

# **Visit to the Palaeobotany Laboratory, University of Calcutta**

**Organized by: Department of Botany, Raidighi College**

**Date of Visit: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Venue: Plant Fossil Repository Centre (Palaeobotany Laboratory), Ballygunge Science College Campus, University of Calcutta**

## **Number of Participants:**

- Students: 2 (Semester 4, Major)
- Teachers: 2

## **Introduction**

The Department of Botany, Raidighi College, organized an educational visit to the Palaeobotany Laboratory located within the Ballygunge Science College Campus of the University of Calcutta on 11th July 2025. The visit was undertaken as part of the department's academic enrichment initiatives to provide students with exposure to practical and specialized branches of botanical science.

## **Objective of the Visit**

The primary objective of the visit was to acquaint students with fossil plants, the significance of palaeobotanical research, and various techniques employed in the study of ancient plant remains. This field of study is crucial for understanding plant evolution, past climates, and ancient ecosystems.

## **Overview of the Visit**

The team from Raidighi College included two 4th-semester major Botany students, accompanied by two faculty members from the department. On arrival, the participants were welcomed by the staff of the Palaeobotany Laboratory and guided through the Plant Fossil Repository Centre.

The session began with an introductory lecture by a senior research scholar of the laboratory, who explained the scope and relevance of palaeobotany. Students learned how fossilized plant materials are collected, prepared, identified, and preserved. The techniques highlighted included the preparation of thin sections of fossil specimens, the use of microscopes for analysis, and methods for dating the samples.

The students also had the opportunity to observe a variety of well-preserved fossil specimens, including ancient gymnosperms and pteridophytes. Visual aids and practical demonstrations helped them understand the morphological features used in fossil identification and classification.

## **Key Takeaways**

- Students gained firsthand knowledge about the methods used to investigate plant fossils.

- They developed a conceptual understanding of how palaeobotanical data contributes to reconstructing Earth's vegetation history and climate changes over geological time.
- Career prospects in palaeobotany, archaeobotany, and related interdisciplinary research were discussed, opening up new areas of interest for the students.

### **Outcome of the Visit**

The visit successfully enriched the academic experience of the participating students by broadening their understanding of plant science beyond the conventional curriculum. It also encouraged them to explore research-oriented careers in palaeobotany and related fields. Faculty members noted a heightened curiosity among the students, which is expected to positively influence their academic engagement and future pursuits in botany.

### **Conclusion**

The educational tour to the Palaeobotany Laboratory was a valuable experience for both students and faculty. The Department of Botany, Raidighi College, extends its sincere gratitude to the University of Calcutta for providing this learning opportunity. Future collaborations and similar visits are anticipated to further enhance the department's academic initiatives.

