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TITAN ARUM (*Amorphophallus titanum*), AMAZING PERENNIAL PLANT OF SUMATRA

Summary

*Amorphophallus titanum*, an extremely rare, endemic Sumatran species, is a perennial plant which forms one of the largest inflorescences in the world. Reaching up to approx. 3 m in height, the spadix is surrounded by a purple flower sheath which attracts the pollinators – beetles, hymenoptera and flies. Those, deceived by an intense scent of carrion emitted by the flowers and also by its colour, are lured to the flowers hidden inside the spadix. Despite its remarkable size, *A. titanum*'s biology has not been well known. The equatorial area of Dipterocarpaceae forests in SE Asia, which is the natural habitat of *A. titanum*, is dwindling. The Indonesian and Malay rainforests, ones of the main biodiversity hotspots in the world, are being cut and burnt down in order to establish African oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis*) plantations, which only in Indonesia cover an area of approx. 7,7 mln ha.

Key words: *Amorphophallus titanum*, endemic species, lowland equatorial evergreen rainforests, Sumatra