

## National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories

was established in 1961 as a Botanical Survey and Herbarium under the Department of Medicinal Plants later it has renamed as National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories (NHPL) under the Department of Plant Resources, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation. The NHPL is abbreviated as KATH herbarium. It is a national institute focused on country-wide exploration, collection and identification of plants. Since its establishment, plant expeditions have been conducted all over Nepal from its own capacity as well as from collaboration with foreign botanists and intuitions. Now more than 150,000 specimens have been preserved in KATH. So, it has been a source of resource for botanists, students and researchers. Additionally, there are over 60,000 backlog specimens awaiting for mounting, identification and housing.

Within the NHPL there are different sections and laboratories as follows:

### Phanerogams Section

aims to document flowering plants of Nepal and publish them in the form of fascicles and Nepal flora. In this connection, the section continues to organize plant collection trips to various parts of the country, identify them, preserve them in the form of herbarium. Until to date, it has published more than 39 flora book likes Flora of Kathmandu



valley, Flora of Phulchoki and several fascicles. This section also provides plant identification services to clients, students and researchers.

### Cryptogams Section

conducts research on Algae, Lichen, Bryophytes and Pteridophytes.



### Mycology section

documents fungi including mushrooms found in the Nepal. It has published **Fungi of Nepal** in four volumes having over 1600 species.



Tree fern

### Economic Botany Section

aims to document wild plants of economic importance. Within this section, there is a museum where around 700 plants specimens of various uses have been maintained for disseminating knowledge to the visitors.



### Ecology and Environment Section

aims to investigate the underlying factors that control distribution and diversity patterns of plants along the elevation gradient for which the country is well known amongst the plant scientist of the



A new species of ziziphus

world. The wider bioclimatic gradients offer as an excellent experimental site for testing hypothesis and theories on biogeography and ecology. This section has been engaged to explore diversity patterns of various plant groups along the elevation gradient in the Himalayas.

**Cytology section** aims to develop identification procedures based on the number and type of chromosomes.

Many plants of the country are becoming threatened due to various anthropogenic factors. About 1100 species including indigenous and exotic plants have been preserved by **Plant Genetic Resources Section**.



A rare CITES species of *Gnetum montanum*

### First Tissue culture laboratory

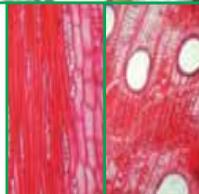
in Nepal was established in 1978 at NHPL. Tissue culture is a tool to propagate rare and endangered plant in the enormous amount. It can produce superior quality of planting materials. Tissue culture section of this institute has developed protocol of over 115 species including ornamental, vegetable, tree and



medicinal plant. This section has also conserved culture of some valuable plant species. This laboratory has been providing service especially for B.Sc and M.Sc Bio-technology students.

**Anatomy section** helps for species

identification, detect adulteration in wood and timber, and suggests whether or not the wood is useful for given purpose by the help their internal structure. One of the oldest section of this institute, has so far studied the wood anatomy of more than 136 plants of the country. It continues to serve the Department of Forests in identifying species from the wood samples it confiscates quite often. Now, there are more than 200 wood samples in a wood museum of NHPL.



**Medicinal plant Section** attempts to

document and domesticate wild herbs. It develops agro technology for such species and conducts feasibility study for their extension in fields.



*Lilium nepalensis*

**Digitization of Herbarium specimens:**

We have planned digitizing image of all species of KATH. This is a pioneer work in Asia. After

completion of the work, Botanists or researchers may have opportunity to access our specimens from any part of the world. Besides this, it will help for preservation of our specimens for future.



Beside various laboratories, this institute has

a **Library** which is the best library in Nepal for botanical information especially for flora. It has collection of 2900 books and 2000 copies of different journals.



**Digitised Specimen**

"Let's Explore and Conserve our Biodiversity"

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