

MEETING 3 June 1964

A wild, wet, windy, winters night and a small gathering of hardy souls. Prof. Chapman gave a most interesting talk, illustrated by coloured slides, on the Ganges delta in eastern Pakistan.

I thought I knew what a delta was - a water-laid fan of alluvium through which a large river meanders seawards in numerous streams; but this was beyond my wildest imagination. An area several hundred miles wide with thousands of miles of waterways and very few roads. A veritable mangrove swamp, densely inhabited by the human species, and sparsely by the royal Bengal tiger. Subject to periodic flooding and consequent dislocation, household boats are used as we use cars, and houses, built largely of mangrove wood, are raised above the river on stilts. Rice is cultivated everywhere and fish netted systematically, but food remains a problem, along with flood control. Several mangrove species, some over 40 feet in height, cover much of the lower delta and form a boggy, humid jungle. Modern mills convert mangrove logs into pulp and paper, and jute into twine. Botanical shots of interest included a largeish tree smothered in the twining parasite Cassytha; a brightly red-flowered kapok; and a yellow flowered tree (the name eluding me), from which the familiar insecticide Derris Dust is obtained.

We started out without a projector, but Mr. Lediard very decently went out into the storm and fetched his from home, for which we were all more than grateful. E.D.H.

THE NAMES OF THE OLIVES

For those who are interested in the Olea - Gymnelaea - Nestegis controversy -

The genus Nestegis (Rafinesque 1838) from N.Z. P.S.Green Journal Arnold Arboretum 44:p377.1963

see also L.Johnson in Degener New Illus. Flora Hawaiian Is. p300.1958

The specific names and author citations remain as for Gymnelaea. Just which of these three names will be eventually used for the N.Z. plants is at present uncertain. Much depends on the circumscription of the genus, which is largely a matter of opinion. E.D.H.

CORRECTING AN ERROR

On p7 of the March Newsletter I tentatively recorded Corybas cryptanthus from Glorit on the basis of the seeding peduncles. Mr. Beaver staked these plants at the time and now reports (June 1964) that they are in fact C. aconitiflorus, and flowering well, although nearly buried in leaf debris. My humble apologies - E.D.H.