

VIII. ANNUAL REPORT FOUNDATION FLORA MALESIANA 1994

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M. C. ROOS

Rijksherbarium/Hortus Botanicus, POB 9514, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands

Board news

Some membership changes occurred which were affirmed during the last Board meeting at Kew.

Dr. Aprilani Soegiarto, while remaining on the Board for his term, resigned as chairman, because he will retire before the next meeting. With regret the Foundation accepted Dr. Aprilani's decision, but is most grateful to him for so actively chairing the Board from its start in 1991 onwards. By acclamation Dr. Mien Rifai has been appointed as the new chairman.

Dr. Raven, Dr. Barlow and Dr. Lucas also resigned; the latter two because they retired recently. The Foundation is most indebted to them for their active support for the case of Flora Malesiana. As their successors have been appointed Dr. J.G. West (representing CSIRO), Dr. J. Dransfield (K) and Dr. H.H. van der Werff (MO).

During the Board meeting in Kew various topics were discussed at length:

- Progress and how to keep momentum; the Board expressed satisfaction with the production of instalments between the Second and the Third FM Symposium.
- Fund raising and how to explore possibilities; we will try to submit proposals to the European Union and the MacArthur Foundation; contacts will be made with ITTO.
- Training and education; the Board welcomes the possibilities for MSc and PhD training included in the GEF (Global Environmental Facilities) programme, but regrets that the UNESCO/BO/L course on Plant taxonomy has been postponed for two years in a row.
- Research permits and counterpart funding in Malesian countries; the Board recognises that the extensive procedures discourage collaboration in the FM project (especially but not only for short-term funded projects), but understands that to facilitate cooperation research proposals should be submitted long in advance to enable commitment by the counterparts.

Next Board meeting will be held during the next Flora of Thailand Symposium, which will be held mid-September 1996 in Thailand on the occasion of the centennial of the Royal Forest Department of Thailand.

Publication

Concurrent with the start of the Third FM Symposium, Flora Malesiana Series I Volume 12 (1) appeared, with the treatment of the *Meliaceae* by D.J. Mabberley et al. The authors are complimented with their major contribution to FM.

Earlier this year another voluminous publication appeared as *Blumea Supplement no. 8: Checklist and Botanical bibliography of the Aroids of Malesia, Australia and the tropical western Pacific* by A. Hay et al.

Third Flora Malesiana Symposium

The Third FM Symposium took place July 10–14, 1995, at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. We are most grateful to our colleagues from K, who have put so much effort in organising this very successful event. How successful may already be clear from the large number of participants (c. 180).

The programme was most interesting and of good quality. It started with the presentation to Dr. Aprilani and Dr. Prance of the first copies of the new instalment, *Flora Malesiana Series I Volume 12 (1)*.

The lectures and posters covered a great many topics: the state of affairs of FM as a whole, related flora projects as well as different family treatments, ethnobotany, ecology, GIS applications, etc.

Two sessions during this symposium were devoted to workshops on, e.g., the work of international teams revising large-sized families, specialised subjects like computerisation and ethnobotany, etc.

The results of these workshops were very positive and set high hopes for future initiatives. For instance, the Legume workshop decided to compile a checklist in 1996. The workshop on *Palmae* was used to establish a working team; the participants agreed on adopting a pragmatic approach, to compile a checklist in 1996 and set December 31, 2000, as the deadline for a complete treatment. During the *Pteridophytes* workshop a number of taxa have been allotted and a new work schedule made, including plans for a checklist. The workshop on *Annonaceae* discussed a grant proposal to the European Union.

One subject turned up many times during the symposium, namely the demand for national short-term inventory projects of specific taxa and/or commodity groups. Everybody agreed that FM is the taxonomic standard for the region, but some argue that because of the large scale and long term of completion there is a need for more quickly available floristic treatments. This topic of the regional approach of FM in relation to the national/local need for taxonomic information will be discussed further in the next years.

In short, this Symposium will be a great stimulus for our FM studies and related projects.

