

Case study

Cryptocoryne bogneri

Species: *Cryptocoryne bogneri* Rataj
Class: LILIOPSIDA
Order: ARALES
Family: ARACEAE



Distribution:

This is an aquatic plant endemic to Sri Lanka.

Population:

The species was believed to be extinct as it had not been recorded since 1900. However, a researcher studying and sampling *Cryptocoryne* species discovered a new population of this species at a site in the southwest of Sri Lanka in 1999 (M. Nalinda Peiris pers. comm. 2002). The physical appearance and flower of these individuals indicated that it was distinct from the two other closest species of *Cryptocoryne* (as well as from all other *Cryptocoryne* species in Sri Lanka) while corresponding in all aspects to the original description of *C. bogneri* (de Wit 1975). More than 250 individual plants were recorded.

Images from The Crypts Pages by Jan D. Bastmeijer

<http://users.bart.nl/~crypts/index.html>

Habitat:

The area is a small 75 ha patch of swamp forest on the edge of an extensive rubber estate. This forest also contains several other rare endemic species of plants that are confined to this site or have very limited distribution ranges. This forest is on private land within the heavily populated and extensively cultivated Western Province. The most recent observations were made during a relatively dry period and most of the individuals were seen on the muddy banks of a stream, although this species is recorded as being present under submerged conditions.

Threats:

This species is not commercially exploited (other species in this genus are widely grown in aquatic horticulture, but this species is difficult to cultivate), and the present owner of the site location is conserving the land as the area contains many other endemic species. The water level at the site fluctuates naturally but it is not known whether there is regular fluctuation in the numbers of mature individuals. Expanding agricultural activities and human settlements have impacted the other sites where this species was previously recorded.

Sources:

De Wit, H.C.D. 1975. *Cryptocoryne alba* de Wit (nov. sp.) en *Cryptocoryne bogneri* de Wit (nov. sp.). *Het Aquarium* 45(12): 326-327.
 Jacobsen, N. 1987. *Cryptocoryne*. *A Revised Handbook to the Flora of Ceylon* Vol. 6: 85-99.
 Rataj, K., 1975. Revision of the genus *Cryptocoryne* Fischer. *Studie CSAV*, c.3.Praha.