

The snake pennywort *Geophila repens* at Mount Faber Park

Subjects: Snake pennywort, *Geophila repens* (Magnilophyta: Rubiaceae).

Subjects identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Mount Faber Park; 21 April 2014; 0830 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest and managed vegetation.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: Three healthy patches of *Geophila repens* were observed to be growing at Mount Faber Park and along Mount Faber Road (Fig. 1-3). The patches are close to each other but separated by footpaths and roads. The plants were observed to be flowering and fruiting profusely.

Remarks: *Geophila repens* is an endangered creeper in Singapore (Chong et al., 2009). It is found in inland forests, amongst leaf litter. The round, reddish-orange berries are eaten and dispersed by birds.

The population at Mount Faber Park is believed to be naturally occurring as it was growing on turf area that has no ornamental plantings and is close to secondary forested patches from where it was probably dispersed. This population was not recorded by Teo et al. (2010), and could possibly be genetically similar or identical to the population at Henderson Road due to their close proximity. Successful attempts have been made by the National Parks Board (NParks) to collect and propagate the plant.

References:

- Teo S., B. R. Kurukulasuriya & H. T. W. Tan, 2010. The distribution and status in Singapore of the snake pennywort, *Geophila repens* (L.) I. M. Johnst. (Rubiaceae). *Nature in Singapore*. 3: 183–186.
- Chong K. Y., H. T. W. Tan & R. T. Corlett, 2009. *A Checklist of the Total Vascular Plant Flora of Singapore: Native, Naturalised and Cultivated Species*. Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore. 273 pp.

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Fig. 1. First patch of *Geophila repens* at Mount Faber Park (right). Picture on left shows general area.



Fig. 2. Second patch of *Geophila repens* at Mount Faber Park (right). Picture on left shows general area.



Fig. 3. Third patch of *Geophila repens* at Mount Faber Park with flowering and fruiting plants (right). Picture on left shows general area.

Photographs by Ooi Zong Yu