

BOOK REVIEW

FLORA OF PENINSULA MALAYSIA. SERIES 1: FERNS AND LYCOPHYTES. VOLUME 1. Edited by B.S.Parris, R. Kiew, R.C.K. Chung, L.G. Saw & E. Soepadmo. 2010. (Malaysian Forest Records No. 48). Pp. 250, 12 black & white figs, 18 col. plates. 256 x 800mm. Forest Research Institute Malaysia, 52109 Kepong, Selangor Darul, Ehsan, Malaysia; Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia. ISBN:978-967-5221-24-8 (v.1). Available from Forest Research Institute Malaysia.

The *Flora of Peninsula Malaysia* is an initiative of the Malaysian Government as part of its commitment to biodiversity conservation, and it is supporting employment and training for taxonomists, fieldwork and overseas collaboration. The *Flora* is founded on thorough taxonomic review, including examination of type material, and includes ecological information. A strong focus of the project is new botanical exploration, coupled with taxonomic training, to gather information from areas where there has been little collecting in the past and review old records, to acquire up-to-date information on the status of plants, their diversity and current distributions, in order to assess conservation needs.

The last published fern flora of Peninsula Malaysia was that of Holttum in 1968 (and covered ferns but not fern allies), but he continued to publish on ferns of this region during his long retirement at Kew, contributing a number of family accounts for *Flora Malesiana*.

The Volume starts with a conspectus by Barbara Parris of Orders, Families and Genera, to reflect the changes in classification of ferns and fern 'allies' that have emerged from recent phylogenies based on morphological and molecular data. The editors broadly follow the treatment of Smith *et al.* (2006) in placing Equisetaceae and Psilotaceae with the ferns, rather than with lycophytes, but have modified the treatment for ferns, e.g. Pteridaceae is divided into five monophyletic families, Parkeriaceae, Adiantaceae, Cryptogrammaceae, Sinopteridaceae and Pteridaceae; Polypodiaceae is divided into three families. Loxogrammaceae, Polypodiaceae and Grammitidaceae. Justification for the changes is provided.

A further chapter by Parris deals with the history of botanical collecting in Peninsula Malaysia, followed by a chapter on species assessment and conservation by L.S.L. Chua of the Forest Research Institute Malaysia.

Keys to families, genera and species are provided. Each taxonomic account in the *Flora* includes information on nomenclature and type material, detailed description, notes on distribution together with a distribution map, conservation assessment based on the current IUCN guidelines and notes on ecology. There are useful black and white figures and coloured plates that illustrate the variation within families, and some fern habitats.

Volume 1 covers accounts for 9 families, 21 genera and 100 species, and includes Selaginellaceae, Psilotaceae, Equisetaceae, Osmundaceae, Matoniaceae, Schizaceae,

Cibotiaceae, Loxogrammaceae and Grammitidaceae.

The authors and editors are to be congratulated on a beautiful, scholarly and very valuable work.

REFERENCE

Holttum, R.E. 1968. *Revised Flora of Malaya*. Vol. 2 Ferns. 2nd ed. Government Printing Office, Singapore.

Mary Gibby