matra, and *Orania sylvicola* and *Oncosperma horridum* are also known in Sumatra.

The illustrations, apart from the attractive plates, are disappointing. The silhouettes of palms intended to clarify their habit, with one or two exceptions more often than not obscure it. Line drawings would have been preferable to the silhouettes—the difference between the leaflets of *Oncosperma horridum* and *O. tigillarium* is not emphasized in the silhouettes, for example, and would have been better elucidated by diagram. Even the sketches are not all reliable; for example, the sketch of the ocrea of *Korthalsia echinometra* misleads the reader into thinking that the stem is swollen beneath the ocrea.

Despite the cumbersome nature of the name *Johannesteijsmannia* this is the correct name for *Teysmannia*, and it is not justifiable to continue to use this old name when other newer combinations such as *Rhopaloblaste singaporensis* are adopted in the text notes.

One of the really useful features of the book is the check list of Malayan palms—this list is likely to be of interest to Palm Society members in the preparation of desiderata lists for seed collectors.

In summary, many of the deficiencies of this book could have been eliminated by consultation with other palmologists and more careful proof-reading; the book gives the impression of having been written in isolation and in a hurry. Despite these comments, this is the only modern partial introduction to Malayan palms, but the interested naturalist will still have to use the works of Furtado, Beccari, and Ridley to identify Malayan palms with confidence. The price of M$35 will probably put the book beyond the reach of Malayan students but Palm Society members may wish to purchase it, if only for the beautiful plate by Mr. Ho Sai Yuen of *Johannesteijsmannia magnifica* and *J. lanceolata*.

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PALM BRIEFS

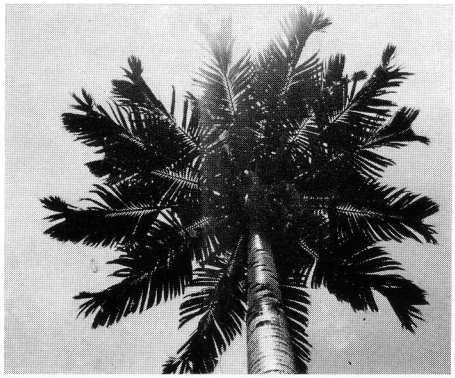
Pigafetta filaris in Sibolangit

In relation to Dr. M. E. Darian's article on *Pigafetta* in PRINCIPES 17(1), the following note is presented.

Sibolangit Botanic Garden in North Sumatra, Indonesia, lies about 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Medan on the road to the hill resort of Berastagi and at about 500 meters (1640 feet) altitude. It covers an area of about 20 hectares (49 acres) and is fringed on one side by a small nature reserve about 100 hectares (247 acres) in extent. The Garden was founded in 1914 as a branch of the Bogor Botanic Gardens. Owing to economic difficulties, the Bogor Gardens relinquished control of the Garden after the Second World War, and since then the Garden and the Nature Reserve have been run by the Department of Nature Conservation. The Garden at the moment is in an agreeable state of neglect, with only the main paths kept open from the virulent stinging shrub *Laportea*. It is hoped that the Bogor Gardens will soon be able to take over the running of Sibolangit Garden again and begin to re-establish it as a scientific garden. I very much hope so, if for no other reason than that this garden is, to my knowledge, the only place where mature trees of *Pigafetta filaris* Becc. can be found in abundance in cultivation.

Pigafetta filaris, native in Minahassa (N. Celebes) and New Guinea (including Irian Jaya), was regarded by David Fairchild as his favourite palm. It cer-

1. *Pigafetta filaris.* These trees were planted at Sibolangit Botanic Garden in 1958.



2. Sunlight is reflected from the highly polished trunk of *Pigafetta filaris.*

tainly is very beautiful, but in my opinion is outshone in grace by *Actinorhytis calapparia* (which, incidentally, is also common in Sibolangit). When I first visited Sibolangit in 1971, I could find no ripe seed of the *Pigafetta,* though seedlings were so abundant as to form swards under the female trees. I brought back seedlings to Bogor to try to reestablish this glorious palm in Bogor, where until recently grew two trees. The seedlings brought back grew extremely fast but proved to be very susceptible to fungal attacks at the base of the stem when repotted, and also to red spider attacks on the leaf. Of this original introduction, some 40 plants still survive and we have recently planted out four, and hope shortly to plant an avenue of *Pigafetta* in front of the new laboratory buildings. In March, 1973, I was able to revisit Sibolangit and this time was able to collect many ripe fruits which were distributed to the Seed Bank under the collection number *Dransfield* 3404.

