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Research

Araceae of Mulu National Park. I. Four new species of *Schismatoglottis* (Araceae)

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Four new species of *Schismatoglottis* are described and illustrated from Mulu National Park in Malaysian Borneo: *Schismatoglottis fossae* (Patentinervia Clade), *S. roseopedes* and *S. serratodentata* (Calyptrata Clade) and *S. pellucida* (currently unplaced but likely in the Multinervia clade). A brief summary is provided of botanical exploration at Mulu, notably where pertinent to aroid botany.

Keywords: Araceae, Borneo, endemics, Karst limestone, Schismatoglottis

Introduction

While self-evidently familiar to the local community since antiquity, from a scientific perspective exploration of the Mulu massif on Borneo dates from the middle of the nineteenth century. In September 1857 a local guide, Panglima Prang, led Spenser St John, the then British Consul General in Brunei, in an attempt to reach the summit of Gunung 'Mulo' (St John 1862, 1863). On this occasion the climb was abandoned when it became evident that there was no accessible water along the route. In February 1858 St John tried again, this time accompanied by Hugh Low, a colonial administrator on Labuan, once more guided by Panglima Prang. While progressing considerably further than on the first attempt they again had to turn back this time owing to encountering an impassable precipice. Although in his account of the aborted second attempt St John (1863: 8–10) states several times that Hugh Low paid close attention to the plants and in particular to *Nepenthes* there is no evidence by way of herbarium vouchers to support the notion that botanical collections were made on this ascent, although Low appears to have made plant collection on a subsequent visit to the limestone in the vicinity of and while attempting to climb Gunung Api in 1858 (Cowan 1986, Kiew 2001, Julia et al. 2018; see also Reece and Cribb 2002).

There are seemingly unverified reports – (<www.nationaalherbarium.nl/FMCollectors/H/HoseC.htm>), but no mention made in either of Hose's books pertinent to exploration (Hose 1927, 1929) – that Charles Hose, accompanied by his uncle George Frederick Hose made a third attempt to climb Gunung Mulu in December 1894, but if this occurred it appears to have failed.



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