

**The Sarawak Museum Journal****Vol. LIX No. 80****December 2004****ISSN: 0375-3050****E-ISSN: 3036-0188**

Citation: YMeekiong Kalu. (2004). Ferns and Fern-Allies. The Sarawak Museum Journal, LIX (80): 187-192

FERNS AND FERN-ALLIES**Meekiong Kalu**

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ABSTRACT

A total of 120 species in 55 genera and 26 families of pteridophytes are reported within the Bau Limestone Area. These represent approximately 20% of the pteridophyte flora of Sarawak. Polypodiaceae has the most species: 21 species.

Keywords: Bau, ferns, fern-allies, limestone, pteridophytes

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Meekiong, K. (2004) Ferns and fern-allies. In: *Sarawak Bau Limestone Biodiversity* (eds H.S. Yong, F.S.P. Ng and E.E.L. Yen). *The Sarawak Museum Journal* Vol. LIX, No. 80 (New Series); Special Issue No. 6: 187-192.

INTRODUCTION

Ferns and fern-allies were collected along a trail to the summit in 10-15 m strips on both sides of the trails and also randomly in the study areas during preliminary surveys. Specimens are kept in the Sarawak Biodiversity Centre Herbarium and some are maintained as living collections in the SBC nursery. Herbarium specimens were identified at the Forest Research Centre, Kuching and with the help of keys by Parris *et al.* (1984) and publications such as Piggot (1988), Paris *et al.* (1997a), Paris *et al.* (1997b) Parris *et al.* (1992), So (1994), and Sukup (1998).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This Project recorded 23 families, 52 genera and 98 species of true ferns and three families, four genera and 21 species of fern-allies, making a total of 119 species, which is approximately 12% of the estimated species of ferns and fern allies in Malaysia and about 20% of the species recorded in Sarawak.

Dennstaedtiaceae, Dicksoniaceae, Dipteridaceae, Gleicheniaceae, Oleandraceae and Ophioglossaceae were represented by single species. Eleven families were represented by 2-4 species and seven families by 5-8 species. Sellaginellaceae and Polypodiaceae were the most speciose, with 11 and 21 species each (details in Table 1). *Selaginella* and *Asplenium* were the most well represented genera, with 11 and eight species each and