

Notes on species composition and ornamental gingers in Tawau Hills Park, Sabah

Abstract

This paper updates the composition of species and reports on ornamental gingers at Tawau Hills Park, Sabah. The gingers were recorded within 10 m to the left and right of the 15-km-long nature trail and 4-km-long forest rentis. Sixty-four species from 13 genera were documented. Thirty-eight percent and 28 % of the gingers in Sabah and Borneo, respectively are found within the Park. Of these species, seven are likely to be new to science and endemic to this area, and 19–29 species were evaluated as attractive and may be exploited for landscaping. One species, *Boesenbergia pulchella*, was found growing only several metres from the edge of the hot spring, which indicates that it could tolerate soil of high sulfur content and that it may have survived this harsh condition through years of acclimatization. This observation suggests that time and a little effort are required for successful planting of delicate ornamental gingers in unfavourable soil condition in a desired location in a garden. During the survey, *Schapochlamys* was not encountered along the trail where it was reported to occur previously. The results of this study suggest that the park harbours many ornamental gingers and plays an important role in the conservation of these plants in Sabah.