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**DIVERSITY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF *CRYPTOCORYNE* (ARACEAE) SPECIES OF PEAT SWAMP ECOSYSTEM IN BORNEO**

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*Cryptocoryne* (Araceae) is a genus of submerged aquatic plants commonly known as water trumpet. *Cryptocoryne* spp. have been increasingly popular and used in the aquarium industry worldwide. They are found in rivers, streams or swampy areas mostly in fresh water and peat swamps while a few species are able to grow in mangroves. Some *Cryptocoryne* species are rare and grow within their native habitats and are considered localised in their distribution and endemic to certain areas. This study was carried out in Borneo focusing on areas within Sarawak, Malaysia and Kalimantan, Indonesia. Our surveys recorded about 14 *Cryptocoryne* species in Sarawak. The species that inhabit the peat swamp ecosystem of Sarawak are *C. ferruginea* Engler, *C. fusca* de Wit, *C. longicauda* Engler, *C. striolata* Engler, *C. pallidinervia* Engler, and *C. yujii* Bastmeijer. The most common species, is *C. ciliata* (Roxburgh.) Schott., is the only species that thrives in mangrove and brackish water habitats. Two varieties of *C. cordata* Griff., namely *C. cordata* var. *zonata* and *C. cordata* var. *grabowskii*, have also been recorded. The common species that occur in peat swamp areas in Kalimantan are *C. edithiae* de Wit, *C. fusca*, *C. longicauda*, *C. pallidinervia* and three varieties of *C. cordata* namely *C. cordata* var. *grabowskii*, *C. cordata* var. *griffithii* and *C. cordata* var. *zonata* while *C. purpurea* Ridl. has one variety known as *C. purpurea* var. *borneoensis*. Our field observations of *Cryptocoryne* populations in natural habitat indicated that they are often in a stage of high disturbance due to human activities for land conversion and also overharvesting to cater for the commercial demand for aquarium culture. Hence *ex situ* conservation of *Cryptocoryne* species in suitable totally protected areas, especially in Sarawak, should be considered to avoid species extinction in the future.

**Keywords:** *Cryptocoryne*, peat swamp ecosystem, Borneo, conservation