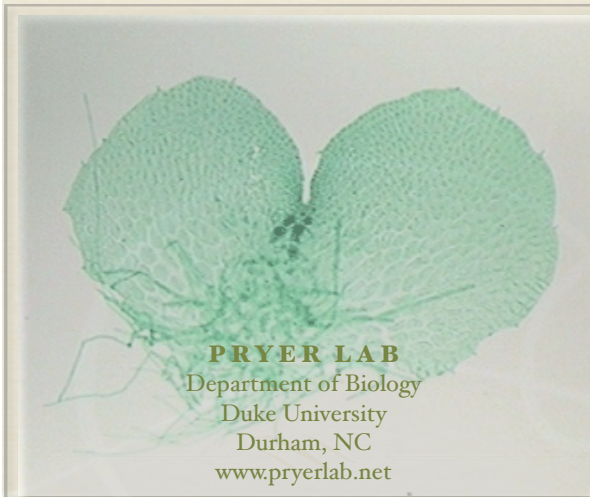


Scientists from various fields have often looked to popular culture for inspiration, sometimes immortalizing their favorite musicians, artists, and writers with scientific names. This new fern genus named in honor of **Lady Gaga** celebrates her articulate and fervent defense of equality and individual expression in today's society.



Paws Up Forever!

Young fern leaves are inrolled into a Gaga claw prior to unfurling..



PRYER LAB
Department of Biology
Duke University
Durham, NC
www.pryerlab.net

A NEW FERN GENUS



GAGA

named in honor of the American
pop singer-songwriter-performer,
Lady Gaga



GAGA

The new fern genus *Gaga* includes about 21 recognized species of ferns, two of which are new to science. One of these new species will be named in honor of Lady Gaga's family (*Gaga germanotta*), and the other in honor of her "little monsters" (*Gaga monstraparva*).

The biology of these ferns is exceptionally obscure and blurred by sexual crossing between species (hybridization), high chromosome numbers (polyploidy), and asexuality leading to offspring that are genetically identical to the parent plant.

Because Lady Gaga speaks to our need to understand and celebrate broad differences within the human species, we hereby provide her with a scientific namesake that characterizes the struggle to understand the intricate biology underlying cryptic patterns of diversity.

THE NEW FERN GENUS *GAGA*

By naming this new fern genus for Lady Gaga we support her voice as a champion for justice, compassion, understanding, and equality. We also hope to draw attention to the beauty of botany and further inspire her art and fashion. Perhaps this could even spawn a renaissance in the study of plants by her "little monsters".

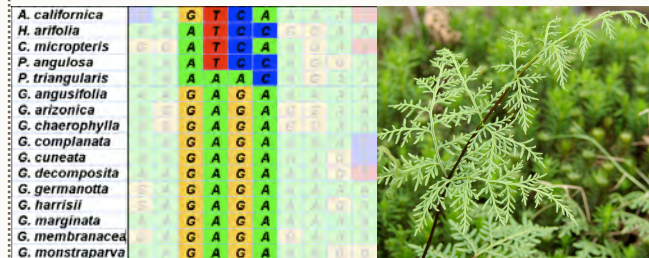


Fieldbook notes from Costa Rica indicated this specimen was unusual...

The delicate beauty of this lacy fern masks the cryptic diversity in the genus *Gaga*

DISCOVERY IN THE FIELD

This unusual species of *Gaga* was originally identified by graduate students as an "odd" member of the *Cheilanthes marginata* complex in 2009. Through detailed DNA studies we have shown it to be a new species that will be named in honor of Lady Gaga's family (*Gaga germanotta*).



G-A-G-A is a unique molecular signature in *Gaga* DNA, and not its relatives...



New to science: *Gaga germanotta*

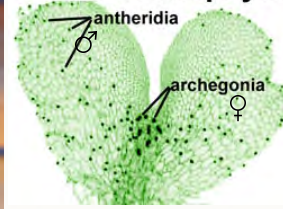
THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

DNA evidence warrants segregation of what was referred to as the "*Cheilanthes marginata*" group into a new genus, to be called *Gaga*. Rampant speciation forces have obscured dynamic patterns of diversity and blurred cryptic boundaries among species. The GAGA signature is even in the DNA...



Lady Gaga's outstanding bodysuit at her 2010 Grammy Performance

Fern Gametophyte



Was Lady Gaga wearing an ultra-magnified bisexual fern gametophyte? see the resemblance?

GAGA'S 2010 GRAMMY PERFORMANCE

At the 2010 Grammy's, Lady Gaga wore a bodysuit from the Armani Privé collection that truly resembles a fern gametophyte - the sexual phase of the fern's life cycle. When a fern spore germinates, it develops into a bisexual, heart-shaped organism that bears both male and female sex organs.