Mapania meekiongii, a new species of Mapania (Cyperaceae) from Sarawak, Malaysia

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Abstract

Mapania meekiongii Miraadila & Shabdin, a new species from Sarawak is described and illustrated. The appearance of Mapania meekiongii is reminiscent of both M. cuspidata and M. sapuaniana but differs by some other morphological characters.

Keywords: Borneo, conservation, Cyperaceae, Mapania meekiongii, Sarawak

Introduction

The cosmopolitan sedge family Cyperaceae is the third largest monocotyledon family, after orchids and grasses, with 106 genera and ca. 5400 species (Govarts et al., 2007). They form a huge, morphologically diverse, geographically widespread and ecologically and economically important family (Naczi, 2005). Sedges occupy a wide range of habitats from swamps to sand-dunes and tropical forests to high arctic tundra (Smith et al., 2009). Nevertheless, some species are very localised, specific to only certain habitats and of conservation concern (Naczi & Ford, 2008). Cyperaceae comprises two subfamilies, Mapanioideae and Cyperoideae (Muasya et al., 2009, Simpson et al., 2007). Two tribes are assigned under Mapanioideae, namely Hypolytraeae and Chrysitriceae. Mapania, a genus in tribe Hypolytraeae contains a group of mostly forest dwelling sedges which are widely distributed throughout tropics (Simpson, 1996). Borneo and Peninsular Malaysia are considered to be centres of diversity for Mapania with 25 and 16 species recorded, respectively (Simpson, 1992), and new species are continue being discovered [Shabdin et al., 2013a; 2013b; (2015 in press)]. Half of the recorded species in Borneo are endemic.

The new species was collected from Kapit, about 20 years ago and kept in the herbarium as unidentified species. There was no known study conducted on this genus since the last enumeration by Simpson (1992). Shabdin et al. (2013a; 2013b) however, only discussed the two new species, M. sapuaniana