

Long-leaved beauty berry, *Callicarpa longifolia*, at MacRitchie forest

Chua Keng Soon & Stella Ling

nhmcks@nus.edu.sg (Chua)

Subject: Long leaved beauty berry, *Callicarpa longifolia* (Magnoliophyta: Lamiaceae).

Subject identified by: Chong Kwek Yan.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, MacRitchie forest near Jelutong Tower; 21 May 2018; 1155 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest.

Observers: Chua Keng Soon & Stella Ling.

Observation: An example of this understorey shrub, about 2 m tall with lilac flowers (see accompanying photograph), was found growing at the edge of a forest path.

Remarks: Of the two native species of *Callicarpa* in Singapore, only *Callicarpa longifolia* Lam. is extant; the other species *Callicarpa maingayi* King & Gamble is believed to be locally extinct (Chong et al., 2009). *Callicarpa longifolia* is a beautiful plant, and in the past had been commonly grown as a hedge plant in the Tanglin area (Keng, 1990: 192). It is widely used in traditional Malay medicine for fever, mouth ulcer, stomach discomfort, diarrhea and syphilis. Crushed leaves of the plant added to water are able to immobilise fish (Burkill et al., 1966: Vol. 1, 407-408).

References:

- Burkill, I. H., W. Birtwistle, F. W. Foxworthy, J. B. Scrivenor & J. G. Watson, 1966. *A Dictionary of the Economic Products of the Malay Peninsula*. Volumes I and II. Reprinted. Ministry of Agriculture & cooperatives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 2444 pp.
- 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.
- Keng, H., 1990. *The Concise Flora of Singapore: Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons, Volume 1*. Singapore University Press, Singapore. 222 pp.



A flowering branch of *Callicarpa longifolia*. Photograph by Chua Keng Soon