Fourth Flora Malesiana Symposium

The Board invited our Malaysian colleagues to organise the Fourth Flora Malesiana Symposium in 1998, an invitation that was accepted with pleasure by the representatives of FRIM, Bangi and the Tree Flora of Sabah and Sarawak project.

Holttum Memorial Pteridophyte Symposium

Subsequent to the FM Symposium, the Pteridophyte Symposium commemorating the late Prof. Eric Holttum was held at Kew. Until his death, Dr. Holttum was the driving force and main author of FM Series II.

This symposium was again excellently organised by K and BM, supported by E, the Linnean Society, the Systematics Association, the British Pteridological Society and the International Association of Pteridologists. Apart from a large number of participants (c. 170), a striking number of 44 nationalities were represented, especially from Eastern Europa and South America. A great variety of topics was covered, ranging from DNA sequencing and physiology to ecology and higher classification, from population biology to world floras, including horticultural aspects and conservation priorities.

I think that this symposium also will stimulate the participants in their studies and that for sure it has been a fine tribute to one of the greatest pteridologists of this century.

Systematics Agenda 2000: the challenge for Europe

In May a conference was convened by L, the Linnean Society of London, the European Science Foundation Systematic Biology Network and the Systematics Association, in order to identify what Europe's special resources in systematic biology could contribute to documenting and understanding the Earth's biodiversity.

The key elements of this goal are expressed by the global initiative Systematics Agenda 2000 (SA 2000), summarised in three inter-related missions:

- 1) To discover, describe and inventory global species diversity.
- 2) To analyse and synthesise the information derived from this global discovery effort into a predictive classification system that reflects the history of life.
- 3) To organise the information derived from this global programme in an efficiently retrievable form that best meets the need of science and society.

The delegates recognised SA 2000 as expressing the over-arching goals to work towards. There was a general feeling that there is much to be achieved by coordinating work on a supra-national basis. It is most opportune to develop new approaches to international collaboration which capitalise on Europe's huge biodiversity collections, a vital resource of information which must be shared with countries around the world, especially those rich in biological diversity. The participants stressed that the task of documenting biodiversity requires that European institutes unite their skills and expertise in partnership with nations lacking those resources and that they work with them to develop their own systematic capacity.

Various actions were adopted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of use of the European systematic resources by coordinating activities and international collaboration in collections development, research and training.

CHECKLIST & BOTANICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

of the

Aroids

of Malesia, Australia, and the Tropical Western Pacific region

by A. Hay, J. Bogner, P. C. Boyce, W. L. A. Hetterscheid, N. Jacobsen & J. Murata

Published by Rijksherbarium/Hortus Botanicus, Leiden University, The Netherlands,
as BLUMEA Supplement 8 (210 pp.) — 1995

ISSN 0006-5196; ISBN 90-71236-25-0 — Price: Dfl. 50.00

- The **CHECKLIST** includes the 1,437 names that have been applied to Aroids in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia.

It includes such ecologically, economically, and horticulturally significant genera as *Aglaonema*, *Alocasia*, *Amorphophallus*, *Arisaema*, *Colocasia*, *Cryptocoryne*, *Homalomena*, *Pothos*, *Rhaphidophora*, and *Schismatoglottis* and the twenty-six more that are recognised in the region.

The Checklist provides a reference to the original description that accompanied each name, lists synonyms, identifies the type specimens to which each name is attached, gives the distribution of each species, and makes comments on nomenclatural problems.

- The **BIBLIOGRAPHY** gives in full all known references to the Aroids of the region, listing 1,264 items in all, from the 17th Century to the present day. These include first descriptions of the species, revisions of genera, flora accounts, and papers on Aroid biology, nomenclature and horticulture.

Together the Checklist and Bibliography form a technical source indispensable to both botanists and horticultural enthusiasts of the Aroids.



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Rijksherbarium / Hortus Botanicus
P.O. Box 9514
2300 RA Leiden – The Netherlands