In all, there are 25 trees of *Pigafetta filaris* at Sibolangit in various stages of maturity. The trees in the accompanying photograph (Fig. 1) were planted in 1958 from seed from another tree in the Garden and are already 20 meters (about 65 feet) or more in height. Other trees are apparently self sown. The original introduction was from the Celebes but I have been unable to find more details of this. The trunk is about the size of the trunk of a coconut but differs markedly in the beautiful shiny, green-brown surface—almost as if the trunk had been wax-polished. The elegant arching leaves are densely golden-brown thorny along the midrib and on the leaf base. Inflorescences are axillary, highly branched, and somewhat reminiscent of a very slender partial inflorescence of *Metroxylon.* The white scaly fruit is surprisingly small (ca. 8 mm. × 6 mm. or ⅓ × ½ inch) and the sarcotesta around the endosperm is soft and sweetish. Fruit, when produced, is in vast quantity, but because of the high polish on the trunk, the tree is virtually unclimbable, and I had to be content to collect fallen fruit.

Sibolangit is easily reached and palm enthusiasts visiting South East Asia can fly to Medan and then take a taxi or bus for the one-hour journey to the Botanic Garden. Despite the state of neglect in the Garden, the sight of many regal *Pigafetta* palms growing so luxuriantly is most memorable.

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NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

Mr. Wayne W. Parish, a member of The Palm Society, offered two *coco-de-mer* (*Lodoicea maldivica*) to the Society if we had a place to plant them. It was suggested that he donate them to Fairchild Tropical Garden, especially since he also belongs to that organization. He and Mrs. Parrish had been to the Seychelles where they had made arrangements with the local government and BOAC to procure viable nuts and to ship them to him. He then was planning to bring them to Miami himself from his winter home in Hobe Sound. However, there was a mix-up in the delivery which caused quite a delay—the nuts went to Brussels and a carton destined for Brussels was shipped to Mr. Parrish. He finally got the nuts and dispatched them to Dr. Popenoe at Fairchild Garden. It now appears that at some point someone cut the hypocotyls of these nuts and they will not grow. It certainly is a big disappointment to all concerned to be so frustrated but we do thank Mr. and Mrs. Parrish for all the effort and expense they went to for this exciting and special gift.

On May 11, 1973 the South Florida members enjoyed a covered dish supper in the garden of Mrs. Lucita Wait. Guest of honor was Professor Dr. T. A. Davis of the Indian Statistical Institute in Calcutta. He showed slides to illustrate the way the Fibonacci progression of numbers appears in nature, including the palm family. This progression is plotted by adding the highest number to the one immediately preceding it—1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55 etc. ($1 + 0 = 1$; $1 + 1 = 2$; $2 + 1 = 3$; $3 + 2 = 5$, etc.) Most of the audience was not familiar with this system, nor its apparent application in the plant family so it caused great surprise and interest.

Save The Palms Committee

Members of the Palm Society in South Florida have been working closely with the Save the Palms Committee (to combat lethal yellowing of coconut palms). Paul Drummond, Chairman of the South Florida Area Members, is Vice-chairman of the Save the Palms Committee and has been of great help to Mrs. Murray McQuaid, Chairman. Mrs. McQuaid, who recently joined the Palm Society, was dismayed to find coconuts dying all around her new home when she moved to Coral Gables a year ago. Single-handedly she called together a group of citizens and formed them into the Save the Palms Committee. It is due to the efforts of this committee that additional funds have been appropriated by the State of Florida to further the work of the (State) University of Florida Research Center on Lethal Yellowing located in Fort Lauderdale. On May 29th, 1973, at a meeting in Coral Gables, Dr. Bryson James, head of the Research Center, announced that Terramycin may soon be available in Florida on a limited basis under strict control. If two grams of this antibiotic are injected under pressure into