

TAXONOMY & ECOLOGY

Beyond Classical Approaches

Edited by

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THE COLOURFUL FLOWERS AND NEWLY FLUSHED FOLIAGE OF SELECTED SHRUBS AT UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

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ABSTRACT

The planting of shrubs bearing colourful flowers and colourful flushed foliage in the campus of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak at the designed landscape area has created attractive scenery. These colourful shrubs species formed the second strata of the main landscape canopy has improved the aesthetic value and environmental qualities when they are blended together with the utility of the surrounding. Study was conducted in UNIMAS campus which involved documentations of 3 plants for newly flushed foliage and 7 plants with colourful flower and also the duration regarding their blooming and flushing. *Pseuderanthemum carruthersii* has the longest flushing period which was 16 days while *Mussaenda erythrophylla* 'Queen Sirikit' has longest blooming period which was 75 days. The observations were carried out during the month of December 2009 until March 2010. December had received a constant distribution of rainfall for the whole month and this might influence the initiation of flowering and flushing of the studied shrubs. Knowledge on flowering and flushing of planted shrubs in the campus and their relationship with the environmental condition was also discussed as this probably influence tree performance and placement of the species in the landscape master plan.

Keywords: colourful flowers, colorful newly flushed foliage, aesthetic value

INTRODUCTION

Landscape can generally define as view of the land which creates by nature or architectural structure (Garis Panduan Lanskap Negara (2008), and the six principles and designs of landscape only known to Malaysians in the 1970's (Rejab, 1993). The six principles in landscape include measurement, simplicity, variation, balancing, replication and repetition (Rejab, 1993). Apart from the principle there are also design elements which need to be compiled together in order to enhance sense of attraction, point of view, and aesthetic value of the landscape design. There are colour, texture, shape, line and contrast which can support the utilization of landscape principle.

Colour is very important in landscape. Colour may enhance attraction and influence feeling towards the landscape and creates a harmony atmosphere. Colours also may upgrade the

aesthetics value of a landscape. Colours may be produced by flower and also foliage. Some examples of plants which produces colorful flower are *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* which have many varieties with bright colour of flower such as red, pink and orange. The size of flower is also different between one and another variety. *Canna* spp, *Orchid* spp, *Bougainvillea* spp, and *Lantana camara* are some other species which have many varieties of colourful flowers.

The Universiti Malaysia Sarawaks' Landscape Master Plan for the new campus was implemented in 2004 with the planting of tree species. However, the inclusion of shrubs and herbecous plant only initiated in 2008 where some of the shrubs planted produce colourful flowers and coloured newly-flushed foliage. Knowledge on the species is important for planner in designing the softscape of the campus.