

## BOOK REVIEW

E. Soepadmo, L.G. Saw, R. C. K. Chung & R. Kiew (Eds.). 2007. **Tree Flora of Sabah and Sarawak. Volume 6.** Forest Research Institute Malaysia, Sabah Forestry Department & Sarawak Forestry Department. x + 335 pp. ISBN 983-2181-89-7. USD90.00.

This flora is a joint project of the Forest Research Institute Malaysia and the Forestry Departments of Sabah and Sarawak. The first volume was published in 1995 and the whole series is expected to consist of at least eight volumes.

Volume 6 contains treatments of Cunoniaceae by R. C. K. Chung (1 genus, 3 species), Hernandiaceae by L. G. Saw (1 species), Meliaceae by D. J. Mabberley and C. M. Pannell with contributions by J. M. Edmonds and A. M. Sing (15 genera, 126 species) and Polygalaceae by W. J. J. O. de Wilde and B. E. E. Duyfjes (1 genus, 51 species).

As usual in the Tree Flora all native non-tree genera and introduced tree genera are keyed out but are not treated in detail. All native tree species are fully described, relevant literature presented (far more complete than usual in a regional flora), notes on distribution, ecology and uses. This makes the flora useful beyond the boundaries of East Malaysia.

All four families treated in the present volume have been revised relatively recently in the well known series Flora Malesiana. It is interesting to see how many new species have since been described in the area covered by the Tree Flora.

In the Meliaceae revised in 1995 by Mabberley c.s. seven new species have been described for Sabah and Sarawak, whereas in the Polygalaceae (*Xanthophyllum*) revised by van der Meijden in 1988, five new species have been added, regrettably none named after the author who died prematurely earlier in 2007 aged 62.

This increase is illustrative for the amount of work that still lies ahead. It is gratifying that the Government of Malaysia acknowledges the urgency of biodiversity research and provides generous financial support to systematic botanical studies in Malaysia.

In the Meliaceae treatment, next to a key a list of spot characters is presented for easy recognition of certain taxa. I

would heartily recommend the listing of spot characters for all species-rich families. I suggest the following additional spot characters for the Meliaceae:

- (1) Black glands along the midrib, *Walsura*.
- (2) Primary and secondary veins closely set (almost as in *Calophyllum*), *Reinwardtiidendron humile*.
- (3) Rachis pulvinate at the insertion of leaflet pairs, *Heynea* and *Walsura*.
- (4) Petiolules strongly swollen at base, *Lansium*.

As in the previous five volumes the quality of this latest volume is of high standard, both scientifically as well as in execution. There are very few printing errors and the illustrations are excellent. Personally I would like to see more colour photographs. The editors and authors are to be complimented for producing another exemplary piece of work.

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