

A tribute to Benito C. Tan (1946–2016), distinguished muscologist

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PART I. FROM A BOY WITH BIG DREAMS TO RICHARD SPRUCE AWARD RECIPIENT

An internationally recognized botanist, Dr. Benito Ching Tan, was born in Manila, the Philippines, on August 30, 1946. For those who knew Benito, he was a man with a big heart for people and plants, but of course, especially for bryophytes. Benito had begun his professional training at Far Eastern University, Philippines, where he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Biology Education (B.Sc. Biol. Ed.), attaining *Summa cum Laude* in 1967. Like many of his siblings, he initially intended to enter medical school, but fortunately for the advancement of bryology his fear of the sight of blood made him take on botany. He continued his education in the University of the Philippines, Diliman, where he attained a Master of Science in Botany (M.Sc. Botany) in 1974. His M.Sc. thesis dealt with the “Sporangial distribution and spore morphology of Philippine *Selaginella*.” His “first love” had always been *Selaginella* apart from all the bryophytes he admired. Benito eventually changed his research to focus on mosses as he realized that it was a large but understudied group of plants, especially in the Southeast Asian region. Benito’s fervent passion in Botany then led him to pursue his PhD under the supervision of Wilfred Borden Schofield (1927–2008) in the University of British Columbia, Canada, and obtained his doctorate degree in 1981. His dissertation on the moss flora of the Selkirk and Purcell Mountain Ranges in South-eastern British Columbia, is still used today as a primary reference for the moss flora for that region. During his days of receiving academic training, Benito had published at least 10 scientific articles. He was awarded as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Filipino Scientists (Philippines) in 1988 as a recognition to his exceptional work in Botany.

Fondly addressed by his many students as Prof. Ben or Prof. Benny, Benito began his journey as an aspiring teacher at the

University of the Philippines at Los Baños, from 1980 to 1988 as an Assistant Professor. With his strong passion for bryophytes, Benito ventured to the west to Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as a Research Associate in Bryology at the Farlow Herbarium (FH). He spent seven years there sharing his knowledge and passion on bryophytes to those who attended his lessons or anyone who had engaged in conversations with him. At the same time, he was invited to be a Project Coordinator and member of the Editorial Board of the Moss Flora of China (English Edition) between 1991 and 1994. Eventually, Benito’s interest in Asian mosses brought him back to Asia where he took up the position of Associate Professor in Botany in the National University of Singapore (NUS) from 1998 to 2007.

After he took up the position as the Keeper of the Herbarium of the Singapore Botanic Gardens (2007–2010), he continued to do part-time teaching at the university. During his 16-year-stay in Singapore (1997–2013), he had been teaching the NUS first year’s module on plant diversity. Benito’s teaching had never failed to make his students understand and appreciate the life-cycle of plants. He kept repeating to his students the terms “gametophyte” and “sporophyte” — the alternating phases of a plant life-cycle – so much so that some students began to call him “benitophyte.” When asked by his students what made him take up bryophytes, he replied with a smile that it was because they could all fit in his pocket! Benito was often described by his students as a fatherly figure who was always smiling and full of cheer, and there was not a mean bone in him. Amusingly, he did not want to be a “father” to his students, he wanted to be their “brother” instead. Benito was also undecidedly quirky; he would keep his important belongings such as wallet and cell phone in between his inner singlet and shirt. There were times where his cell phone rang during class and he would whip out the phone casually by reaching into his shirt. Those were just one of his many comical moments that enlivened the atmosphere in his classes.

There was not a single moment where Benito forgot about his research on mosses. He remained active in the

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bryological community, engaging in many projects, big and small. His most notable works would be on Asian Sematophyllaceae *sensu lato* and, Hookeriaceae *sensu lato*, two of the most challenging moss families, where he focused his research efforts most intensively among other mosses of Southeast and East Asia. He has also a special interest in the moss genus *Fissidens* influenced by one of his mentors and close colleague, Dr. Zennoski Iwatsuki (1929–2015) from the Hattori Botanical Laboratory in Japan. He loved *Fissidens* so much so that he even made a song for it and sometimes taught the song to his students during field work.

Benito’s significant contributions were recognized by the International Association of Bryologists (IAB); he was made the Vice-President from 2005 to 2009. The ultimate glory in his lifelong obsession with mosses was when Benito received the Richard Spruce Award from the IAB in 2004 for his contributions on Asian mosses. Benito was the first and only Asian bryologist to receive this prestigious award. Nevertheless, his obsession and passion did not end there; instead it spurred him even further.

PART II. AN OBSESSION, A PASSION, AND MANY CONTRIBUTIONS

Benito was a key figure in the Asian bryological community where he had served pivotal roles in the Editorial Boards of many renowned botanical journals. Table 1 includes all his editorial contributions. He was fluent in Mandarin, along with English and his native tongue, Tagalog. As such, Benito was often seen as providing the bridge between the Chinese bryologists and the rest of the bryology community. Moreover,

Benito contributed as a manuscript reviewer for many distinguished refereed journals: *Acta Phytotaxonomica et Geobotanica*, *Arctoa*, *Asian Journal of Tropical Biology*, *Botanical Bulletin of the Academia Sinica*, *Bryologie*, *Cryptogamie*, *Chenia*, *Gardens' Bulletin of Singapore*, *Journal of Bryology*, *Journal of the Hattori Botanical Laboratory*, *Nova Hedwigia*, *Novon*, *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*, *Telopea*, *The Philippine Scientist*, and *Tropical Bryology*.

Benito had devoted his life to the study of mosses “rather than just following trends of what is ‘hot’ in the research world, it pays for a scientist to be committed to one field of study, although it may not seem glamorous at the time.” Through his amazing lifetime, Benito had published more than 300 scientific papers on bryophytes. In the course of his research he was involved in the naming of over 80 new taxa of cryptogamic plants (Appendix 1). He was also responsible for another 150 nomenclatural changes. His friends and colleagues have honored him with being the eponyms of some of the new organisms described by them, both flora and fauna (Table 2).

