

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2007)

Project Ref. No.	13026
Project Title	Field Guide to the Forest Trees of Southern Thailand
Country(ies)	Thailand
UK Organisation	RBG, Kew
Collaborator(s)	The Forest Herbarium, Bangkok, Thailand
Project Leader	Tim Utteridge
Report date	31 October 2007
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 3
Project website	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

[Please note this was granted funding in mid-November 2004 to start on 1st January 2005; thus the timetable has shifted by 9 months from the Stage 2 application.]

The project has been undertaking identifications mainly in the last six months for the treatments to contribute to the Field Guide. All naming that has been requested to be done at Kew has been completed by October 2007, and specimens have been distributed to experts in Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh and to visiting scientists at Kew when they have visited. The main family identifications completed at Kew have been the Flacourtiaceae, Icacinaceae s.l., Violaceae and Rosaceae. Other specialists, particularly those based at the project's collaborating institute at BKF who have written accounts for the Flora of Thailand, have been completing naming for the project.

The main thrust of the project in the last six months has been the production of treatments. Once identifications have been completed the project team has been producing the treatments, which involves writing the taxonomic text, comparison with other species etc. and most importantly formatting the hundreds of images for the book (both photographs and line drawings). The project team in Thailand have been working on completing treatments in the Euphorbiaceae, which is one of the largest groups in the project. Other treatments of large families finished are Sapindaceae, Tiliaceae, Elaeocarpaceae, Fagaceae, Apocynaceae,; in addition to these many smaller families have been completed.

The final set of money for the team was sent out in October 2007 after receiving their expenditure report etc. The final set of specimens was received at Kew in September 2007; all of these have been sorted to family and identifications undertaken where required. Photocopying of articles has been ongoing at Kew and these have been set out to the project team in Thailand for those publications that are difficult to get in Thailand.

The project team in Thailand have started discussions with the publishers for the book. Because of the greater number of taxa treated that originally envisaged the book is projected to be a 3 volume work, though we are discussing this with the project team as 3 volumes is quite

unwieldy for a field guide and we are hoping to change the format a little to reduce it to 2 volumes.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

There have been no notable problems with the project, and the guide is still on schedule to be published during 2008 as in the baseline timetable. There may be problems with the identification of a couple of problematic groups, particularly *Aglaia* in the Meliaceae, but we are in contact with specialist who is based in the UK and has started to visit Kew regularly and we are hopeful that we will get this group named. The other problematic group is *Garcinia*.

As previously mentioned it appears that due to a miscalculation in the original budget the project team in Thailand may need to find more funding for the second half of 2007, but it appears that funding may be available from Thailand to cover salaries for this period.

There was still an ongoing problem with mothballs in the specimen processing, however because the number of specimens being received at Kew has now dropped significantly (the last two bundles were received in September 2007), repackaging the specimens did not take long. The problem is more at the Kew end as even though the specimens are not packed with mothballs when they arrive at Kew, staff at Kew are wary of allowing the specimens into the building because they smell very strongly of naphthalene due to processing and storage in Thailand. Even though this appears to be a minor problem, the repackaging and time it takes for the specimens to lose their smell can be considerable and I imagine that other projects may have similar mothball problems with herbarium specimens. However, Kew is notoriously stringent on naphthalene, so this may not be a problem in other institutes (though apparently it is an UK or EU health and safety issue).

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**