

## I. EDITORIAL NEWS

It is with great pleasure that I am able again to present a cornucopia of mixed articles on the Malesian Flora. The exhortation during the Flora Malesiana Symposium in Sydney by Baas that it is “easier to squeeze water from a stone than to get a contribution to the Bulletin” has sorted some effect. Still, it is unmistakable that much more is happening in the region than I can report.

### *This issue:*

This is the last time that we will have the chapter on PROSEA in its present form. By the end of 2002 the last 3 volumes of the series are expected to have been published, and further activities will be coordinated by the Regional Network of six South East Asian countries. We look forward to future contributions from the Network and National PROSEA Offices, all the more appropriate now PROSEA is officially represented on the Board of Flora Malesiana. The Wageningen team has turned to another continent, Africa, with a similar program, PROTA (Plant Resources of Tropical Africa) and a comparable series of books. I wish them all success!

The biography of Rumphius, ‘15 June 2002, 300th anniversary of Rumphius’ death’, included in the previous issue received much positive comment for which my thanks, and posed one interesting enquiry: what are the cocos pearls (*Mestica calappa*) that he described? I have tried to at least partly solve the riddle.

The four main vegetation types of Mt Akiki, one of the higher mountains of Luzon, are briefly described by Buot Jr. The summit zone has an exceptional dwarf bamboo grassland dominated by *Sinarundinaria (Yushania) niitakayamensis*.

The ever-increasing use of molecular methods to unravel relationships has led to a new view of the phylogeny and delimitations of genera and families. Some, with sadness, surprise, or reluctance, have seen the demise of for instance the Asclepiadaceae, Flacourtiaceae, most of the malvalean families, the larger part of the Verbenaceae, the placement of the Pittosporaceae between Araliaceae and umbellifers, etc. Stevens is maintaining a website that includes morphology, anatomy, chemistry, chromosome numbers, etc. as well.

A soft-spoken New Guinea botanist has died, Ted Henty, well-beloved by those who had the fortune to know him. Four of those have contributed a tribute.

Langenberger provides some notes on Philippine mangrove species, especially on *Rhizophora*, and shows that a non-conventional superficial view and rejection of present-day superstition may produce some surprises.

A new herbarium has been started in Los Baños, a description of its aims and holdings is described by Buot Jr. including a short-list of publications relevant to the flora and vegetation of the Philippines and Mt Makiling.

Saw & Soepadmo discuss the Flora Malesiana and its relevance to the Flora of Malaysia which are useful for the other Malesian countries as well. They give arguments why the

writing of Floras should be supported that may help to convince administrators and even fellow-scientists of their necessity.

A comparison of the floras of Sumatra and Peninsular Malaysia is provided by Kiew. She states what insiders already knew: the flora of Sumatra compared to Peninsular Malaysia (and Java) is very poorly known and additional collecting is urgently needed. I think that distribution maps for species there do not provide the distribution of the species, but that of their collectors!

*Progress in Flora Malesiana:*

The volume (Series I, Vol. 16) with the Cymodoceaceae, Potamogetonaceae, Zosteraceae (C. den Hartog & G. Wiegleb), Caryophyllaceae (K. Larsen), and Cunoniaceae (H.C. Fortune Hopkins & R.D. Hoogland†) is in press.

The genus *Ficus* of the Moraceae will hopefully be published within a year.

Work on the Araceae is temporised because of another job for the coordinator.

The time estimated for a completion of the Flora Malesiana must be extended again, as Govaerts (2002 ('2001')) has estimated the number of Malesian species of seed plants already described at 50,715. Roos (1998) had it at 42,000. As many genera have not yet been revised and a conservative estimate is that at least 10% of the taxa are yet undescribed, the actual number will therefore be considerably higher again.

*Miscellaneous:*

The years 2001 and 2002 have been true milestones in Malesian orchidology owing to the publication of several major works that have been long in preparation: *Orchids of Sumatra* by J. Comber (2001); *Orchids of Sarawak* by T.E. Beaman, J.J. Wood, R.S. Beaman & J.H. Beaman (2001); *The orchids of the Philippines* by J. Cootes (2001); *Dendrochilum of Borneo* by J.J. Wood (2001); *The genus Coelogyne: a synopsis* by D. Clayton (2002); and *Phalaenopsis: a monograph* by E.A. Christenson (2001). A serious but welcome attack on the purse of anyone interested in this plant family!

It is a curious experience to note that many questions on literature references, reviews, revisions, etc., cross my desk, that might so easily be solved if the 12 indices to the publications of the past 53 years provided by the Bulletin had been consulted. There's really a goldmine there! Perhaps half an hour of checking these can lead to a collection of basic and not so basic references.

The Sixth Flora Malesiana Symposium will be held in Los Baños, Philippines, probably in September 2004, to be organised by Dr. E.S. Fernando, address: Director, Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystem, University of the Philippines Los Baños, College, Laguna, Philippines 4031, e-mail: esf@mudspring.uplb.edu.ph

I wish you a pleasant reading and hope that ideas for future contributions may be sown. Water from a stone ...

J.F. Veldkamp