Table 3 lists some of the important flora checklists done by Benito, mainly for the Asian region. His bryophyte checklists are fundamental and indispensable to many botany-related researches, such as conservation, ecology, taxonomy, systematics and genetics studies, and are highly cited by scientists who do research in their respective regions.

Benito had enjoyed going on expeditions with his fellow colleagues and his platoon of students. It was when he immersed in nature and engaged his bionic eyes to look for his

Table 1. List of Benito Tan’s editorial contributions

Position	Journal (Country)	Duration
Editor-in-Chief	Gardens' Bulletin Singapore (Singapore)	2006–2010
Associate Editor	Tropical Bryology (Germany)	1990–2016
	Chenia (China)	1993–2016
	Cryptogamie, Bryologique (France)	1996–2011
Editorial Board member	<i>Kalikasan</i> , Philippine Journal of Biology (Philippines)	1981–1988
	<i>Arctoa</i> (Russia)	1992–2016
	Asia Life Sciences (Philippines)	1993–1996
	Journal of the Hattori Botanical Laboratory (Japan)	1998–2007
	Acta Phytotaxonomica et Geobotanica (Japan)	2004–2016
	Bunrui (Japan)	2006–2016
	Journal of Tropical Biology & Conservation (Malaysia)	2007–2016
	Frontiers of Biology in China (China)	2008–2016
	Journal of Agrobiotechnology and Food Sciences (Malaysia)	2008–2016
	Hattoria (Japan)	2009–2016
The Bulletin of National Museum of Nature and Science, Series B (Botany) (Japan)	2009–2016	

Table 2. Eponyms of organisms in honor of Benito Tan.

Organism	Rank	Name	Reference citation
Angiosperm	Species	<i>Hoya benitotanii</i>	Kloppenb., <i>Gard. Bull. Singapore</i> 61 (2010) 330.
Lichen	Genus	<i>Tania</i>	Egea, Torrente & Sipman, <i>Lichenologist</i> 27 (1995) 352.
	Species	<i>Ocellularia tanii</i>	Sipman, <i>Biblioth. Lichenol.</i> 86 (2003) 183.
Liverwort	Species	<i>Plagiochila benitoi</i>	Piippo, <i>J. Hattori Bot. Lab.</i> 72 (1992) 122.
Moss	Genus	<i>Benitotania</i>	H.Akiyama, T.Yamag. & Suleiman, <i>Bryologist</i> 106 (2003) 454.
	Species	<i>Merrillobryum tanianum</i>	D.H.Norris, T.J.Kop. & W.R.Buck, <i>Ann. Bot. Fenn.</i> 45 (2008) 273.
		<i>Fissidens benitotanii</i>	Z.Iwats., K.T.Yong & Tad.Suzuki, <i>Gard. Bull. Singapore</i> 61 (2009) 49.
Arthropod	Species	<i>Elaphropeza benitotani</i>	Shamshev & Grootaert, <i>Zootaxa</i> 1488 (2007) 68.

Table 3. Flora checklists of different regions done by Benito Tan

Region	Reference
Borneo	Borneo Suleiman <i>et al.</i> , 2006
	Brunei Tan & Mohamed, 2013
China	China Redfearn <i>et al.</i> , 1996
	Jiangxi Ji <i>et al.</i> , 2003
	Mongolia Ignatov <i>et al.</i> , 2004
	Taiwan Chiang <i>et al.</i> , 2001
	Xinjiang Tan <i>et al.</i> , 1995
Indochina	Indochina Tan & Iwatsuki, 1993
Indonesia	Sulawesi Gradstein <i>et al.</i> , 2005
	Sumatra Ho <i>et al.</i> , 2006
Peninsular Malaysia & Singapore	Mohamed & Tan, 1988 Yong <i>et al.</i> , 2013
The Philippines	Iwatsuki & Tan, 1979
	Tan & Engel, 1986
	Tan & Iwatsuki, 1991

little moss friends. He had traveled widely and conducted bryological field work in Australia, Canada (British Columbia, Alberta), China, Finland, Germany, Indonesia (Java, Bali, Sumatra), Japan, Korea, Malaysia (also Sarawak and Sabah), Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russia (Siberia), Sri Lanka, Thailand, USA (California, New England, Florida), and Vietnam. A true blue Filipino at heart, Benito enjoyed singing during field trips which had an instantaneous mood uplifting effect. With his warm heart, he had built countless friendships across the globe and laid foundations for future collaborations between countries.

Behind his smiling face is a sentimental heart. Benito was always saddened when he learned of bad news or received obituaries of passing fellow bryological colleagues and friends.

Among them, he really grieved the passing of his mentors, as well as his former Filipino student, Leonardo L. Co (1953–2010). In memory of the unfortunate death of Leonardo, Benito acted as one of the editors for the 2013 special issue in recognition of Co's botanical contributions published in the Philippine Journal of Science.

Benito was always generous in sharing his knowledge in plants and of course especially bryophytes as he believed that it is through training, team work and collaboration that the huge gap in bryological knowledge of Asia can be filled. He evangelized and shared interesting bryological facts whenever he met anyone who expressed interest. Benito was actively involved in workshops in the training of many hundreds of students and botanists in bryology mainly in SE Asia, but also

beyond in Sri Lanka and Réunion. Most notably was the series of training workshops on bryophytes and lichens organized by the SEAMEO BIOTROP (Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Tropical Biology), Bogor, Indonesia. The six workshops were held in Bogor every alternate year from 2001 and co-organized by Benito, Prof. Stephan Robbert Gradstein, and Dr. Sri Sudarmiyati Tjitrosoedirdjo. Unfortunately the workshop series ceased after the retirement of Dr. Sri from SEAMEO BIOTROP in 2011. The last training in Asia on bryophytes conducted by Benito was in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand, January 2015.

