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NOTE

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A NEW DISTRIBUTION RECORD OF *ASPLENIUM SCALARE* ROSENST. (ASPLENIACEAE) IN INDIA

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The genus *Asplenium* L. (Aspleniaceae) in India is currently represented by 72 species (Fraser-Jenkins et al. 2016).

The fern species *Asplenium scalare* Rosenst. was first described as a new species by Rosenstock (1914) from Sumatra, Indonesia. It was also reported from Malaysia (Holttum 1966; Fraser-Jenkins 2012).

Based on an early collection by J. Joseph from Thiruvananthapuram, it was Fraser-Jenkins and Chandra et al. (2008) who first reported this species from Kerala in India. They found only one specimen at the Madras Herbarium (MH) and thus its nativity was not verified (see Fraser-Jenkins et al. 2016). This collection was mistaken for *A. phyllitidis* D. Don by earlier authors.

Here we report the occurrence of *A. scalare* in Tamil

Nadu for the first time. As the previous report was not confirmed, our new report is the first verified one in India. It was found only in Kuzhivalavu, Kolli Hills (Image 1). Its natural occurrence suggests that *A. scalare* is native in India, not escaped from cultivation. This species has shortly caudate, simple fronds, with buds (Holttum 1966; Image 1). It is very rare in India and assessed as CR (Critically endangered) by Fraser-Jenkins (2012).

Another simple fronded, proliferous species *A. batuense* Alderw. was reported from the Nicobar Islands (Fraser-Jenkins 2012). In *A. scalare* midrib is not winged on lower surface, like *A. batuense* (Holttum 1966).

Asplenium scalare Rosenst.,

Reper. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg. Beih. 13: 214. 1914. (Image 1)

Lectotype (designated here): Indonesia. Sumatra. Batakerland, 1911, Dr. J. Winkler 73 a (S-P-1453; Isolectotypes UC391682, NY00128018).

Synonym: *Asplenium subscalare* Alderw., Bull. Jard. Bot. Buitenzorg, 2, 20: 6. 1915.

Distribution: India (Kerala, Tamil Nadu—present report), Indonesia, Malaysia.

Note: In the protologue Rosenstock (1914) did not mention any holotype. He only mentioned the collector: Dr. J. Winkler, collection no.: 73a. We traced the type specimens (syntypes) in UC (barcode UC391682), NY (barcode NY00128018) and S (Reg. no. S-P-1453) (herbarium acronyms from Thiers 2018). To fix the application of this name we selected specimen at S as Lectotype.



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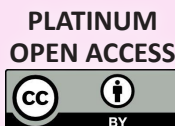
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Image 1. *Asplenium scalare* Rosenst. plant in Kolli Hills, India showing proliferous frond.

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