

IX. SYMPOSIA, CONGRESSES, SOCIETIES, MEETINGS

(continued from page 40)

NOTE TO ORGANIZERS:

Please submit your announcement to this Bulletin as early as possible! Several made here were received too late for interested readers to make use of. After the event please send a summary of the doings, and/or the Proceedings, if any.

Settlement of aliens was the subject of a colloquium held at Paris by the Société de Biogéographie in October 1982, entitled "L'homme, facteur biogéographique", now published in the C. R. des Séances de la Société, vol. 60 (1984) 1—72. Subjects were Buddleja at Paris, Acacia in the French Mediterranean, some marine algae, and reintroduction of menaced or vanished indigenous plant species in their original habitat for the benefit of conservation.

Significance of species diversity in tropical forest ecosystems. An IUBS / UNESCO workshop was held in Paris from 24—26 October 1983, the first of a series, part of the IUBS 'Decade of the tropics'. A draft report of the proceedings was seen from which we cite.

As the most species rich of biological systems tropical rain forests merit study in their own right. To what extent does the species richness relate to complexity of structure and ecological function? How did the species richness originate? How would these systems change in the absence of the larger number of species? A sufficient amount of information on species richness and diversity of the tropical forests is available so that we can identify those areas where scientific advance is possible. Some of the most interesting themes are:

1. Is species richness controlled directly (through distribution) by physical factors of the environment, or is it the result of intrinsic properties of the biological species and their interactions?
2. Is animal diversity causally related to floristic, chemical, or structural plant diversity?
3. What is the relation between patterns of speciation, dispersal and habitat distribution?

From these questions the workshop developed specific questions for three major ecological groups: higher plants (primary producers), vertebrates and invertebrates (consumers and predators) and soil fauna and flora (decomposers). Some common concerns and approaches were principally identified. There is obviously need for:

1. An increasing number of surveys and inventories, especially in threatened areas.
2. An increasing number of investigations where species richness, diversity and ecosystems are studied simultaneously.
3. More detailed studies of the biology of individual species and species groups.
4. Greater taxonomic expertise and the development of taxonomic outlets through the tropics.

This diversity Group under the direction of Ms. Dr. G. Maury-Lechon (P) was one of several activities of the 'Decade' program. The group planned to meet again in 1985 in Manaus, Brazil, to consider the results actually available on species richness in tropical forest ecosystems and their significance, especially to major ongoing projects.

I like to add here a theory explaining the origin of species richness in areas with the equably warm climate as is found in the tropics only. In other areas pests are controlled by the climate. A cold and/or dry season means that a large part of the population of for instance insects dies and that only a few remain to build up the population of the next season. In the tropics the population is maintained at a high level provided that there are enough host plants close enough for the insects to reach. This means that it is of an evolutionary advantage to host plants to maintain a low population density and a sufficiently large enough distance between the individuals. This is exactly the case in the tropical rain forest ecosystem. It also means that there is room for many more species than in other ecosystems. The most uniform forests are those under cold and temperate conditions, the Conifer forests. Many species of plants means that there are more niches for animals as well. Even the number of pest species or parasites can become larger than in other ecosystems. It seems worthwhile to investigate this theory further. — H.P. Nooteboom

The Association of Systematic Biologists of the Philippines held their second annual Meeting on June 23, 1984, at the National Research Council of the Philippines Auditorium. A scientific session was held on the role of systematics in environmental assessment.

At the IUFRO Planning Workshop for tropical Asia held in Sri Lanka in July 1984 Malaysia and the Philippines have been identified as the lead countries to coordinate a rattan research network

Eighth Aberdeen/Hull Symposium on Malesian ecology was held in Aberdeen between September 21 and 24, 1984. The subject was 'Dynamics of tree populations in tropical forest' and about 30 participants attended, including Mr. J. WYATT-SMITH. Methodologies and preliminary results of long-term enumerations in natural forest were discussed, including up-to-date analyses of major data sets from

three continents among which those of Sg. Menyala, Malaysia. The papers revealed fascinating similarities in the processes of these diverse sites and the continued maintenance of these valuable records promise unrivalled opportunities for understanding the natural regulation of forest structure and composition. It is intended to publish the proceedings of the meeting possibly as a special issue of the *Journal of Tropical Ecology*.