During his time in Singapore, he also joined as members in some local organizations, such as the Singapore Institute of Biology (SIBiol) and Nature Society, Singapore (NSS). Benito quickly became a SIBiol Council member for over 13 years until 2012. From the beginning, he had a strong opinion that SIBiol, as a professional biological society, should have an annual forum to showcase research conducted by local biologists. This could then extend the scientific findings to not only within the Biology fraternity but to the general public as well. Benito conceptualized the SIBiol Annual National Biology Convention (ANBC) which materialized in October 2000, becoming one of the quintessence of SIBiol. In total, Benito had organized nine ANBCs, the last held in October 2011. In addition, as a member of the Nature Society, Singapore, he had conducted workshops to enthusiasts on the knowhow of identifying pteridophytes in Singapore.

Benito, along with Tomas Hallingbäck and Patricia Geissler, was a key member of the Bryophyte Species Committee of the IUCN to monitor the endangered bryophytes of the world. In 2008, he spearheaded the first Asian bryophyte Red List meeting at the Singapore Botanic Garden focusing on the listing of endangered bryophytes of Asia.

PART III: THE CALIFORNIA PERIOD (2010–2016)

Benito, as an American citizen, had planned for his eventual departure from Singapore at the end of his extended teaching contracts. When he reached 65, these contracts were not going to be renewed or extended. This realization and transition occurred slowly over several years. With relatives in California, his plan was to return to the United States so he could receive various health and social security benefits. The herbaria of the University of California, Berkeley (UC) and of the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco (CAS) were two large educational and scientific institutions that were prepared to offer Benito office space from which to continue his bryological research. In fact, in 2013 both institutions made him a Research Associate. Shortly thereafter, Benito purchased a home in Richmond, California. This home was about nine miles north of the UC Berkeley campus, so Benito decided to make the herbarium at UC his new professional

home since it would be a much easier and shorter commute. In retirement, Benito had more time to focus exclusively on bryophytes. He spent part of each day on campus to work on moss specimens. Meanwhile, Benito was also active in the botany department at CAS and in October of 2013, Benito was elected a Life Fellow of the California Academy of Sciences.

While in CAS, Benito took part in the 2011 Hearst Biodiversity Expedition to the Philippines which has a bryological component. As part of the bryology team, he was able to return to several places in Luzon he had explored earlier during his career, including Mt. Banahao and Mt. Makiling. After the Luzon expedition, Benito immersed himself in the identification of the several hundred bryophytes collected. Of them, many new records of Philippine mosses were identified which were then published in a series of papers.

The Hearst Biodiversity Expedition led to another CAS collaborative venture for botanical expeditions to the Philippines, focusing on Mindanao in partnership with Central Mindanao University. At least 80 species along with two new taxa described, were added to the moss flora of Mindanao from the month-long expeditions initiated in 2014 and 2015. A manuscript was in preparation to describe a new species of *Distichophyllum* just prior to Benito's bereavement on 23rd December 2016.

Destined to be a botanist, the life work of Benito has benefited the progress and development of botany in Asia. Appendix 2 provides the comprehensive list of Benito's publications. As an inspirational mentor and teacher, he passed on his knowledge and nurtured his love for bryophytes and plants with all who interacted with him.

Dear Benito, you have left us way too soon, but your legacy and fiery passion for bryophytes live on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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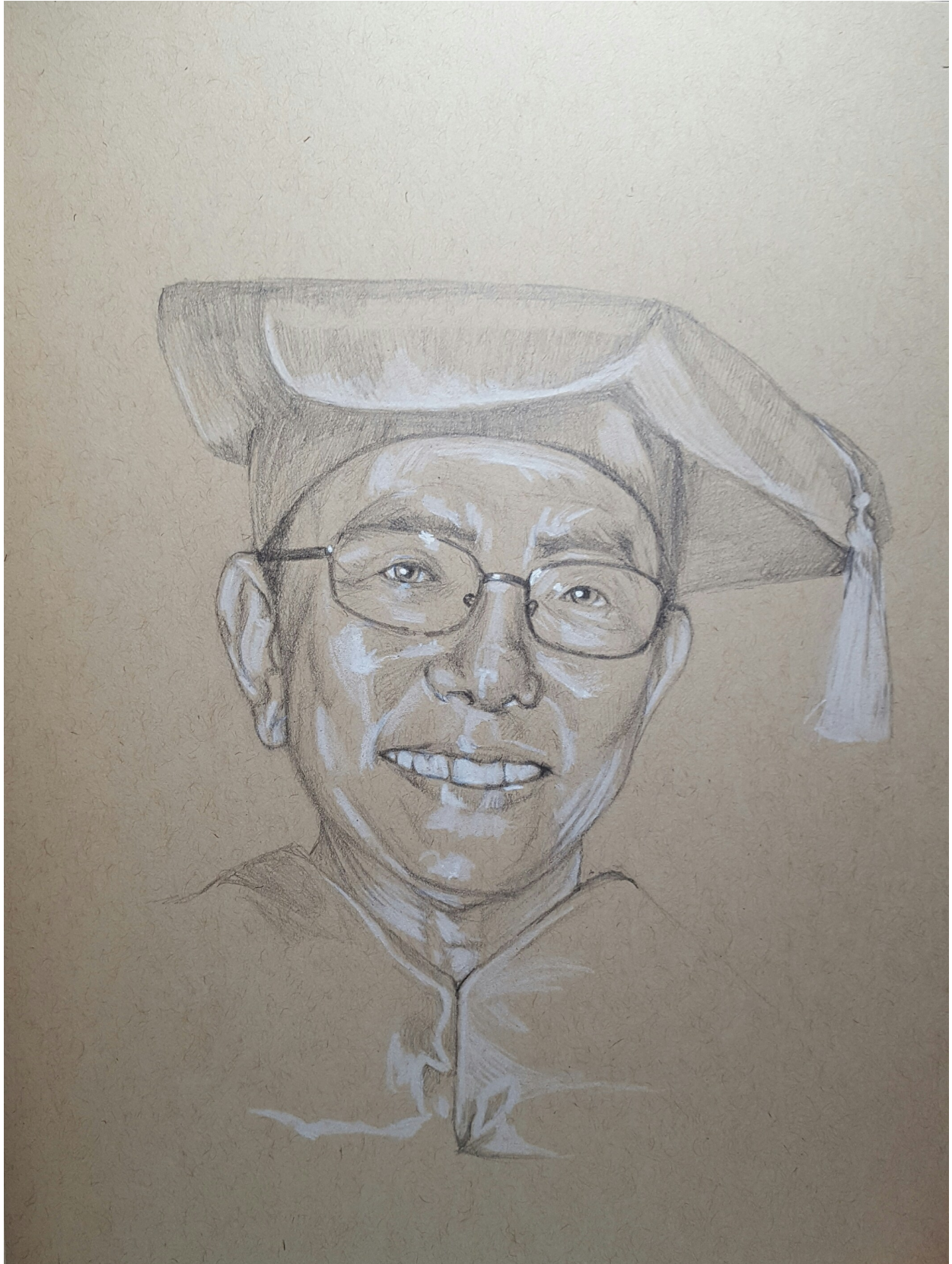


