

BURIADIA SEWARDII SAHNI: THE CORRECT NAME OF *BURIADIA HETEROPHYLLA* FEISTMANTEL

The nomenclature of the leafy coniferous shoots from the Lower Gondwana (Karharbari formation) of India that SEWARD and SAHNI placed in their new genus *Buriadia* in 1920 is confused and needs to be clarified. These shoots have received two names, *Buriadia heterophylla* FEISTMANTEL (SEWARD & SAHNI, 1920) and *B. sewardii* sp. nov. (SAHNI, 1928). The former name, though it has priority, is ambiguous and invalid, though it has been used by number of workers in recent years (FLORIN 1944; PANT & NAUTIYAL, 1967). We believe that *Buriadia sewardii* is the correct name for the plant.

The problem of nomenclature developed from FEISTMANTEL's erroneous identification of some fossil leafy shoots from the Karharbari beds of Giridih Coalfield, India as *Voltzia heterophylla* in 1879. However, the type material of *Voltzia heterophylla* was from the Triassic of Europe and had been originally described by BRONGNIART (1828). SEWARD and SAHNI (1920) realized that the Indian conifer was not a *Voltzia*, therefore, they created a new genus *Buriadia* for the Indian forms. But for some unknown reason they attributed their new binomial, *Buriadia heterophylla* to FEISTMANTEL instead of naming it as a new species. Had they merely written "new species" after it, instead of using FEISTMANTEL's name as its author, there would have been no difficulty. This, however, they did not do.

The intention of SEWARD and SAHNI (1920) when they named their new plant is not clear. Some investigators assume that they intended to name a new species, pointing out that in creating a new genus the selection of *heterophylla* was entirely appropriate because it was descriptive. But if this was their intention, why did they attribute it to Feistmantel who had no part in the formulation of the name? Then too, why did SAHNI later decided that a new name was necessary if the plant had been properly named in the first place? It seems more likely that SEWARD and SAHNI merely wished to retain *heterophylla* in deference to FEISTMANTEL, because that was the trivial name he had used in the first place. That of course resulted in the ambiguous situation. SEWARD and SAHNI's new name for the Indian plant did not alter the generic status of the original European material which remained a valid species of *Voltzia*. It did, however, place the one species *heterophylla* in both *Voltzia* and *Buriadia*, which of course is nomenclatorially absurd. SAHNI, therefore, was quite right when he decided that a new name was in order for the Indian conifer and in proposing *sewardii* as the new trivial name. Our conclusion is that *Buriadia sewardii* SAHNI is the correct name for the conifers described under *Buriadia heterophylla*.

***Buriadia sewardii* Sahni, 1928**

- 1879 *Voltzia heterophylla* Brongn.: Feistmantel, p. 28, pl. 22, figs. 1-6; pl. 23, figs. 1-5, pl. 24, fig. 4, pl. 25, figs. 1-3.
 1879 *Albertia* sp.: Feistmantel, p. 29, pl. 24, fig. 3, pl. 26, fig. 2.
 1920 *Buriadia heterophylla* Feistmantel: Seward & Sahni p. 12, pl. 2, figs. 20-25a.
 1928 *Buriadia sewardii* sp. nov.: Sahni p. 6, pl. 1, fig. 1-3.
 1940 *Buriadia heterophylla* Seward & Sahni: Florin p. 310, pls. 161-162, figs. 10-23.

- 1944 *Buriadia heterophylla* Seward & Sahni: Florin, p. 376, text-figs. 11a-d, 17a-f, 23a-b.
1967 *Buriadia heterophylla* (Feistmantel) Seward & Sahni: Pant & Nautiyal, p. 27, pls. 4-12, fig. 1-78.

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