

Aroid Conference at International Botanical Conference in Yokohama

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On Friday, September 3, 1993, an aroid conference entitled "Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Systematics of the Araceae" was held during the XV International Botanical Congress held in Conference Center of Pacifico, Yokohama. The botanical congress was held between August 28th and September 3rd and had participants from all parts of the world. Since it was the first International Botanical Congress to be held in Asia the participation of Japan and China was especially high. The aroid conference held during these meetings was the fifth international meeting held which dealt with the Araceae (See *Aroideana* Vol. 15 [1992] for a history of aroid conferences). The Yokohama aroid meetings were co-moderated by Tom Croat and Jin Murata. After opening remarks and a welcome by Japanese host Jin Murata, Tom Croat gave a brief history of the current taxonomic work on the family.

There were eight invited papers:

1. Alistair Hay of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney gave a presentation entitled "A Brief Sketch of the History and Progress of the Systematics of the Araceae in Malesia". This paper discussed the history of work with Araceae in Malesia, an area defined as southeast Asia ranging from the Malayan Peninsula to Indonesia and New Guinea (but excluding the Philippine Islands). It is essentially the area defined by the Flora Malesiana project, and Alistair Hay is the coordinator of that project. His published version of the paper will outline the activities of the many participants in this large effort.

2. Li Heng from the Kunming Institute of Botany in Yunnan Province of China presented an illustrated slide lecture entitled

"Species Diversity of Araceae in China". We were introduced to many of the Chinese species of Araceae. Li Heng also distributed to the group present the first circular for the planned 6th International Aroid Conference to be held in Kunming June 26-July 2, 1995.

3. Michael H. Grayum of the Missouri Botanical Garden, who was to have presented his paper "A Taxonomic Revision of *Philodendron* subgenus *Pteromischum* for Pacific and Caribbean Tropical America", was unable to attend because of illness the day of his departure and his subsequent inability to arrange for a later flight.

4. Harald U. Riedl from the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria presented a paper entitled "Morphological and Ecological Diversity of *Stylochaeton* Compared to Other Genera of Aroideae." Dr. Riedl has written the Araceae treatment of the Flora of Iraq, the Flora of Syria, and is currently involved with the Flora of Ethiopia.

5. Thomas S. Ray, formerly of the University of Delaware and currently doing research in Japan, presented a "Review and Summary of Studies of Shoot Organization and Development in the Araceae." This report may be his last research project for the Araceae and is a culmination of more than a decade of work on these important aspects of growth and development.

6. Simon J. Mayo, of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, presented "A New Cladistic Classification of the Araceae" on behalf of his collaborators Josef Bogner and Peter Boyce (Munich Botanical Garden and Kew respectively). This new system of suprageneric classification, based on a computerized cladistic analysis of morphological



Photo by Hiroko Murata. Left to right: Thomas B. Croat, Shrirang Ramchadra Yadav, Myong Gi Chung, Harald Riedl, Simon Mayo, Elke Seubert, Thomas Ray, Alistair Hay, Li Heng, and Jin Murata.

and chromosomal information, is revolutionary in its proposed changes and will be presented in their new book entitled "The Genera of the Araceae". We will be announcing this work in the I.A.S. Newsletter as soon as it becomes available.

7. Elke Seubert, from the University of Kaiserslautern, Germany presented her paper entitled, "A Refined Generic Classification of the Araceae". This work, the result of her Ph.D. dissertation, is the result of a thorough study of Araceae fruits and was recently published. Look for an announcement in the newsletter of the International Aroid Society as soon as we are aware of the availability of the publication.

8. Myong Gi Chung, from Gyeongsang National University in Korea, presented the results of the work done at Rutgers by Jim French and his collaborators on studies with chloroplast DNA. Chung as well as Y. K. Hur are co-authors of this as yet unpublished work. The studies resulted in a thorough review of all genera of the family and have gone a long way to helping establish the most thorough revision of the Araceae by Bogner, Mayo, and Boyce.

In addition to these very fine invited papers one additional paper was presented by S. R. Yadav from the University of Goa in western India who presented a slide show on some interesting Araceae in the Flora of Western Ghats, South India.

Other attractions at the International Botanical Congress for Araceae were several posters in the Poster Sessions. These included one entitled "Distribution of *Philodendron* subgenus *Philodendron* in Central America" by Tom Croat. Mitsuru Hotta from Kagoshima University in Japan presented his poster entitled "Male Flower Diversity in Schismatoglottidinae (Araceae)." Jin Murata, Director of Nikko Botanical Garden of the University of Tokyo and faculty member in the Department of Botany at the University of Tokyo, presented three posters. One was entitled "*Arisaema flavidum*, a Honey Producing Araceae". This poster was a collaborative effort with C. Ren, Hiroko Murata, and S. Ogawa. The second was entitled "Systematics of *Typhonium* (Araceae)" and was a collaborative effort whose principal author was one of Jin's students, Duangchai Sriboonma from Thailand. In addition to Murata she was assisted by M. Hasebe, N. Murakami, and K. Iwatsuki. The third poster presented was entitled "*Arisaema* in South India." This was a collaborative effort with Shrirang Ramchadra Yadav, Head of the Department of Botany at Goa University, India.

The aroid conference in Japan, though not so well attended as we would have liked was nevertheless a great success. We are looking forward to our next meeting in Kunming during June 26-July 2, 1995.