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***Rhizanthus lowii* (Becc.) Harms. (Rafflesiaceae), a new record from Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarawak, Malaysia**

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Abstract: *Rhizanthus lowii* (Becc.) Harms., a new species record from the Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarawak is re-described and illustrated. The blooms show outstanding features that include its orange-white *batik* pattern half-way through every tepal with very dense hairs covering the entire inner side of the tepals. Its host is *Tetrastigma diepenhorstii* (Vitaceae).

Key words: *Rhizanthus lowii*, Rafflesiaceae, new record, Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarawak.

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Rhizanthus* Dumortier (Rafflesiaceae) is a lesser-known endoparasite compared to its sister, *Rafflesia*. The *Rhizanthus* species only parasitise the near-ground stems of a few species of plants including the *Tetrastigma* (Vitaceae) vine, and is therefore a ground plant (Donna *et al.*, 2011). It has no leaves or photosynthetic tissue, stems or roots and the only vegetative part being the fine filaments or haustoria-like appendages that penetrate the stems of the host for its nutrients. The plant produces ephemeral flowers that are both unisexual and bisexual. Mature buds of *Rhizanthus* in Sarawak are known locally as “patma tikus, patma laba-laba or jambu lipa”. Unlike those of *Rafflesia*, the *Rhizanthus* mature buds are oblong or ovoid, the open flower has 16–20 narrow thin and valvate lobes ending in elongate stiff bayonet-like appendages which are important character to differentiate among the known species. Currently, only four species of *Rhizanthus* are known and strictly distributed in South-east Asia (Banziger, 2007; Meekiong *et al.*, 2010). They are *R. zippelii* (Blume) Spach that is only known from the type locality near Bogor, west Java, Indonesia, *R. deceptor* Banziger et Hansen, endemic to West Sumatera, Indonesia, *R. infanticida* Banziger et Hansen, a species that is widespread in South Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia and Sumatera and *R. lowii* (Becc.) Harms that is endemic to Borneo, but so far has been reported only in Brunei and Crocker Range, Sabah. The scientific expedition for this paper was undertaken in June 2008, part of the Heart of Borneo (HoB) project at Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary (LEWS), Sarawak. A book entitled, “Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary: A Checklist of Flora, Fauna, Food and Medicinal Plants” edited by P.P.K Chai (2000) did not mention the occurrence of *R. lowii*. However, it is now included in the latest checklist book published by the Forest Department Sarawak (edited by Meekiong *et al.* 2019) based from this expedition findings undertaken.

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