



## Editorial

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Kew Bulletin has always had a strong emphasis on the botany of the Asian, African and American tropics. In this issue I am very pleased that we are publishing another review paper, this time giving an exhaustive overview of the ecologically most important plant group in the Asian tropics — the Dipterocarpaceae. Lowland Malesia, especially on the western side of Wallace's line, would have been covered by vast tracts of mixed dipterocarp forest (known to ecologists and botanists as 'MDF'). Unfortunately, extensive areas of this forest have now been replaced by agriculture, especially rubber and oil palm plantations and, although many taxa are now known only from reduced populations in small forest reserves, there is still much we have to learn about these plants — including new insights revealed by the latest phylogenetic methods, which will undoubtedly lead to important future taxonomic changes. We are very pleased to have the eminent dipterocarp botanists Peter Ashton and his co-authors, R. Morley, J. Heckenhauer and V. Prasad, publish their review, 'The magnificent Dipterocarps: précis for an Epitaph?', in Kew Bulletin (Ashton *et al.* 2021).

Tropical plant diversity is now under threat as never before, but species still undescribed to science are being continually documented. For example, in this issue, several species of the mint family are described from Brazil (Harley & Pastore 2021a; Harley & Pastore 2021b; Soares *et al.* 2021), as well as from south-west China (Chen *et al.* 2021) — both areas with completed checklists and/or Floras, highlighting further discoveries are waiting to be made as new collections and data are gathered. Kew Bulletin remains an important outlet for new species, especially when combined together in a synthesis of the group and presented as a revision or synopsis. Grouping together several new species into a single paper is always to be preferred wherever possible, but single new species papers are considered, especially of interesting or threatened groups, such as the description of a new species of *Drypetes* combined with notes on the threatened forests of Cameroon by Cheek *et al.* (2021).

As a taxonomic journal, nomenclature is fundamental to the stability, as well as the clear and concise communication of names. Kew Bulletin is fortunate to draw upon the skills and expertise of nomenclatural specialists at Kew who manage and edit the Interna-

tional Plant Names Index (IPNI), including our Associate Editor Helen Hartley. This issue includes several nomenclatural papers, including important clarifications in the fern genus *Amblovenatum* by Lindsay & Middleton (2021), and the 'groundwork' for the Flora projects in Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore in the genus *Diospyros* by de Kok & Puglisi (2021). Again, whilst not always publishing single, ad hoc papers, such as a name change of a single species, Kew Bulletin will always be a welcoming outlet for critical nomenclatural papers, including lectotypifications, where they are needed by specialists preparing floristic accounts or more substantial revisions.

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