A Symposium on rattans organized by the Rattan Information Centre, (RIC), Kepong, in October 2 to 4, 1984, was held in Kuala Lumpur. Some 130 people of 10 nationalities listened to the 22 papers presented, dealing with propagation, nursing practices, ecology, silviculture, conservation, etc., etc. The proceedings are being edited by Messrs. N. MANOKARAN and K.M. WONG (KEP) and should have been published in early 1985.

The Fern Society of the Philippines holds its meetings every third Sunday of the month. Sessions on propagation and culture and exhibitions are often included. An annual fern show highlighted the activities on October 3, 1984, at the Patio Botanico, National Museum. A series of lectures was also scheduled, which included such topics as 'The ecology of Philippine ferns' (Ms. Dr. C.C. JOAQUIN) and on 'Azolla, the nitrogen fixing aquatic ferns. Its biology and potential as alternative sources of nitrogen of lowland ricefields' (Dr. P.C. PAYAWAL).

International Symposium on Botanic Gardens of the tropics: their roles and future in a changing world. December 17—19, 1984, Penang (Malaysia).

During the Symposium it was said that many botanical gardens appear to be undergoing an identity crisis. This may be true: there have been at least four symposia in ten years about the problems, roles and goals of botanical gardens (1974, Kuala Lumpur, see F. M. Bull. 30, p. 2801, and 32: p. 3206; 1978, Kew; 1979, Berlin; and this symposium). Many of the original aims and functions of botanical gardens, especially those of tropical countries, have changed over the years. However, many have not yet found a meaningful and relevant role to play. The Botanic Gardens of Penang, also called the Waterfall Gardens, were founded in 1884, and the Symposium was held in commemoration of the centenary. The Penang Gardens have an almost entirely recreational role now and it is obviously the intention to rehabilitate them. It was hoped that the Symposium will play a modest role in stimulating interest in the Gardens as a botanical garden.

There must be something botanical in a botanical garden or 'botanic gardens', as most speakers said: Kew influence!), but what can it mean? Prof. R.E. HOLTUM, who gave the keynote address, said that it must mean that plant sciences of one kind or another are studied there. The pure botanical research function is in many botanical gardens obviously absent and it can be replaced by more applied botany, e.g. horticultural research or plant breeding as the most important function.

The Symposium started with a survey of Asian garden situations (Mr. S.C. SHARMA about India, Dr. Usep SOETISNA about Indonesia, Dr. R. DEL ROSARIO about the Philippines, Mr. Hardial SINGH about Singapore, Mr. H. RAJAPAKSE about Sri Lanka, Dr. T. SMITINAND about Thailand), but the other sessions were for a large part devoted to the situation in West Malaysia (where c. 50 out of c. 70 participants came from). Penang, the campus of the University at Bangi, Rimba Ilmu of

the University of Malaya, the F.R.I. Arboretum at Kepong, the planned National Arboretum Taman Kiara at Kuala Lumpur, they all represented their plans, hopes, frustrations, developments and difficulties. Remarkable is the fact that all these gardens (except Penang) are situated in or near the capital, Kuala Lumpur: other cities in West Malaysia do not appear to possess a botanical garden.

About education, very little was said during the Symposium but conservation was amply discussed (papers by Ms. Dr. R. KIEW and Dr. SOEPADMO especially). Botanical gardens cannot only be the last refuge but also a starting place where endangered species can be multiplied and sold, so that their availability and cheapness will discourage commercial collecting. This will promote their survival in the wild.

It was decided to increase cooperation between the Malaysian botanical gardens and arboreta. It was decided to form a Southeast Asian regional group of the botanical gardens. In a later stage this may become associated with IABG.

The Proceedings of the Symposium, containing the text of the c. 25 papers will be published. Information: Dr. Leong Yueh KWONG, School of Biological Sciences, Univ. Sains Malaysia, Penang, W. Malaysia. — C. Kalkman.

The 5th Inter-congress of the Pacific Science Association was held between February 3 to 7, 1985, in Manila, the Philippines. The botany session included papers on the geological history of the Philippines (Dr. G. G. BALCO, Bureau of Mines, Quezon City), the ecology of the Philippine Dipterocarp vegetation (Dr. P. ROJO, CLP), phytogeographical relationships between the Philippines, Taiwan and Botel Tobago (Dr. C.E. CHANG, Pingtung, Taiwan) and Borneo via Palawan (Dr. C.E. RIDSDALE, L) and the taxonomic and geographic relationships of Philippine Vitaceae (Dr. A. LATIFF, UKMS). A resolution was adopted that areas on Palawan should be identified as sites for National Parks and that funding for further exploration of the island should be found.

