

## **An ethnobotanical survey of medicinal and other useful plants of Muruts in Sabah, Malaysia**

### **Abstract**

This paper presents the results of ethnobotanical studies on medicinal and other useful plants used traditionally by the Muruts in Sabah. They have rich ethnobotanical resources. A total of 91 species of plants were noted and collected during the surveys. Among them are 68 species of medicinal plants and 64 species of other useful plants. Reports from plant informants were obtained during field studies in February 1994, in March 1998, in May 1998, in May 2000 and in February 2001. For each species are given the botanical name, Murut name(s), collection number, medicinal uses, as well as plant part(s) used, and other uses. The popularity of plants with traditional uses among the Muruts is fading due to migration, restriction from religion, lost interest of younger generations and heavy dependence on modern medicine. Opening of forests for agricultural development and timber harvesting makes the resources scarce which is also contributing to the loss of knowledge. Awareness activities in Malaysia's primary and secondary schools on the usefulness of plants and their environment, and government policies on medicinal plants, have contributed significantly towards the preservation of indigenous traditional knowledge of plants.