Photo 1. Portrait sketch of Benito by Debbie Teo, one of his former students from NUS.



Photo 2. Benito in a day-trip with students from NUS to visit a forest park in Johor, Peninsular Malaysia, in 2005. (photo credit: Kien-Thai Yong)



Photo 3. Benito in his last bryophyte workshop in Asia conducted in Queen Sirikit Botanic Garden, Thailand, in January 2015. (photo credit: Boon-Chuan Ho)



Photo 4. Participants of the first IUCN/IAB conference workshop on the red-listing of endangered bryophytes in Asia organized by Benito. (photo credit: Serena Lee)



Photo 5. A get-together on 23rd August 2013 for Benito's former students and some of his colleagues to bid farewell to him just a few days before he moved to California. (photo credit: Yaohui Lim)

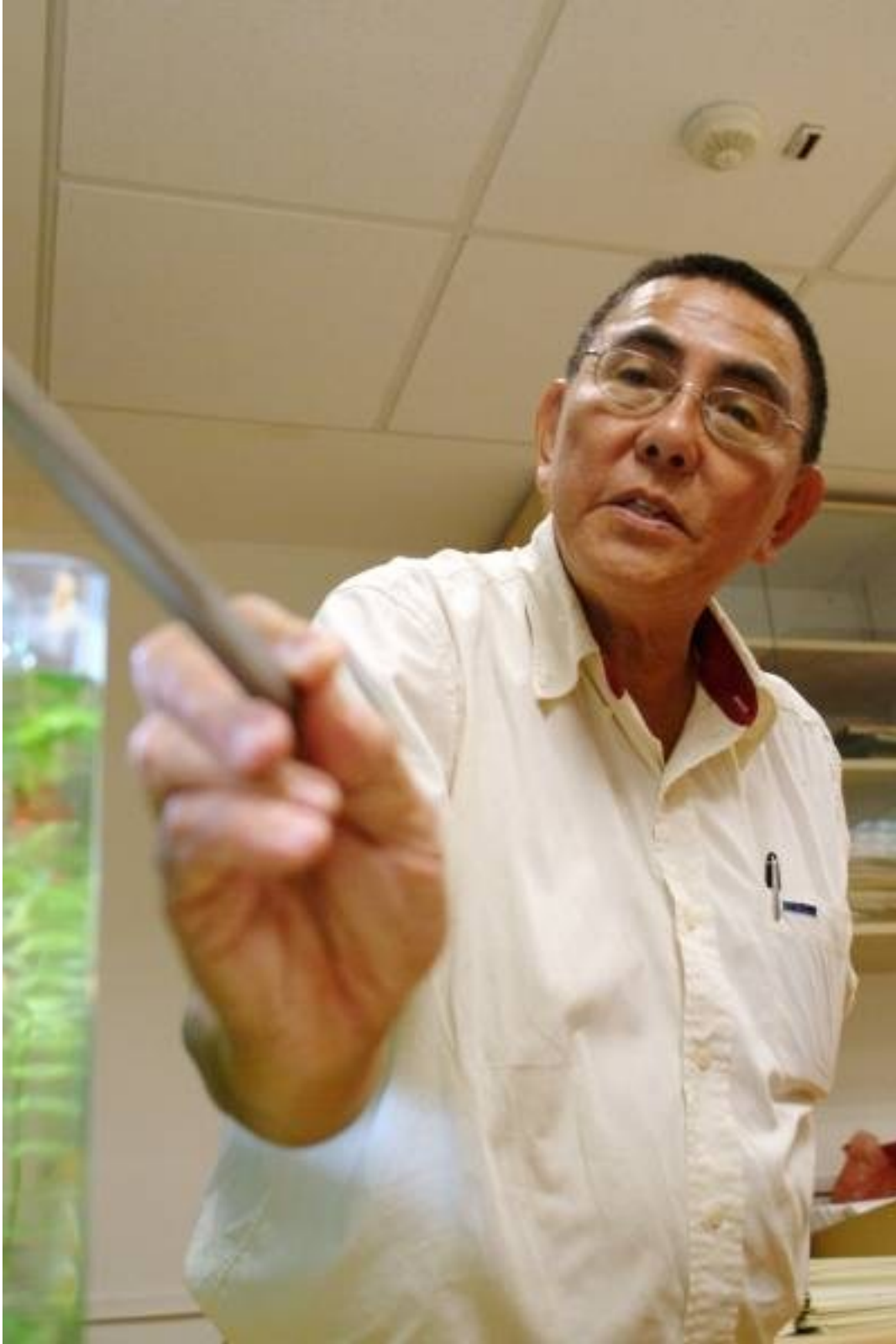


Photo 6. Benito proudly pointing and explaining the bryophytes in his little aquarium when he was heading the cryptogam plant lab in NUS. (photo credit: Yaohui Lim)

