

REVIEW

RUTH KIEW: **Begonias of Peninsular Malaysia**. Natural History Publications (Borneo) Sdn. Bhd., Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia, 2005. xi, 308 pp., illus. ISBN 983-812-086-3. Price: RM 195 (Malaysia), SGD 100 (Singapore), USD 85 (USA), GBP 40 (United Kingdom), EUR 64 (Europe).

Ruth Kiew and her team (Zainal Mustafa (drawings), Wendy Gibbs (water colour paintings), Yap Kok-Sun, Ali Ibrahim & Tan Jiew-Hoe (photographs)) has produced a magnificent book about the begonias of Peninsular Malaysia. The book is richly illustrated by a large amount of very good colour photographs, black-and-white drawings and some beautiful water colour paintings.

The book starts with two introductory chapters, which describe general aspects of begonias, including notes on leaf anatomy, some scan photographs of seeds, notes on vegetative propagation, seasonality, habitat, distribution and conservation. The main part of the book consist of the description of the genus (a discussion of the sections present in Peninsular Malaysia is given in an appendix), the key to the species and the species descriptions. In total 54 species (and some varieties) are treated, including 12 new species (+ 1 new variety). All species are honoured by a full-length description with one, sometimes two or three line drawings, one or several colour photographs and in a few cases a water colour painting. Together the descriptions, the illustrations and accompanying notes give a very good idea of the variability of the species and of the genus as it occurs in Peninsular Malaysia.

The author and her team deserve my well-meant congratulations. The book is a must for everyone interested in Begonias.

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