

THELYPTERIDACEAE

NEW COMBINATIONS IN *THELYPTERIS*

Holttum in J. S. Afr. Bot. 40: 123–168 (1974) stated that the estimated 1 000 species in the family Thelypteridaceae can either be regarded as belonging to a single genus, *Thelypteris*, or they can be placed in a number of different genera. In Blumea 19: 17–52 (1971) he adopted the latter course by grouping the 450–500 Asian-Malesian species into various genera. “For comparative purposes”, Holttum (1974) also classified the 55 African species of the family Thelypteridaceae according to this scheme. He added, however, that “. . . for persons who are concerned only with Africa, or a part of Africa, it is reasonable to adopt one genus *Thelypteris*, as Prof. Schelpe has done in his account of the ferns in *Flora Zambesiaca* (1970)”.

I agree with this approach, with the possible exception of *Ampelopteris*, a monotypic genus, which can easily be recognized by the unicellular forked hairs and numerous gemmae on the fronds.

The characters used to differentiate between the genera of Thelypteridaceae (pinna veins anastomosing

or not, reduction of lower pinnae, hairiness or scaliness of fronds) are, in my opinion, not sufficient in the African context to justify division into genera. The presence or absence of indusia may be useful for subgeneric division, but will have to be studied in conjunction with other characters.

Holttum (1974) pointed out that some of the African taxa described in that paper still lack names in *Thelypteris*. For two of the South African species these combinations are made below, as they have not been proposed by Schelpe (in press):

***Thelypteris altissima* (Holt.) Vorster comb. nov.**
Christella altissima Holtt. in J. S. Afr. Bot. 40: 141 (1974).

***Thelypteris prolifera* (Retz.) Vorster comb. nov.**
Hemionitis prolifera Retz., Obs. Bot. 6:38 (1791).
Ampelopteris prolifera (Retz.) Copel., Gen. Fil. 144 (1947).

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