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF NEW TAXA DESCRIBED BY BENITO TAN

Section and genera:

- Distichophyllum* sect. *Platyovatoephyllum* B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 432 [Daltoniaceae]
Meiotheciella B.C.Tan, W.B.Schofield & H.P.Ramsay, *Nova Hedwigia* 67 (1998) 215 [Sematophyllaceae]
Orthodontopsis Ignatov & B.C.Tan, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 71 (1992) 169 [Orthodontiaceae]
Papillidiopsis (Broth.) W.R.Buck & B.C.Tan, *Acta Bryolichenol. Asiat.* 1 (1990 ['1989']) 11 [Sematophyllaceae]
Pilosimitra B.C.Tan & G.Dauphin, *Trop. Bryol.* 26 (2005) 20 [Sematophyllaceae]
Pseudocryptogonium H.Akiyama & B.C.Tan, *Phytotaxa* 98 (2013) 21 [Pterobryaceae]
Pseudokindbergia Min Li, Y.F.Wang, Ignatov & B.C.Tan, *Cryptog. Bryol.* 36 (2015) 61 [Brachytheciaceae]
Radulina W.R.Buck & B.C.Tan, *Acta Bryolichenol. Asiat.* 1 (1990 ['1989']) 9 [Sematophyllaceae]
Yakushimabryum H.Akiyama, Y.Chang, T.Yamag. & B.C.Tan, *J. Bryol.* 33 (2011) 42 [Pylaisiadelphaceae]

Species and infra-specific taxa (excluding invalidly published and illegitimate names):

- Acroporium microcladum* var. *burleyi* B.C.Tan, *Trop. Biodiv.* 4 (1997) 236. f. 1 [Sematophyllaceae]
Acroporium microcladum var. *rhizogemmae* B.C.Tan, W.B.Schofield & H.P.Ramsay, *Nova Hedwigia* 67 (1998) 214 [Sematophyllaceae]
Acroporium praelongum var. *aciphyloides* B.C.Tan, *Willdenowia* 24 (1994) 274 [Sematophyllaceae]
Anomobryum erectum B.C.Tan & T.J.Kop., *Cryptog. Bryol. Lichénol.* 10 (1989) 239 [Bryaceae]
Anomodon solovjovii var. *henanensis* B.C.Tan, Boufford & T.S.Ying, *Acta Bot. Yunnan.* 18 (1996) 69. f. 1–4 [Anomodontaceae]
Barbula cheniana Redf. & B.C.Tan, *Trop. Bryol.* 10 (1995) 65 [Pottiaceae]
Barbula zennoskeanna B.C.Tan, *Hikobia* 11 (1994) 415. f. 1–14 [Pottiaceae]
Brachythecium propinnatum Redf., B.C.Tan & S.He, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 79 (1996) 184 [Brachytheciaceae]
Brotherella nictans var. *zangmu-xingjiangiorum* B.C.Tan, *Hikobia* 13: (2000) 188. f. 1–9 [Sematophyllaceae]
Bryum ochianum Redf. & B.C.Tan, *Trop. Bryol.* 10: 66 (1995) 66 [Bryaceae]
Calymperes dixoconstrictum B.C.Tan & Mohamed, *Bryologist* 91: 29 (1988) 29 [Calymperaceae]
Calymperes robinsonii B.C.Tan & W.D.Reese, *Bull. Natl. Sci. Mus., Tokyo*, B. 9 (1983) 30. f. 27–36 [Calymperaceae]

- Calypsothecium distichophyllum* Nog. & B.C.Tan, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 57 (1984) 66. f. 3 [Pterobryaceae]
Calypsothecium squarrosulum Nog. & B.C.Tan, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 57 (1984) 64. f. 2 [Pterobryaceae]
Chaetomitrium schofieldii B.C.Tan & H.Rob., *Smithsonian Contr. Bot.* 75 (1990) 31 [Symphyodontaceae]
Chionostomum hainanense B.C.Tan & Y.Jia, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 86 (1999) 34. f. 8: 5–11 [Sematophyllaceae]
Clastobryopsis imbricata H.Akiyama, Y.Chang & B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 113 (2010) 754 [Pylaisiadelphaceae]
Desmatodon burmensis B.C.Tan & Z.Iwats., *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 74 (1993) 343 [Pottiaceae]
Dicranoloma damanhurii B.C.Tan & Mohamed, *Cryptog. Bryol. Lichénol.* 11 (1990) 359 [Dicranaceae]
Didymodon gaochienii B.C.Tan & Y.Jia, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 82 (1997) 309. f. 12–19 [Pottiaceae]
Diphyscium buckii B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 429. f. 1–5 [Diphysciaceae]
Diphyscium tamasii B.C.Tan & Ninh, *Acta Acad. Paedagog. Agriensis, Sect. Biol., n.s.* 24 (2003) 88 [Diphysciaceae]
Distichophyllum collenchymatosum var. *pseudosinense* P.J.Lin & B.C.Tan, *Harvard Pap. Bot.* 7 (1995) 38. f. 28: E–F [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum meizhiae B.C.Tan & P.J.Lin, *Trop. Bryol.* 10 (1995) 55. f. 2, 8–12 [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum noguchianum B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 429. f. 6–12 [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum oblongum B.C.Tan & P.J.Lin, *Bot. Bull. Acad. Sin.* 32 (1991) 310 [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum oblongum var. *fanjingense* P.J.Lin & B.C.Tan, *Harvard Pap. Bot.* 7 (1995) 41. f. 32: E–I [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum obtusifolium var. *vuquangiense* B.C.Tan & Ninh, *Acta Acad. Paedagog. Agriensis, Sect. Biol., n.s.* 24 (2003) 89 [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum subnigricaulis var. *hainanense* P.J.Lin & B.C.Tan, *Harvard Pap. Bot.* 7 (1995) 43. f. 33: E–I [Daltoniaceae]
Distichophyllum wanianum B.C.Tan & P.J.Lin, *Trop. Bryol.* 10 (1995) 57. f. 1, 13–18 [Daltoniaceae]
Ectropothecium neoperrevolutum Suleiman, H.Akiyama & B.C.Tan, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 99 (2006) 134 [Hypnaceae]
Fissidens involutus var. *jejuensis* Y.J.Yoon, B.C.Tan & B.Y.Sun, *Arctoa* 24 (2015) 38 [Fissidentaceae]
Fissidens pseudoceylonensis B.C.Tan & M.S.Choy, *J. Bryol.* 24 (2002) 48 [Fissidentaceae]
Frullania sinskeana J.J.Engel & B.C.Tan, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 60 (1986) 335 [Frullaniaceae]
Gammiella panchienii B.C.Tan & Y.Jia ex B.C.Tan, *Hikobia* 13 (2000) 187 [Hypnaceae]
Gammiella touwii B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 432. f. 13–

