

Recent publications

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The Palms and Cycads of Thailand, edited by Donald R. Hodel. Kampon Tansacha, Nong Nooch Garden, Thailand, and Allen Press, Kansas (1998). 190 pp, hard cover. US\$50.00.

A lavishly illustrated book with photographs of 155 indigenous and several other introduced or cultivated species, including the rattans, with text descriptions. A recent review by John Dransfield in *Palms* (Vol. 43(2): 98–100, 2000), however, points out that some of the taxonomic names used in the book are not up to date, as the authors did not examine type specimens available or consult with many other taxonomic experts about the correct names. There are also about six palm species reported from Thailand that are missing from the book. The part about *Cycas* varies greatly from the taxonomic revision by De Laubenfels & Adema (*Blumea* 43: 351–400, 1998). In spite of the taxonomic lapses, the book is impressive and will be useful for palm and cycad enthusiasts and gardeners.—*W. Y. B. and J. F. Maxwell*

Trees Commonly Cultivated in Southeast Asia—An Illustrated Field Guide, 2nd ed. FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok. RAP Publication 1999/13, February 1999, 230 pp. (Available free from FAO Office on Phra Athit Road, Bangkok.)

This handy, pocket-sized, popular-style book includes some common commercial and ornamental trees found in the Asia-Malesian region. The introductory parts include basic information on terminology, e.g. leaf shapes and margins, flower structure, inflorescence types, etc. There are also keys based on leaf type and arrangement. The species are arranged according to groups, viz. conifers & casuarinas (i.e. needle- or scale-like leaves), bamboos, palms and bananas, and broad-leaved trees—which includes most of the entries in the book.

Each species is well illustrated by colour drawings and includes one other page of information. The botanical name, family, synonyms, common names, description with key characteristics emphasized, use, ecology, and distribution with a map, and reference is provided for each species. Genera are arranged alphabetically in each group.

This book is quite useful for non-botanists, especially people not familiar with some common plants of the region. As with most popular books about nature available, much, if not all, of the information presented is not original—a serious mistake since not all literature, especially in botany, is academically acceptable. It is, therefore, quite regrettable that some of the information in the book is incorrect. Some terminology is wrong, e.g. “bipinnately compound” leaf which, as the illustration clearly shows, is actually twice pinnate. Cordate and cuneate are not leaf shapes, but terms used to describe, most often, blade bases. There is also some confusion presented in the diagram of a flower where calyx and sepal are used together. For the stamens, anther and filament could have been indicated.

The identities of most of the species are correct, however no author names are included. *Casuarina equisetifolia* is not a conifer. I can understand why this species is placed in this group, but the author was apparently unaware that this is a flowering plant and does not produce a cone as fruits, although the structure produced by *Casuarina* superficially resembles one.

Some taxonomic corrections include: *Agathis dammara* = *Agathis borneensis* Warb., *Albizia saman* = *Samanea saman* (Jacq.) Merr., *Cassia siamea* = *Senna siamea* (Lmk.) Irwin & Barneby, *Coffea canephora* should be amplified to include the entire *Robusta* group, viz. *Coffea canephora* Pierre ex Froh. var. *robusta* (Linden & De Wildem.) Chev.,

and *Ziziphus mauritiana* = *Ziziphus nummularia* (Burm. f.) Wight & Arn.

Aside from these deficiencies, the book can serve as a basic introduction to some commonly planted trees in the region. The author is encouraged to include more species and use more professional literature in a future edition.—*J. F. Maxwell*

Thai Orchids. Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden, vol. 6, 2000, 291 pp. (in Thai) (Email: qpg@chmai.loxinfo.co.th)

The other five volumes of this series (1994–1997) include various other plant families, while the 6th volume is specifically about various showy Thai orchids. The introductory part is useful in giving information about the history of orchid research in Thailand as well as basic information about orchid terminology and flower morphology. The various genera are arranged alphabetically and include: the Thai name, complete botanical name, synonyms, a brief description, and vivid colour photographs. This is a very impressive and classy publication that will be appreciated all Thai readers.—*J. F. Maxwell*

Pteridophytes of Thailand, compiled by Thaweesakdi Boonkerd & Rossarin Pollawatn. Office of Environmental Policy and Planning, Bangkok (2000). 312 pp.; available free from the authors and publisher. (Biological Resources Section, Natural Resources and Environmental Management Division, OEPP, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, 60/1 Soi Phibun Wattana, Rama VI Road, Bangkok 10400; fax: 662-279-8088)

