

**BOOK REVIEW. Flora of Peninsular Malaysia. Series II: Seed Plants, Volume 2.** (Malayan Forest Records No. 49) *R. Kiew, R.C.K. Chung, L.G. Saw, E. Soepadmo & P.C. Boyce* (eds). 2011.

Kepong: Forest Research Institute Malaysia. 25.7 cm × 18 cm, hard cover. 235 pp. ISBN 978–967–5221–53–8. Price RM 100 / US\$ 75.

Barely a year after the much anticipated first volume of the Seed Plants series, Flora of Peninsular Malaysia, the second volume was published. The contents of this volume are well structured and typically conform to the format preset for the first volume (see Review in *Gardens' Bulletin, Singapore* 62(2): 331–332).

This second volume is entirely devoted to the family Apocynaceae, with special emphasis on two of the five subfamilies, namely, Apocynoideae and Rauvolfioideae. The author of this momentous volume, Dr. David Middleton (Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh), is an accomplished apocynologist who specialises in the two subfamilies of Southeast Asian Apocynaceae. His past significant achievements in the region include revisions for the Flora of Thailand (1999), Tree Flora of Sabah and Sarawak (2004), and Flora Malesiana (2007). The other three subfamilies not treated in this volume are the Asclepiadoideae, Periplocoideae and Secamonoideae. These three subfamilies were formerly included in their own family, Asclepiadaceae, and rejoined Apocynaceae only recently based on phylogenetic findings. In this account, a total of 35 genera and 112 species, namely, 21 genera and 55 species for subfamily Apocynoideae, and 14 genera and 57 species for subfamily Rauvolfioideae, are enumerated.

The taxonomic account begins with a brief family description, followed by general distribution, ecology, general uses with some highlights of native species used as ornamental plants, and a brief taxonomic explanation of the family, in a broad sense, that includes Asclepiadaceae. Adding a phylogenetic tree to illustrate the evolutionary relationships of the five subfamilies in the more broadly defined Apocynaceae would have made it more informative. Conservation assessment was briefly provided by L.S.L. Chua with an accompanying table listing Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU) species in the two subfamilies. Arrangement of the taxonomic account in this volume is based on the position of the two subfamilies reflected in the key to subfamilies of Apocynaceae, beginning with subfamily Rauvolfioideae, and later Apocynoideae. However, genera enumerated were arranged alphabetically under each respective subfamily. The general enumeration format is as follows: accepted name, etymology, key references and type citation, description, vernacular name, distribution, species distribution map, conservation status, ecology, and uses.

In general, this volume is easy and friendly to use, not just for botanists but also horticulturists. There are two identification keys provided at the beginning of the account, namely, key to subfamilies of Apocynaceae (p. 8), and key to genera for the two subfamilies revised in this volume (pp. 9–13), before the enumeration of genera begins. Then, there are also identification keys to species provided in the account for the following genera: subfamily Apocynoideae: *Anodendron*, *Chonemorpha*, *Epigynum*, *Holarrhena*, *Kibatalia*, *Micrechites*, *Parameria*, *Parsonsia*, *Strophanthus*, *Urceola*, and *Wrightia*; and subfamily Rauvolfioideae: *Alstonia*, *Alyxia*, *Cerbera*,

*Chilocarpus*, *Kopsia* (also key to varieties of *Kopsia griffithii*), *Leuconotis*, *Melodinus*, *Rauvolfia*, *Tabernaemontana*, and *Willughbeia*. In addition to that, this volume is also well illustrated with 15 colour plates provided at the end of the account and also 36 line drawings distributed throughout the book for the various genera.

As the Flora of Peninsular Malaysia team is picking up its pace to document and disseminate information of Peninsular Malaysian plants to the scientific community, we eagerly look forward to the next volume.

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