- 17 [Hypnaceae]
Hageniella hattoriana B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 433. f. 18–22 [Hypnaceae]
Horikawaea redfearnii B.C.Tan & P.J.Lin, *Trop. Bryol.* 10 (1995) 59. f. 3–7, 19–25 [Pterobryaceae]
Hyophila acutipocsii B.C.Tan & Z.Iwats., *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 74 (1993) 357 [Pottiaceae]
Hypnum mittenohamatum B.C.Tan, *Mem. New York Bot. Gard.* 68 (1992) 5 [Hypnaceae]
Leskeodon maibarae var. *jejuensis* Y.J.Yoon, B.C.Tan & B.Y.Sun, *Arctoa* 24 (2015) 38 [Daltoniaceae]
Macromitrium eddyi B.C.Tan & Shevock, *Proc. Calif. Acad. Sci., ser. 4*, 62 (2015) 542 [Orthotrichaceae]
Macromitrium novorecurvulum B.C.Tan & B.C.Ho, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 98 (2005) 228 [Orthotrichaceae]
Mittenia plumula var. *gigantea* B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 433. f. 23, 26 [Mitteniaceae]
Mitthyridium iwatsukianum B.C.Tan, *Mem. New York Bot. Gard.* 45 (1987) 453. pl. 1 [Calymperaceae]
Ochrobryum herzogianum B.C.Tan & Mohamed, *Bryologist* 91 (1988) 29 [Leucobryaceae]
Octoblepharum arthrochormoides N.Salazar & B.C.Tan, *Botany (Ottawa)* 88 (2010) 440 [Calymperaceae]
Orthodontopsis bardunovii Ignatov & B.C.Tan, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 71 (1992) 169. pl. 1–4 [Orthodontiaceae]
Orthomitrium schofieldii B.C.Tan & Y.Jia, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 82 (1997) 313. f. 1–11. [Orthotrichaceae]
Papillidiopsis koponenii B.C.Tan, *Bryologist* 93 (1990) 437. f. 29–36 [Sematophyllaceae]
Papillidiopsis malesiana W.R.Buck & B.C.Tan, *Acta Bryolichenol. Asiat.* 1 (1990 [1989]) 13. f. 1–15 [Sematophyllaceae]
Pilosimitra buckii B.C.Tan & G.Dauphin, *Trop. Bryol.* 26 (2005) 20. f. a–j [Sematophyllaceae]
Pseudotaxiphyllum obtusifolium Z.Iwats. & B.C.Tan, *Novon* 14 (2004) 75. f. 1–2 [Plagiotheciaceae]
Rhaphidorrhynchium auneae B.C. Tan, T.J.Kop. & D.H.Norris, *Acta Bryolichenol. Asiat.* 7 (2017) 20 [Sematophyllaceae]
Schlotheimia crumii B.C.Tan, *Mem. New York Bot. Gard.* 68 (1992) 5 [Orthotrichaceae]
Selaginella antimonanensis B.C.Tan & Jermy, *Fern Gaz.* 12 (1981) 170 [Selaginellaceae]
Selaginella pricei B.C.Tan & Jermy, *Fern Gaz.* 12 (1981) 170 [Selaginellaceae]
Sematophyllum brotheri Z.Iwats. & B.C.Tan, *Misc. Bryol. Lichenol.* 7 (1977) 152 [Sematophyllaceae]
Splachnobryum temasekensis B.C.Tan, B.C.Ho & B. K.B.Seah, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 96 (2004) 228. f. 9–17 [Pottiaceae]
Stereophyllum linisii Enroth & B.C.Tan, *Ann. Bot. Fenn.* 44 (2007) 146 [Stereophyllaceae]
Symblepharis guizhouensis B.C.Tan, Q.W.Lin, Crosby & P.C.Wu, *Bryologist* 97 (1994) 134 [Rhabdoweisiaceae]
Taxiphyllum arcuatum var. *apiculatum* B.C.Tan & Shevock, *Bryophyte Diversity Evol.* 36 (2014) 27 [Hypnaceae]
Tayloria rudimenta X.L.Bai & B.C.Tan, *Cryptog. Bryol.* 21 (2000) 3 [Splachnaceae]
Trichosteleum fleischeri B.C.Tan, B.C.Ho & B. K.B.Seah, *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 96 (2004) 223. f. 1–8 [Sematophyllaceae]
Trichosteleum streimannii B.C.Tan, T.J.Kop. & D.H.Norris, *Ann. Bot. Fenn.* 44 (2007) 73 [Sematophyllaceae]
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APPENDIX 2: PUBLICATIONS OF BENITO TAN (CHRONOLOGICAL)

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Sir Benito: amiable, loyal friend and dedicated botanist

Many years ago, when I was an MS Biology student at the University of the Philippines Diliman, I had known Dr. Benito Tan as one of the very few bryologists in the world.

