

# Learning about Dipterocarps

Fill in the blanks below to complete the crossword puzzle on the next page!

Did you know that the world's \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>ACROSS 6</sup> tropical tree is a Dipterocarp? Towering over the rest of the forest at an unusual 100.8 metres, a Yellow Meranti (*Shorea faguettiana*) found in Sabah, Malaysia, was given this title in 2019.

The Dipterocarps are a family of hardwood trees that occur in \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>ACROSS 8</sup> forests across the world. Their stronghold lies in Asia, particularly in Southeast Asia to Sri Lanka, where at least 500 species in total are known to occur. They grow to be some of the tallest trees in the region's forests and comprise up to 50 to 80% of the forest canopy. Living up to hundreds of years old, these \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>ACROSS 2</sup> trees grow slowly but surely, often reaching heights of over 60 m at maturity. The next time you are in a mature forest, take a look up – one of the tallest trees you spot may very well be a Dipterocarp!

These mighty giants play a big role in our native forests. Dipterocarps often make up the \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>DOWN 4</sup> proportion of trees in mature forests, and are among the emergent trees in the canopy. Being so tall and numerous, their presence provides important \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>ACROSS 7</sup> for animals living in the forest, in addition to producing fruits, pollen, and nectar for them.

Other than being ecologically important, Dipterocarps are also \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>ACROSS 5</sup> significant. They are highly sought-after in the timber industry due to the \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>DOWN 3</sup> of their wood which is used in construction and furniture. The oil-rich seeds of some Dipterocarp species can be used as a substitute for cocoa butter in cooking and cosmetics. When "wounded", their trunks secrete resin that is tapped for use in varnishes, essential oils and medicine.

However, many species of these long-lived, slow-growing trees have become Critically Endangered in our region due to \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>DOWN 1</sup> to make way for plantations, or commercial logging for timber.



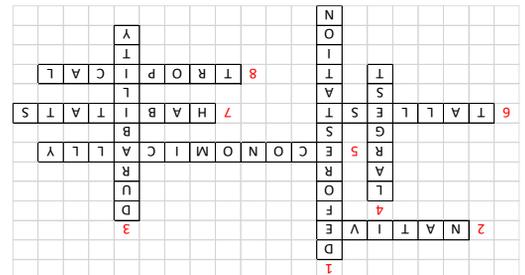
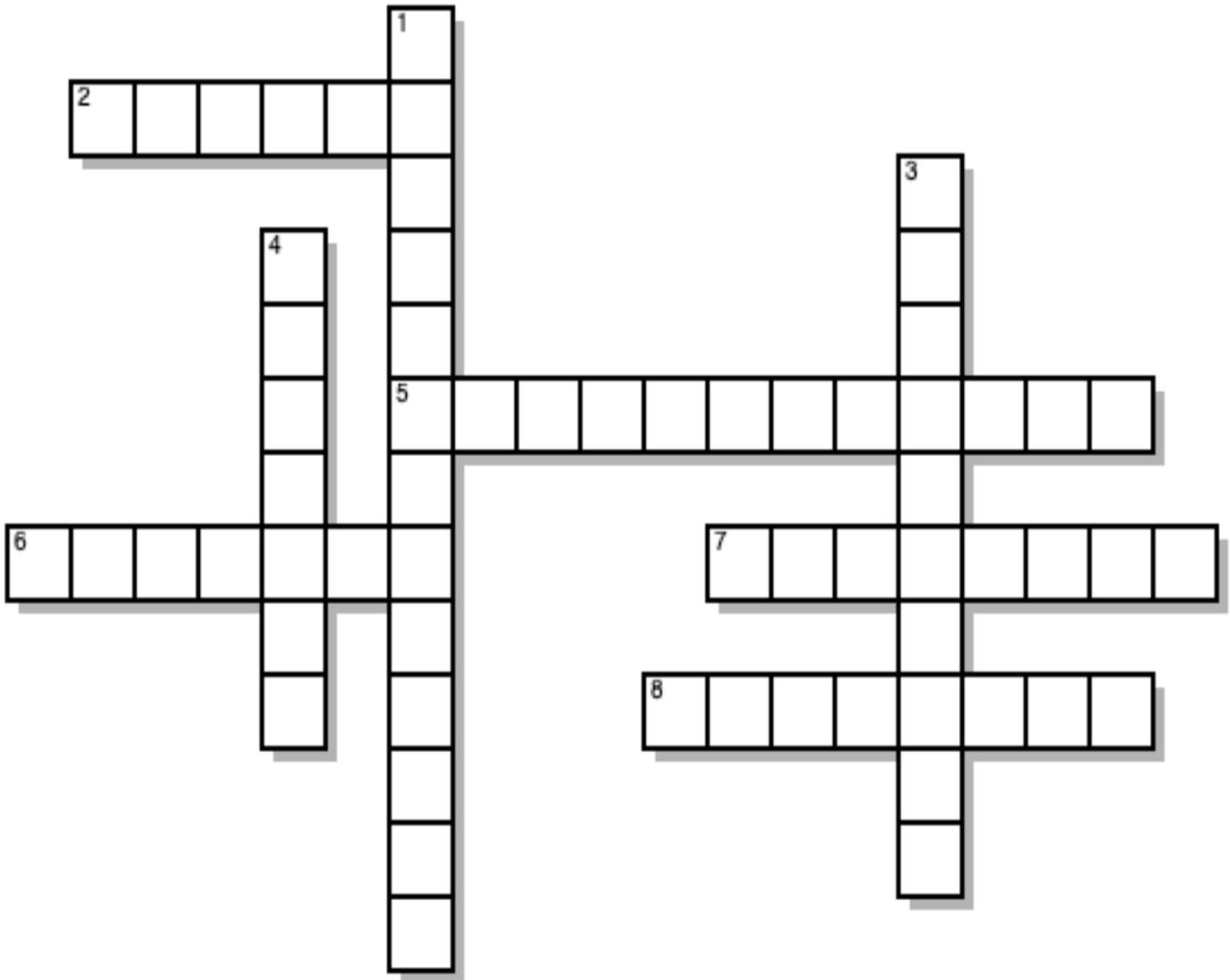
Text adapted from "Conserving Tropical Forest Giants", [www.nparks.gov.sg/nparksbuzz/issue-44-vol-1-2020/conservation/conserving-tropical-forest-giants](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/nparksbuzz/issue-44-vol-1-2020/conservation/conserving-tropical-forest-giants)



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Fill in the crossword puzzle below with your answers from the previous page!



Answer key



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