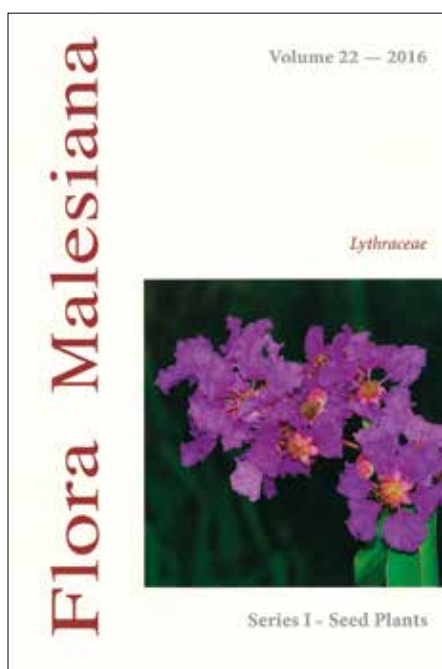


BOOK REVIEW: Flora Malesiana, series I – Seed Plants. Volume 22: Lythraceae. W.J.J.O. de Wilde & B.E.E. Duyfjes. P.C. van Welzen (Ed.) 2016.

Leiden: Flora Malesiana Foundation. 24 × 16 cm, soft cover, 68 pp, 2 plates with colour photos, 21 black and white line drawings. ISBN 978-90-6519-016-1 (softcover), Price £34.99 (softcover).



Willem J.J.O. de Wilde and Brigitta E.E. Duyfjes between them have completed accounts of Campanulaceae, Coriariaceae, Cucurbitaceae, Hernandiaceae, Myristicaceae, Passifloraceae, Polygalaceae and Stemonaceae for *Flora Malesiana*, altogether comprising many hundreds of species. They have now added the Lythraceae to this list. They are stalwarts of *Flora Malesiana* and, indeed, several other Asian Floras such as the *Flora of Thailand*, *Flora of Peninsular Malaysia* and the *Tree Flora of Sabah and Sarawak*. As was noted in Baas et al. (2016), they accomplish their great feats of taxonomic botany with generosity and good humour.

The account of Malesian Lythraceae comprises 11 genera and 47 species, including alien but naturalised species from genera such as *Cuphea*. The account includes the genera *Duabanga*, *Punica*, *Sonneratia* and *Trappa*, all now included in Lythraceae, by reference to earlier *Flora Malesiana* accounts when they were placed in different families. As in earlier volumes of *Flora Malesiana*, the introductory parts include a description of the family, a discussion of the taxonomy, details on the wood anatomy and pollen morphology of the included genera, and a short discussion on uses. The wood anatomy and pollen morphology sections are contributed by Pieter Baas and Raymond van der Ham respectively.

As would be expected from these authors, all content is logically and clearly presented. The main part of the work comprises the key to genera and accounts of each of the genera. The treatment for each genus includes a description of the genus, keys to the species, notes on morphology in some cases, and a description of each species – the standard fare of a Flora account. For *Lagerstroemia*, keys are presented for both flowering and fruiting material. There are two colour plates and a number of expertly drawn illustrations, mostly by Jan van Os.

The largest genera are *Lagerstroemia* (14 species), *Rottala* (8 species) and *Ammania* (7 species). *Cuphea*, with all species introduced from the New World, is represented by six species. The native species are treated in detail. The naturalised

species are treated in less detail but still sufficiently to ensure a positive identification.

One small criticism and that is that in the nomenclatural sections I suspect there has been some overuse of the term ‘holotype’, particularly for many nineteenth century names that should rather be lectotypified. For the genera previously treated in other families, I also would have liked to have seen them entirely included again here, even if just copied from the previous content with acknowledgement. The number of additional species is not great and it would have made the new treatment here more complete.

As is well known, *Flora Malesiana* has struggled to maintain a consistent output of volumes. This is a reflection of the lack of taxonomists working on basic biodiversity inventory in Southeast Asia as institutions, particularly in Europe, reduce their commitment to such ambitious projects. This new *Flora Malesiana* volume is a great testament to the hard work and tenaciousness of Willem de Wilde and Brigitta Duyfjes, but let us also hope that future volumes will be more frequent, contain more families, and attract accounts from the best and brightest of botanists who understand that taxonomic inventory is as vital today as it was when *Flora Malesiana* first began over 60 years ago.

Reference

Baas, P., Veldkamp, J.F. & van Welzen, P.C. (2016). On the 80th birthdays of Willem J.J.O. de Wilde and Brigitta E.E. Duyfjes. *Blumea* 61: 85–86.

David J. Middleton

Singapore Botanic Gardens