I had the first chance to personally meet him during the 7th Flora Malesiana International Symposium held on June 17 – 21, 2007 at Leiden, The Netherlands. There were several Filipinos among us but most of us did not know each other. It was Dr. Tan who organized a Filipino get together at the nearby McDonald's. Here we had our first lesson from Dr. Tan: that in Leiden, when you ask for catsup to go with your order you will have to pay for it. True enough, we had to pay for the catsup for our fries and burger at McDonald's. Afterwards, he treated us to a "Linnaean walk" where while leading our walking group, Sir Benny would narrate many interesting stories about Carolus Linnaeus' life in Leiden in each of the site we visited. After my oral presentation at the Flora Malesiana International Symposium, he spoke to me and said, "Ikaw pala ang nag-aaral ng Philippine *Begonia*. Gusto mong pumunta sa Singapore para aralin ang mga *Begonia* ng Asia?" [So you are the one studying Philippine *Begonia*. Would you want to come to Singapore to study the *Begonia* of Asia?] I readily said yes, but I did not have the funds. With a big smile, he said I can apply for a research fellowship grant at the Singapore Botanic Garden (SBG), and he can teach me how. And so he did. I went to the SBG Herbarium on November 8-18, 2007 to study the historical collections of begonias of our neighboring countries which greatly improved my Ph.D. dissertation which I was writing at that time. A string of other Filipino botanists were able to avail of this grant through the help of Sir Benny.

Before the end of the month, I received another invitation from Sir Benny to participate in the Liceo de Cagayan University (LCU) and SBG joint expedition to Mt. Hibok-Hibok on Camiguin Island. And so I had the great opportunity of botanizing Mt. Hibok-Hibok under the expertise of Sir Benny from February 2 to 8, 2008. I was amazed listening to his impromptu lectures and jokes while studying the bryophytes in the wild. He said, "O, huwag kang lilipat sa mga lumot ha, kailangan ka ng mga *Begonia*". [Oh, don't you ever move over to study mosses, you are needed to study the Begonias.]

Early in 2009, Dr Tan invited me to be part of an ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB) funded project in collaboration with the University of Andalas in Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia. As part of this project, we conducted a plant taxonomy and biodiversity workshop for the faculty of the University of Andalas. Here Sir Benny taught me how to be a better teacher of plant taxonomy. In 2010, SBG hosted the 8th Flora Malesiana International Symposium, and Sir Benny requested that I organize a post-symposium botanical excursion to Northern Luzon. This is his comment in his email:

Sept 5, 2010 at 9:11 PM

Dear Chit,

Congratulations on your successful trip to Northern Luzon with the taong puti group. Ngayon your good name will spread to Moscow in Russia and beyond na. At nakapag-gain ka pa ng karanasan kung papaano maglead ng tour of international citizens. Hindi ba? (Congratulations on your successful trip to Northern Luzon with the group of white people. Now your good name will spread to Moscow in Russia and beyond. And you will have an experience how to lead a tour with international citizens. Isn't it?)

Keep in touch.

**Sincerely,
Benito C. Tan**

Early in 2011, Dr Tan invited me to participate in the Sixth Regional Training Workshop on Biodiversity and Conservation of Bryophytes and Lichens held at the SEAMEO BIOTROP in Bogor, Indonesia in July 11-19, 2011. He said, "I want you to learn about these plants and teach about them later. Magtuturo ka lang ng tungkol sa mga lumot ayaw kong umalis ka sa iyong *Begonia* research [You will just teach about mosses but I don't want you to leave *Begonia* research]. I did as suggested and the following semester, Biology 114 (Mosses, hepatics & ferns) was offered for the first time as an elective for our BS Biology Program. It was a subject that our graduates will

never forget because of their immersion in the mossy forests of Mt. Pulag.

Sir Benny gave me more opportunities and I gained so much wisdom and networking from all of them: submitted a manuscript for the special volume commemorating the late Leonardo Co which was published as a special issue of the *Philippine Journal of Science* in 2013; submitted a collaborative research proposal to the Peer Science Program of the USAID in January 2014; and annotated *Begonia* spp. deposited at the University of California Berkeley Herbarium in July 2014.

This email was the last one I received from him. It also encapsulates the persona of Sir Benny: amiable, loyal friend and dedicated botanist.

Chit,

Happy b-day to you.

Do not forget to celebrate your birthday with your family. I have been getting news that you work very hard at UP Manila as an administrator.

Take care. The Philippine *Begonia* flora needs your attention....

**Regards,
Benito**

This brief association has left a lasting impact on my life as a botanist and an educator. Knowing him as been one of the most important chapters in my life.

**Rosario R. Rubite
Department of Biology
University of the Philippines Manila
Padre Faura, Manila**



He weaves his stories with humor, humanity and humility. Once when he had a bandage patch on his jaw, I asked him what happened. He said that he laughed so hard, his jaw was dislocated. He would tell stories about the goodness of other people, how a person's action can be explained by looking from another perspective. Dr. Benny Tan was a tireless story teller where he teaches, answers and poses questions to people. His stories are gifts of wisdoms, mostly profound, sometimes not, mostly botany related or sometimes not. A long time ago when we were on our way to Mt. Makiling and stuffed in a jeepney, he posited: what if we could dismantle our limbs, hang them on bars (which are hung on the ceiling of the jeep)...wouldn't that make a more comfortable jeep ride? When he was a graduate student at UP Diliman he was known for two "talents" – acupuncture and palm reading. He usually looked serious, looking at your palms and telling the future...of course he would say things that would make one feel positive for the future (he said I would succeed in my chosen vocation). As for the acupuncture, it was a time of martial law and this Chinese medical practice had a "subversive" tinge to it. However, Dr. Benny had many "patients" from the Department of Botany.

