

Editorial

Although *Gardens' Bulletin Singapore* routinely publishes papers reporting new records of plant species for Singapore and rediscoveries of species presumed to be extinct in Singapore, this issue is rather special as it contains far more of such papers than is usual. In recent years there have been several long-term biodiversity surveys in various parts of Singapore, along with a concerted effort to collect specimens for researchers engaged in revisions of plant families for the *Flora of Singapore*. Later in 2018, as a joint effort of the National University of Singapore and the National Parks Board, we plan to publish a new Checklist of the plants of Singapore in a supplement to *Gardens' Bulletin Singapore*. These periodic Checklists, most notably Turner (1993) and Chong et al. (2009), provide useful benchmarks of our state of knowledge at particular moments in time and are vital summaries of the plant diversity of Singapore for stakeholders in a wide variety of fields. The new Checklist will stand alongside the *Flora of Singapore* as a brief summary of what we know occurs in Singapore rather than replace or compete with it. The Checklist will also, for the first time, include all of the bryophytes of Singapore. To ensure that the Checklist truly reflects our current state of knowledge we have attempted to ensure that botanists from various institutions who were already aware of new records and rediscoveries commit their knowledge to the page before the Checklist is published. The result is a series of nine papers, some of which are more detailed papers on particular taxa from authorities on those plantgroups; others feature results from long-term surveys; one tracks additional non-native species that are becoming established in Singapore; and one gathers the otherwise unassigned new records and rediscoveries, along with their discoverers, to ensure they are published. They follow on closely from the new records and rediscoveries recently reported by Chong et al. (2018) from Nee Soon fresh water swamp forest. Although there will undoubtedly be more to come in the future, in this issue alone we publish 34 new records of native plant species, 11 new records of plants found to be naturalising in Singapore, and 1 new record of a species for which it is not certain whether it is native or naturalised. In addition, 21 rediscoveries of species previously reported to be extinct are published. It is sobering to note that in densely populated and relatively well-collected Singapore (Niissalo et al., 2014) that we still have so much to discover.

Along with these papers, we also include a number of papers from authors in Singapore and the wider region which are more typical of the content of *Gardens' Bulletin Singapore*. These include works on fungi, ferns and flowering plants describing the biodiversity of the Malesian region, including the description of many new species.

References

- Niissalo, M., Wijedasa, L., Boyce, P.C. & Leong-Škorničková, J. (2014). *Hanguana neglecta* (Hanguanaceae): a new plant species from a heavily collected and visited reserve in Singapore. *Phytotaxa* 188(1): 14–20.
- Chong, K.Y., Tan, H.T. & Corlett, R.T. (2009). *A Checklist of the Total Vascular Plant Flora of Singapore: Native, Naturalised and Cultivated Species*. Singapore: Raffles Museum of

Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore.

Chong, K.Y., Lim, R.C.J., Loh, J.W., Neo, L., Seah, W.W., Tan, S.Y. & Tan, H.T.W. (2018). Rediscoveries, new records, and the floristic value of the Nee Soon freshwater swamp forest, Singapore. *Gard. Bull. Singapore* 70 (Suppl. 1): 49–69.

Turner, I.M. (1993). The names used for Singapore plants since 1900. *Gard. Bull. Singapore* 45: 1–287.

David J. Middleton

Singapore Botanic Gardens