

## BOOK REVIEW

### **Prosiding seminar dan lokakarya nasional etnobotani, Cisarua-Bogor, 19–20**

**Februari 1992.** Rusdy E. Nasution, Soedarsono Riswan, Prabowo Tjitropranoto, Eko Baroto Waluyo, Wahyono Martowikrido, Harini Roemantyo, and Salikin S. Wardoyo (editors). Jakarta: Departemen Pertanian dan Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (LIPI) (Herbarium Bogoriense, Jalan Raya Juanda 22–24, Bogor, Indonesia), 1992. Pp. viii, 432. \$11.25 U.S. (Rp 22500) (paperbound). ISBN 979–8006–71–2.

Indonesia is biologically and culturally one of the most diverse countries in the world. An archipelago of over 17,000 islands covered largely by tropical rainforest, it contains upwards of 30,000 plant species and over a hundred distinct cultural units.

Not surprisingly, there is a great deal of ethnobotanical knowledge present in the islands, much of which is being lost very rapidly. Some of this information has been collected by Indonesian ethnobotanists across the country. To date, the results of these studies have been scattered across publications of a variety of disciplines, mostly Indonesian publications. In 1992, however, a conference was held in Bogor to attempt to bring together ethnobotanists from across the country. This book is a collection of 61 papers presented at the conference. All the papers are by Indonesian authors, and all are in Indonesian with English abstracts.

Most of the papers are purely descriptive, some containing long tables listing names and uses of plants in one or another section of the country. Discussed also are plants used for food, fiber, medicine, contraception, and cosmetics, as well as in ethnoveterinary treatments and in traditional ceremonies. There is little of the theoretical bases pervasive in much European and North American ethnobotanical literature, such as ethnotaxonomy, chemical ecology, or optimization theory. Nevertheless, the book is remarkable for the breadth and diversity of topics covered, and for the wealth of valuable information contained in its pages.

This book will prove to be immensely useful to anyone working on the ethnobotany of insular Southeast Asia. Such progress deserves to be encouraged and fostered.

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