need to preserve traditional knowledge systems and promote further scientific validation of these medicinal claims.

**Keywords:** ethnobotanical significance, traditional worship, *Lygodium flexuosum* (L.) Sw. Schrad. and *Drynaria quercifolia* (L.) J. Sm.

### **Introduction**

Ethnobotany plays a crucial role in understanding the relationship between plants and local communities, particularly in rural and tribal regions where traditional knowledge is still actively practiced. Ferns and fern-allies (pteridophytes), though often overlooked, possess significant medicinal and ecological importance. Among these, *Lygodium flexuosum* and

*Drynaria quercifolia* are widely distributed in the Konkan region of Maharashtra, especially in Ratnagiri district.

These species are deeply integrated into the cultural and healthcare practices of the local population. Traditional healers utilize various plant parts such as fronds and rhizomes for treating a range of ailments. Moreover, certain plants are revered and worshipped due to their

perceived healing properties and spiritual significance.

The present study aims to document the ethnomedicinal uses, field distribution, and cultural relevance of these two important fern species. By recording such indigenous knowledge, this chapter contributes to the conservation of both biological resources and traditional wisdom, which are increasingly under threat due to modernization and habitat loss.

**Botanical Name:** *Lygodium flexuosum* (L.) Sw. Schrad.

**Common Name:** Chitrangi, Malya, Wanashiwel, jakhamjodi.

**Family:** Schizaeaceae



*Lygodium flexuosum* (L.) Sw. Schrad.

#### Ethnomedicinal Observations

- Decoction of fronds is applied to treat chronic cuts and wounds.
- Juice of young plant about one teaspoonful once a day during bed time is prescribed to anthelmintic for expulsion of intestinal worms.
- Decoction of fronds is drunk to cure jaundice.

- Frond juice is used as antirheumatic.
- The rhizome paste is applied on piles.

#### Field Observation

Common on moist and shady localities found throughout the Ratanagiri district.

**Botanical Name:** *Drynaria quercifolia* (L.) J. Sm.

**Common Name:** Bashing, Wanar bashing, Pankadha, Fansawarche Bandgul.

**Family:** Polypodiaceae



*Drynaria quercifolia* (L.) J. Sm.

#### Ethnomedicinal Observations

- Fronds are used for poulticing against swellings.
- Fronds are used on anti-AIDS (Used on HIV viries)
- Leaf extract used on ears puse.
- young fronds are used as cattle fodder in some part of study area.
- 50 gm rhizome mixed to meat curry (1/2 liter) and consume 7 to 8 days,

then sever pile will cover within a eight days.

- The rhizome and leaves decoction is used as anthelmintic and expectorant.
- The whole plant juice used in low fever.

### Other Uses

It is cultivated as ornamentals in gardens as epiphytes. It is also grown in pots, hanging

baskets for indoor gardening.

Field observation

Common on tree trunk, found throughout the district

### Conclusion

The study of *Lygodium flexuosum* and *Drynaria quercifolia* reveals their immense ethnobotanical value in the Ratnagiri district. Both species are widely used in traditional medicine for treating various ailments, including wounds, jaundice, piles, rheumatism, and infections. Their availability in natural habitats such as moist, shaded areas and tree trunks makes them easily accessible to local communities.

In addition to their medicinal uses, *Drynaria quercifolia* also holds ornamental and economic importance.

The documentation of such traditional practices underscores the rich indigenous knowledge associated with pteridophytes.

There is an urgent need to conserve these plant species and validate their medicinal properties through scientific research. Preservation of this knowledge will not only benefit future generations but also contribute to the development of novel plant-based therapeutics.

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