

EDITORIAL

Volume 37 of the *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology* assembles 18 papers and notes on animal taxonomy and biology.

The *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum* began publication in 1928 and was issued in regular numbers until 1960. Papers on both Zoology and Anthropology were included in its pages. In 1961, the museum changed its name to *The Singapore National Museum* and further issues of the Bulletin were under that name. Issues now appeared separately at irregular intervals, but were given numbers, although not on a strictly yearly basis.

In 1970, the policy of the Museum was revised and it became a Museum of Art, History and Ethnology, the zoological collection and library being removed from the premises to make room for an expanded role in these fields. This led to a period of great difficulties for the small staff responsible for their maintenance, and there were times when even retention of the collection in Singapore was in doubt.

The collections were first transferred to the ownership of the Singapore Science Centre, then under construction and without premises of its own. Since the Science Centre had no mandate to conduct scientific research, the reference materials were donated to the then University of Singapore. For a time they were stored in crates in five Romney huts on a new University site under development. Then as construction proceeded, they had to be dispersed to scattered premises in and around the University of Singapore. In 1980 much of the collection was centralised again in the top floor of the library building of Nanyang University. The two universities were united in 1981 as the National University of Singapore on the new site at Kent Ridge and the development of this site at last included proper facilities for the zoological collections. As the Nanyang and Singapore University sites were vacated for their own redevelopment the collections were brought to Kent Ridge where they are now, we hope permanently, established in specially designed modern museum premises (in the Science Library Building) within the Department of Zoology of the National University of Singapore. The old Raffles Museum collection and the collections of the Department of Zoology, now form the Zoological Reference Collection (ZRC) of the National University of Singapore, whose premises were officially opened in October 1988.

This brief history provides background to the new name of this journal. The Raffles Museum no longer exists under that name and the collection is no more associated with the Singapore National Museum so that neither of its previous titles are available to us. However, now that the collection has a permanent home with an active research role, continuation of the series becomes both possible and desirable. As direct heir of the zoological collections of the Raffles Museum, the ZRC, with permission of the National Museum, has taken up responsibility for its journal. For the sake of continuity we have adopted the name *The Raffles Bulletin* by which it was widely known in the past, suitably qualified to indicate its current restriction to the zoological sciences.

With volume 37, we resume the style of its predecessors which assembled short or medium length contributions dealing with the Southeast Asian region. Many of the present papers have been based on studies conducted in the Department of Zoology and the Zoological Reference Collection (ZRC). Several concern insects collected in Singapore mangroves. It was originally intended to devote an issue wholly to mangrove fauna but this project led to such delays that it had to be abandoned. The editors apologise to contributors whose manuscripts have been held back in this way. The revival of a zoological bulletin whose emphasis is the study of the collection is timely. The editors hope that the *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology* will be the main organ for the communication of new discoveries and ideas in systematics and ecology for workers who use the ZRC facilities.

The editors are grateful to the various contributors for their support and patience in helping us see this volume through. We hope that from 1990, the bulletin will be issued in two numbers a year. Thanks are due to the members of the editorial board for their help. Mrs. Jessie Mui helped retype many of the manuscripts for which the editors are most grateful. Mrs. Chan Yee Ngoh, Ms. Cynthia S. C. Lee and Ms. Greasi Simon helped in correspondence, editing and other administrative details.

Editors

D.H. Murphy
Peter K.L. Ng