

XIV. THE VEGETATION OF THE PALE GREEN PATCHES IN THE MOUNTAIN FOREST
ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MT. PANGERANGO (WEST JAVA)

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Everybody visiting the Cibodas Mountain Garden must have observed that on the North side of Mt. Pangerango there are roughly between 2300 and 2700 m several sizeable pale green patches visible in the dark green montane forest. They were never visited and it intrigued me to know their vegetation which clearly must differ from the surrounding forest. End May 1950 a rintis was made from Kandangbadak at the base of the Pangerango proper westwards to a large northern spur of Mt. Pangerango, the so-called Geger Prut, over which one can descend to Cibereum from where the trail to Cibodas can be resumed. The rintis was prepared by Mr. Verheul and Mr. Nurta, curators of the Cibodas Garden. This appeared to be quite an effort, as the rintis went up and down crossing many small ravines. Incidentally we found between the second and third ravine in a lighter place Berberis wallichiana and Anaphalis maxima, both then new for Mt. Gedeh, the latter a very rare species. At times we had to tunnel our way through very large stands of Gleichenia (paku andam), consisting of G. linearis, G. longissima and G. volubilis. These stands are characteristic for earthslides.

After three hours having crossed eleven small ravines we reached a singular open sloping rocky plateau, which we called Tegal padas, from where we had a clear view on Cibodas and Rarahan; the altitude was ca. 2600 m. The dimensions of the tegal were estimated at 200—300 by 100—200 m. Soil was almost absent, the stony surface consisted of cemented irregular gravel. A tiny stream cut through it, of which the bottom was a solid dark glassy rock. The preliminary conclusion was that the structure was a lava stream overlain by lahar material. For about 50% the palish rocky surface was visible with a large number of ground lichens identified by Mr. Groenhart as belonging to Stereocaulon, one Baeomyces and two Lecidiaceae. The vegetation was sparse: there were no Gleichenias and no grasses. All woody plants were dwarfed: Rhododendron retusum, Gaultheria fragrantissima, G. nummularioides, Symplocos sp., Eurya sp., Vaccinium varingifolium. Of herbaceous plants I noted several species of Lycopodium (L. cernuum, L. clavatum, L. volubile), Dianella javanica, Nepenthes sp. Along the brook were some specimens of Myriactis nepalensis, Valeriana hardwickii, Thalictrum javanicum, Gahnia javanica and Astilbe indica, obviously descended by water dispersal. Specimens of Leptospermum flavescens flowered in 20 cm high dwarf shrubs.

As a sign of recognition from below we succeeded to plant two poles for stretching a tikar of 2.5 m²; it could later even be seen with the naked eye from a parking lot near Cibodas and proved indeed to be situated in one of the pale green patches.

Following the rintis westwards Geger Prut was reached after one hour, and descending along Geger Prut to Cibereum took two hours.

Summarizing: the pale green patches consist partly of very large Gleichenia stands obviously on earthslides, but mostly of very sterile lahar-covered lava-streams with a very sparse dwarf vegetation, for about 50% consisting of bare rocky ground with many lichens.