

REVIEW

HSUAN KENG, S.C. CHIN & H.T.W. TAN: **The Concise Flora of Singapore Volume II: Monocotyledons**. Singapore University Press & National Parks Board Singapore, 1998. xix + 215 pp., 293 figs. ISBN 9971-69-207-4 (paper). Price: SGD 39; USD 29.

This volume is the continuation of 'The Concise Flora of Singapore: Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons', published in 1990. All native and naturalised Singapore seed plants are covered by these two volumes, as well as some of the commonly cultivated ones. This volume covers 34 families with approximately 750 species.

Keys to the families and genera are presented. In Orchidaceae separate keys to the subfamilies and in some of these to the tribes and genera are presented. Selected species are keyed out in Orchidaceae, Cyperaceae, and Gramineae. In the last family a separate key to the bamboos is given. No reference to page numbers is given in the keys. In general, the characters used for identification are adequate and not too technical.

The arrangement of the genera under the family and of the species under the genera is alphabetically. The descriptions of the species are short and do not always describe the characters in a comparable way. For most species a short indication of the ecology and the distribution in Singapore is given, specimens are cited. Synonyms are often cited, but not for all species. The drawings are simple and often not very detailed, but are in many cases adequate because most genera occur in Singapore with one or very few species only. An appendix contains a list of scientific names and Chinese vernacular names.

The Orchidaceae were checked in more detail. One confusing mistake needs correction. On p. 65 in lead 13 the names of the genera are interchanged: *Bulbophyllum* has free lateral sepals and *Cirrhopetalum* has a synsepalum of which the upper side is in fact the underside of the lateral sepals which are once twisted and are fused with their originally non-facing margins. *Cirrhopetalum* further seems to be polyphyletic and is not recognised by many orchid taxonomists. Minor spelling mistakes are in *Peristylus* (*is*) and its epitheton *lacertifer* (*ferus*), and *Pomatocalpa latifolium* (*olia*).

The book is well produced and not too big to prevent taking it into the field. It seems well suited for its purpose: The identification of the species of Monocotyledonous plants in Singapore.

The coverage of the species in the area appears quite complete but does not seem to be based much on recent inventories. It thus remains to be seen how many of the species recorded in this book are still extant in the island, especially in families which occur mainly in the tropical rain forest, like Orchidaceae, Zingiberaceae, and others.

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