

# A SHORT NOTE ON THE HETEROCERA OF PENINJAU, MT. SERAMBU, BAU, SARAWAK: A CENTURY AFTER

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## INTRODUCTION

Peninjau Hill, a spur of Mount Serambu (N 01° 25' 47.0" E 110° 13' 57.7") is located in Bau district, Sarawak. The great naturalist, A.R. Wallace once visited this hill and stayed for three weeks, from December 1855 to January 1856 for the purpose of making a collection of land-shells, butterflies and moths, ferns and orchids (Wallace, 1869). For twenty-six nights of collecting by only using a lamp, he managed to collect 1,386 moths which represented all the chief tribe of moths. He described this steep pyramidal mountain of crystalline basaltic rocks as a spot where he never found elsewhere in collecting a great abundance of moths during his eight years' of wanderings in the East. A dedicated Italian botanist, Odoardo Beccari who described many new plant species and made other important contributions to biological knowledge of the Malaysian/Indonesian region also once visited Peninjau in 1902, and commemorated his visit with his famous writing titled 'Wanderings in The Great Forests of Borneo'. An attempt to document the insect communities at the very spot where Wallace did, Moulton (1912) used the exact method like Wallace's and produced a checklist of insects including butterflies, moths, cicadas, tree-lanterns and beetles. However, none of the moths reported by Moulton (1912) in his checklist was recorded in this trip except for a few genera. The hill was once densely clothed with luxuriant forest as experienced by Wallace (1869), Beccari (1986) and Moulton (1912). Today this mosaic of fragmented habitat of old forest stands intermixed with farmland and orchards, which is a far-cry from the once a pristine lowland primary forests.