An inaugural meeting of the Linnean Society's specialist group for computer applications in biology (acronym, please!) was held on March 21, 1985. This group is open to all biologists and computer experts, regardless of whether they are Fellows of the Linnean Society.

There is an increasing appreciation among biologists that microcomputers are here to stay and that in order to benefit from the technology it has become necessary to find out what everyone is doing. This survey of microcomputers in the biological community aims to find out what strides have been made in the last few years and depending on what is found will hopefully lead to a forum whereby biologists using similar software and machines may be able to contact each other.

If you own or use a micro, whether at home or work, you are urged to let Dr. STIRTON know. Each respondent will be sent an analysis of the survey which, as it is being run under the auspices of the Linnean Society, will we hope be world-wide. Request for a questionnaire from Charles Stirton, c/o The Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 3AE, U.K. (Your editor uses a Kaypro X: all programs in aid of word processing will be very welcome!).

The tree, an international symposium, is to be held at the Institut de Botanique de l'Université de Montpellier II, 163 Rue Auguste Broussonnet, 34000 France, between September 9 and 14, 1985.

Themes will be: morphogenesis, rhythms and phenology, vegetative architecture, modelisation of tree structure, tree sexuality. Forest and silviculture will be the subjects of a future symposium.

The organizing committee consists of P. BOUVAREL, P. CHAMPAGNAT, F. HALLÉ, R.A.A. OLDEMAN and P.B. TOMLINSON. Official languages are French and English. 'All participants should be careful to express themselves in such a way as to be easily understood by everyone, PLEASE.'

The Third Round Table Conference of the International Working Group on Dipterocarps was held between April 16 and 22, 1985, at the Mulawarman University, Samarinda, Indonesia. Sessions were held on the ecology, biology, agrosilviculture and management of Dipterocarps, followed by field trips to Hempake and a forest between Balikpapan and Samarinda.

Second International Legume Conference to be held jointly by the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in St. Louis, 23—27 June 1986. The theme will be the Biology of the Leguminosae with discussions on recent advances gained from both field and experimental research, covering both pure and applied points of view. The working language will be English. Participation will be limited to 350 persons. Poster presentations are welcome. Perhaps there is still room to attend, write to Dr. J.L. ZARUCCHI, Legume Conference Coordinator, Missouri Botanical Garden, POB 299, St. Louis (MO) 63166, U.S.A.

Symposium tropical botany: practice and principles. 28 September — 4 October 1986, Zeist, The Netherlands. To be held on the occasion of the celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the University of Utrecht and the retirement of F.A. STAFLEU from the chair of Systematic Botany at this University. Special attention will be given to the Neotropics in view of the long tradition of involvement of the Utrecht University in Neotropical Botany. Registration fee Hfl. 550.00 (excl. sleeping facilities, which range from Hfl. 600.00 to 1650.00). Inquiries should be addressed to the Institute of Systematic Botany, Heidelberglaan 2, 3584 CS Utrecht, The Netherlands.

XIV Botanical Congress. Berlin-Dahlem, 24 July - 1 August 1987. From the last Circular we observe that the Congress Scientific Program has been subdivided into 6 sections: Developmental Botany, Environmental Botany, Genetics and Plant Breeding, Metabolic Botany, Structural Botany, Systematic and Evolutionary Botany. Systematic Botany will be convened by Dr. W. GREUTER (B). Presentation of contributed papers will be by abstracts or posters only. There will be general lectures at lunch time as well as public lectures in the evenings. Upon request opportunity will be provided for workshops, discussion groups and meetings of international associations. The meetings of the Bureau of Nomenclature will be held during the preceding week, 20-24 July. Pre- and post-Congress scientific field trips will be arranged to North, South and Central Europe. The full registration fee is DM 500.00 if timely announced; later it will be substantially more! English will be the official language.

XVI Pacific Science Congress. The National Academy of Sciences, Seoul, South Korea, is the originator of this Congress to be held from 10 to 20 August, 1987. Contact may be sought with the Standing Committee Chairmen of the PSA: Botany, Dr. S.H. SOHMER (BISH); Ecology, Conservation and Environmental Protection, Dr. D. MUELLER-DOMBOIS (HAW); Fresh-Water Sciences, Dr. J.I. FURTADO, Dept of Zoology, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur; Marine Sciences, Prof. V.I. ILYICHEV, The Ecology Institute of the Far East Science Centre, Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., 7 Radio Street, Vladivostok 690.032.

More details may be found in the APS Newsletters.