One can never question his botany. He knew every sorus, indusium, strobilus, capsule, rhizoids, prothallus etc etc. His work on Bryophyta is voluminous and Asian mosses are given global and ecological significance because of his contributions. His studies on other fern allies (*Selaginella* and *Lycopodium*) enlightened many of us because these groups of plants are understudied and under-appreciated except as ornamentals. Dr. Benny would lament the "conflict" between morphology and molecular biology. He worked tirelessly and was an indefatigable botanical researcher. He had about 7

plants named after him, from palms to hoyas but he was not one to boast.

I saw Dr. Benny more often in the last 5 years since the killing of Leonardo Co. He was so sad, so affected by the death of Leonard who was his student when he taught in high school. But Leonard was not only his student, he was also Dr. Benny's friend, botanical collaborator, scientific colleague and overall "sumbungan." When Dr. Benny got a teaspoon used by Dr. Merrill, he gave the spoon to Leonard in recognition of the continuity of Philippine botany - from Dr. Merrill to Leonard. Dr. Benny did not and could not imagine that Leonard would die before him and this had caused him so much pain.

In one of Dr. Benny's email to me, he said he will not attend the Flora Malesiana (scheduled for July 2016). I did not know then that he had suffered a stroke sometime in the first quarter of the year and that he was already sick. His email was full of positive notes and humor that exemplifies his outlook and temperament. He lived a life with enthusiasm, no frills, maintaining a childlike curiosity and of course with a lot of laughter. When a friend dies, some part of one's heart dies too. With Dr. Benny, I can still hear him say "ano ka ba?" telling me why all the drama. And together we will have a good long laugh!

Elena Mencias-Ragragio
student, colleague, friend
Dec. 29, 2016
Sorsogon, Philippines



As if 2016 has not been cruel enough yet, another celebrated individual in Philippine and East Asian botany suddenly bade farewell, right when the holidays were approaching. This time it's different, he's not just one of those big names I used to see on journals or in scientific meetings – he was essentially my godfather in the discipline, a mentor I've got lucky to know for only two and a half years but had already changed the course of my life as a science student forever.

I can never forget how nerve-racking it was for a neophyte like me to finally meet the authority of Philippine mosses and fern allies in summer 2014. I used to just hear Doc Benny's name from conversations with botany professors who speak highly of him, or see his name in every major Philippine botany literature there is, or be copied with him in circulating e-mails within the botanical community.

But finally shaking hands with and talking to him at the airport in Manila en route to my very first official field work just felt surreal – how could such an internationally acclaimed scientist and professor look so simple in just rolled up white shirt sleeves and slacks and his signature windbreaker? More importantly, how could he be exceptionally polite to young students and narrate hilarious anecdotes like your uncle during holidays?

He always looked and talked in such a very low-key, modest way that it took me a year and two expeditions and six mountains with him before I fully realized he obtained his bachelor's degree at Far Eastern University in Manila, finished his master's program at the University of the Philippines in

Diliman, acquired his PhD at University of British Columbia in Vancouver, worked at the Farlow Herbarium at Harvard University among many other renowned international herbaria, sat in the Nomenclatural Committee on Bryology in the Berlin 1987, St. Louis 1999, and Vienna 2005 International Botanical Congresses, and became a long-time botany professor at the National University of Singapore (in fact, I needed to enumerate these among others because he normally wouldn't tell anyone). Despite all these, he remained such a humble, nice, fatherly figure with a very contagious laughter you could regard him as the Coach Anzai of Oriental botany.

But more than his achievements and stature in the international scientific community, I would love to remember the part of Doc Benny unbeknownst to many. Teaching in the University of the Philippines during the socioeconomic and political turmoil of the 70s, he was one of those who continued to teach and promote pro-people science amid repression by the Marcos regime. At a time when large scale destruction of Philippine rainforests began to accelerate and health care increasingly became inaccessible to the poor, he explored the corners and peaks of the archipelago in search of new plant diversity treasures and medically valuable species. He taught and inspired several hundreds of students and activists who would later become the great patriotic science teachers and ethnobotanists in the Philippines, including my own undergraduate thesis adviser, Len Ragragio, and the late renowned authority on Philippine vascular flora, Leonard Co.

In one of our conversations while trekking he told me that one of the struggles his generation had was coming up with a comprehensive Flora of the Philippine Islands, a complete compendium of all known plant species in the Philippines, a national reference literature that, due to financial, social, and political constraints, has yet to be realized to date. While studying and working abroad he was central to the creation of several checklists and small monographs of Philippine flora, contributing to achieving the ultimate goal one step at a time. Even after retiring and when the number of students of Philippine plants began to decline and especially during his final years, he was still patiently working on Philippine specimens under the scope, hoping that one day, what his generation has failed to achieve will be picked up by those who chose the path less traveled in science and finally be brought into fruition.

After days of shock and denial, I finally took courage to sit down, hoping to relive all the memories we shared during the fleeting time that we worked together. I came across this photo from one of the lakes behind the peak of Mount Apo Natural Park in Mindanao Island, our first expedition together.

For the past couple of years, you were there with me on many of my firsts as a science student – my first published paper, my first hike on the most beautiful peaks of the archipelago, my first field wounds, my first collecting, my first graduate school application as well as first denial, my first research away from the homeland. I can't help but tear up knowing you didn't wait till I get to the finish line and feel afraid because I'm on my own from now on. You left so soon and you caught us all unprepared.

But remembering how close we were to the summit of the highest peak in the country in this photo and knowing how you braved 8,000 feet to get there, I feel all the more determined to finish what I have started. I will forever be grateful for the privilege of knowing you, learning from you, and laughing with you during the ultimate years of your life. Whoever I am and will be will always be because of you. Thank you so much for everything, Doc Benny. I will miss you.

Jef Mancera, mentee
Dec. 26, 2016, San Francisco, CA