

## DRYNARIA QUERCIFOLIA – AN ANTIFERTILITY AGENT

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Received: 19 December, 1995

Accepted: 22 December 1996

**ABSTRACT:** Which belongs to the family polypodiaceae is used as an antifertility agent among Kadars of Anamalai Hills Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent time Medico-ethno-botanical studies are on rapid increase, the primitive groups have their own indigenous methods of traditional remedies using various plant based drugs (Rajan, 1992). As per the reported literature on *Drynaria quercifolia* the rhizome is bitter and astringent, aqueous extracts show antibacterial activity (Anonymous, 1952 & 1986). In phthisis hectic fever dyspepsia and cough (Kirtikar & Basu 1935). The decoction of the plant is used for typhoid fever (Nadkarni, 1982 and Dixit & Vohra, 1984).

The Anamalai Hills popularly known as elephant hills are inhabited by different ethnic groups like, Kadars, Malasar, Madhuvas and pulaiyas. The Kadars are negritoid short statured dark skin people with platyrrhine noses, they speak a mixture of corrupt Tamil and Malayalam. Their population size was 1500 (Census 1981) found in the forest areas of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. They are nomadic and seminomadic in nature and depend on minor forest produce like wax honey myrobalans (*Emblica fischeri*) ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) deer horns elephant tusks rattans and also they cultivate some food crops, their method of cultivation is primitive and

limited (Thurston & Rangachari, 1987 and Rajendran & Henry, 1944). They consume the food items like wild yam tubers (*Dioscorea bulbiflora*), bamboo seed (*Bambusa bambos*), Sheep fowls, rock snakes (*Python*) deer porcupines, rats (wild) Pigs monkeys. They are endowed with a hard well-nourished body (Thurston & Rangachari, 1987).

Medico-ethno-botanical information collected from the tribe Kadars of Anamalai hills, Coimbatore district. It lies between 76° 43' and 77° 26' E and 10° 13' and 10° 32' N the elevation ranges from 100 M to 2750 M (Fischer 1921).

The information gathered is critically screened with the available literature (Jain, 1991), which reveals that the use of this plant forming a new report.

*D. quercifolia* (L) J. Sm in Hook J Bot 3:398. 1841; Bedd Ferns S. India t: 187. 1864 & Handb. Ferns Br. India 341 t. 191. 1883. *Polypodium quercifolium* L. Sp Pl 2: 1087. 1753 (Polypodiaceae).

Rhizome creeping 2-5 cm thick, densely scaly, scales Ca 7x1mm, closely dentate ciliate dark brown Nest leaves 20-35 cm

long and as much as wide, lobed 1/3 -1/2 way to the centre, lobes rounded, stipes of foliage leaves 1- 2cm apart, 10-20 cm tall 5mm thick glabrous, grooved above, edges of grooves winged laminae pinnately lobed oblong upto 25-40x20-30 cm terminated by a pinnule similar to the laterals one, base decurrent; pinnules 5-10 pairs, basal –most one much shorter and smaller than the rest middle pinnales 13-18 x 3-4 cm, oblong-lanceolate, decurrent , edges entire, apex acute or obtuse; costae grooved above. Veins raised above and below interconnected by veinlets; areoles including a single free – lamina coriaceous light green glabrous.

#### **HABITAT**

Occasionally seen on fully or partially exposed rocks and tree trunks from 900-1500M

#### **USES**

The fresh rhizome is mixed with water and made into a semisolid paste, administered orally to women in the early morning an empty stomach for 3-4 consecutive days once per day during menstrual period.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We thank Dr. A,N Henry, scientist Emeritus BSI, coimbatore and Dr. D.P Rastogi director, CCRH, New Delhi for their encouragement during the study.

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