This book continues the biodiversity series (including Algae, 1995, and Bryophytes, 1995, both compilations) published by the OEPP. The monumental work by Tagawa & Iwatsuki on the Pteridophytes of Thailand [*Flora of Thailand* 3: 1–4 (1979–1989), 639 pp.] includes 630 species, etc. This new book has 671 species and 32 infraspecific taxa. It is also basically an uncritical compilation lacking keys and descriptions, but includes some excellent habit and sori photographs, useful distribution maps, references, and species index.—*J. F. Maxwell*

A Field Guide to Forest Trees of Northern Thailand, by Simon Gardner, Pindar Sidisunthorn & Vilaiwan Anusarnsunthorn. Kobfai Publishing Project, Bangkok (2000). 545 pp, soft cover. Price: 750 baht or US\$28.00. A Thai language version is available for 450 baht. (E-mail: kobfai@cscs.com)

A very compact and handsomely printed field guide including 880 species of trees of northern Thailand (about 75% of the total known), of which 430 are described and illustrated, 340 “similar species” are partially described and 110 additional species are mentioned and included in the keys. This book contains a general introduction to northern Thai vegetation (with a stunning watercolor showing forest profiles), general keys to genera using vegetative and reproductive characters. The main part includes detailed descriptions of species with photos and line drawings of flowers, fruits, leaves, etc. with coded information on phenology, habitat and elevation. Keys are given for complex genera. The excellent quality photographs in this part are the main asset of the book and set a new standard for Thai popular botanical works. Part 2 of the book contains a list of synonyms, references, distribution and uses, followed by a glossary, tables of family and generic characters, list of references (rather oddly and unhelpfully arranged), and indices to Thai and English names. The book is intended for people without formal botanical training, but has been done with the help of

competent local plant taxonomists. It will be useful to many scientists and laymen alike. The book was produced at the CMU Herbarium, Chiang Mai University,—*W.Y.B.*

Tree Seeds and Seedlings for Restoring Forests in Northern Thailand, by the Forest Restoration Research Unit (FORRU), Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai. Biology Department, Science Faculty, Chiang Mai University (2000). 151 pp, soft cover, 150 baht (Contact Dr. Stephen Elliott or Dr. Vilaiwan Anusarnsunthorn, FORRU, Biology, Faculty of Science, Chiang Mai Univ., Chiang Mai 50200. E-mail: scopplrn@chiangmai.ac.th).

This important publication is a practical guide to the “framework species” method used by FORRU for promoting regeneration of forests on degraded hill areas of the North, through the selection, germination, and planting out of native fast-growing pioneer and some climax forest species. The method jump-starts and stimulates natural forest succession through rapid shading out of herbaceous weeds and encouraging immigration of more native, animal-dispersed species. Part 1 explains the philosophy and methods in detail to the general reader with the help of photographs and line drawings. Part 2 is a detailed guide to the selection and propagation of 45 species of trees, including detailed descriptions and line drawings of seeds and seedlings. Part 3 contains a color guide to the species with a 12-page illustrated glossary of botanical terminology. This book sets a high scientific standard and is a must for anyone interested in reforestation. A Thai language edition has also been printed.—*W.Y.B.*

Forest Inventory and Monitoring Manual, by Horst Weyerhaeuser and Timm Tennigkeit, supported by Heinrich Boell Foundation, Chiang Mai (2000). 40 pp, soft cover (no price given). Bilingual with Thai and English. (www.mekonginfo.org (ICRAF))

This manual is based on experiences from two regional training courses organized by the Department of Forest Resources (headed by the late Dr. Apichart Kaosa-ard), Faculty of Agriculture, Chiang Mai University, in cooperation with the German Foundation of International Development. It briefly summarizes standard techniques important in forest inventories, including: forest mensuration techniques (tree parameters, stand characteristics, non-timber forest products, biomass), inventory design (sampling techniques, sample plot design), and data collection and analysis. The book is a useful and short summary of inventory methods for trees from the forestry literature.—*W.Y.B.*

Carnivores of Mainland South-East Asia, by B. Kanchanasakha, S. Simcharoen and U Tin Than. Endangered Species Unit, WWF–Thailand Project Office, 1998 (50/9 Fhonthongnivet (Soi 3), Paholyothin Road, Bangkok, Bangkok 10220), 236 pp., hard cover.

