

A new species of *Zingiber* (Zingiberaceae) from Taman Negeri Rompin, Pahang, Malaysia

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Abstract: Silver-leaved *Zingiber* group (Zingiberaceae) previously known only from Borneo was now appended with a new species from Taman Negeri Rompin, Pahang, Peninsular Malaysia — marking the first record of this group outside the Borneo island. The new species, *Zingiber zulkifliana* Tan, Besi & Go was described, illustrated, and compared to its closest relatives in this study. An artificial key to differentiate the species of the silver-leaved *Zingiber* was also provided.

Keywords: Botany, gingers, Malesia, ornamental plant, tropical plant

INTRODUCTION

Zingiber Mill. is one of the most charismatic ginger (Zingiberaceae) genus with medium stature, but rather tall brightly-colored inflorescences. The genus contains around 210 species worldwide and is naturally distributed in Asia between India, Japan and Papua New Guinea (POWO 2024). In the Peninsular Malaysia region, *Zingiber* was revised to contain 19 species (Theilade 1996). Later, one species (*Z. citrinum*) was synonymised, and 9 new species were added, namely *Z. malaysianum* (Lim 2002), *Z. kelantanense*, *Z. raja* (Lim 2003), *Z. angustifolium*, *Z. belumense*, *Z. flaviflorum*, *Z. limianum*, *Z. nazrinii*, *Z. sabun* (Lim and Meekiong 2014). This brings the record total to 27 species, which includes two non-native species. From the 25 known native species, nine are categorised as threatened and five are endemic (Sedek *et al.* 2024). Additionally, the group of *Zingiber* with orange to red inflorescences and pale-yellow flowers, termed as the *Zingiber gracile* alliance, were discerned for Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore with the description of a new Singapore -endemic species, *Zingiber singaporense* (Leong-Škorničková *et al.* 2014).

MATERIALS AND METHOD

During a fieldwork conducted on May 13th 2023 to study the diversity of ornamental flora on the trail to Padang Tujuh, Taman Negeri Rompin, Pahang, a remarkable species of *Zingiber* with silvery leaves was collected and later flowered in cultivation. The morphological details were recorded and photographed throughout its flowering period. Herbarium specimen was prepared according to the standard method and deposited in the Herbarium of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) at the Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, UPM, Selangor, Malaysia and in Majlis Biodiversiti Pahang. Specimens of closely related species were observed on the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (<https://gbif.org>). Associated live plant images were also viewed on PhytoImages website (<https://phytoimages.siu.edu>).

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