

NEPENTHES CLIPEATA CONSERVATION

BARRY RICE • International Carnivorous Plant Society • P.O. Box 72741 • Davis, CA 95617 • USA • barry@sarracenia.com

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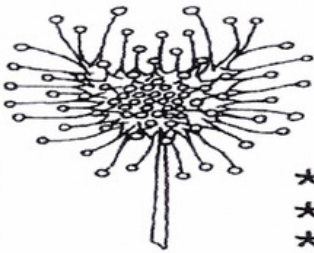
During the ICPS International Conference in San Francisco (2000), I realized it was a marvelous opportunity for conservation. In the same room were such luminaries of the *Nepenthes* worlds of field study, exploration, and nursery propagation as Robert Cantley, Charles Clarke, Chien Lee, and Andreas Wistuba. We formed an impromptu discussion group, and talked about the most imperiled species. It was agreed that a species that was the most likely to become extinct in the wild within the next few decades was *Nepenthes clipeata*. Some estimates suggested that less than a few dozen individual clones remained in the wild. Population pressures were primarily change in habitat, and now that the population was so low, illegal plant collection was likely to deal the final death blow to the plants in the wild.

With extinction a likely outcome, I considered creative conservation options. Since this plant was established in various collections around the world, it was only a matter of time that cultivated plants would represent the bulk (and ultimately the only) genetic record of the *Nepenthes clipeata* genome. A draft ex situ conservation plan was developed, but due to other more pressing issues was allowed to stagnate for a few years.

In 2003, the core people who met in 2000 spontaneously redeveloped interest in this project; the draft conservation plan was recirculated and saw many edits and modifications. James Cokendolpher joined the team (a crucial addition as it turns out). The conservation plan draft was finalized, and it is reprinted in this issue of Carnivorous Plant Newsletter. Read it, and you will learn more about this conservation initiative the ICPS has been working on.

A few comments before you read the conservation plan. First, this initiative does not have any partners based in Indonesia. This is unfortunate, and the ICPS would welcome Indonesian participation. However, the main focus of this initiative is ex situ conservation, so the lack of Indonesian partners should not be misinterpreted as second-party meddling. Second, you will notice that some of the dates are long past, and not all our achievements have occurred on schedule. This is because this plan, like all others, has some goals that are met and others not. Third, I want to note that over the last few years, James Cokendolpher has truly been the powerhouse and engine-room keeping this conservation initiative alive. He alone has been enthusiastic about keeping this activity alive, while we others have been distracted by other pressing concerns. Quite literally, this conservation project owes its vitality to his work.

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