An introduction to the families of carnivores, and to the SE Asian region, followed by descriptions of 50 species including excellent black-and-white drawings, range maps, and some details of ecology and behavior. Final sections include an endangered status table, diagrams of tracks, and tips on how to observe or study carnivores.—*W.Y.B.*

Mammals of Khao Yai National Park (2nd ed.), by Sompoad Srikosamatara & Troy Hansel. Green World Foundation (394/46-48 Soi Penphat 4, Maharaj Road, Pranakorn, Bangkok 10200; fax 662-622-1618 (2000). 120 pp, soft cover. Bilingual with Thai and English.

A useful pocket guide to the common mammals of Khao Yai Park, including descriptions and excellent drawings of 23 species and a checklist of 70 species known to occur. Useful features include a good topographic map showing 18 hiking trails, trail descriptions, comments on the park and how to see mammals, and a bibliography of 18 references.—*W.Y.B.*

Waterfalls and Gibbon Calls: Exploring Khao Sok National Park (2nd ed.), by Thom Henley. Limmark Advertising and Printing (1999). 144 pp, soft cover. Price: 470 baht. (For information, contact Pai Tio Rediscovery, P.O. Box 35, Krabi 81000, Thailand.)

Park guides are not normally reviewed in the *NHB*, but this one has some features that make it particularly noteworthy and interesting. Khao Sok National Park in Surat Thani, South Thailand, is part of the largest tropical wet evergreen forest in the South and occupies the southern edge of the Cheow Lan Reservoir. In addition to the usual visitor guide information and park highlights, this book has a good account of the park's history and a frank discussion of park problems and local people living in the area, and their attitudes toward the park. Park managers and experts know all too well that 'no park is an island,' and this book also makes that clear. About half of the book has interesting discussions of the ecology and biology that one might experience in the park, with many paintings and photographs. Although the author is not a scientist, this material is for the most part accurate and very appropriate and interesting for visitors. However, I suggest that before doing another edition, the author enlist the collaboration of a botanist, as there are a number of botanical errors, and much more could have been done with plants. A bird expert could also help to explain the ornithological attractions better. There are also too many misspelled technical terms and species names are not properly italicized. But even at 470 baht, this guide is a good buy for the average foreign visitor, and those planning to write similar interpretative books will get a lot of good ideas from this one.—*W.Y.B.*

Biodiversity Conservation in Thailand: A National Report, prepared by the Office of Environmental Policy and Planning (OEPP). Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment, Bangkok (2000). 142 pp, soft cover. (Biological Resources Division, National Resources and Environmental Management Division, OEPP, Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment, 60/1 Soi Pibul Wattana 7, Rama VI Road, Bangkok 10400)

Thailand signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1992, but has not yet ratified it. Nevertheless, officials hope that it will do so soon, and the Convention has served as a guiding framework for biodiversity conservation plans in the kingdom. The government set up a National Committee on the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1993 under the National Environment Board, which has worked toward satisfying Thailand's requirements under the Convention. This report satisfies the requirement under Article 6, that the Contracting Parties are obliged to report on implementation of provisions of the Convention. The contents of chapters are as follows: Ch. 1: Biodiversity and Status; Ch. 2: Activities Prior to the Enactment of the National Strategy on Biodiversity; Ch. 3: National Strategy for Implementing the CBD; Ch. 4: Coordinating Mechanisms for the Implementation of the CBD; Ch. 5: International Cooperation and Collaboration; Ch. 6: Capacity for an Implementation of the CBD; Annex I: National Policies, Measures and Plans on the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Biodiversity 1998–2002 (approved by the Cabinet on July 15, 1997); Annex II: Drafted Regulation on the Access and Transfer

of Biological Resources; Annex III: Guideline on Biodiversity Data Management (BDM);
Annex IV: Biodiversity Data Management Action Plan.—*W.Y.B.*

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65/16 Chaiyapruk Road, Taling Chan, Bangkok 10170 Thailand
Tel. 882-1010 Fax. (662) 433-2742, 434-1385
E-Mail : info@amarin.co.th Homepage : <http://www.amarin.co.th>