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[\[Wildlife Conservation\] The Only Two Plants of *Heirostylis Rubrifolius* Are Dying](#)[Wildlife Conservation] The Only Two Plants of *Heirostylis Rubrifolius* Are Dying ([Chinese Version](#))

Merit Times, China Times E-paper, The Liberty Times (2010/04/08), RTI & National Education Radio (2010/04/07)
In response to the rapid decrease of biodiversity induced from human development, Dr. Cecilia Koo Botanic Conservation Center, sponsored by National Science Council, was established in Pingtung three years ago. By now, the center has collected more than thirteen thousand and ninety one species of tropical plants, among which the collections of orchidaceae, bromeliaceae and pteridophytes are the most comprehensive ones in the world. These plants are about to be presented to the public at the Taipei Int'l Flora Expo 2010. However, the center announced on April 7 that the last globally recognized new species of orchid, viz., *Heirostylis Rubrifolius*, which was discovered two years ago and recognized as globally new species last year, are going to die out. During the eight eight flood last year, its habitat was wiped out, and now the globally-only two plants conserved in the center are reported to be on the danger list.

Credit: Chia-Wei LI

Dr. Cecilia Koo Botanic Conservation Center discovered this new species in North Dawu Mountain in August 2008, which was recognized as the new species in November 2009. However, the habitat of this new species was destroyed during the eight eight flood last year. And it seems that the only two plants of *Heirostylis Rubrifolius* preserved in the center cannot survive as well. One of them has just lost its new sprout, and the other has lost half part of itself. Professor Chia-Wei LI, Institute of Molecular and Cellular Biology, NTHU, told the public, if these two plants die, this kind of plants may just disappear forever.

LI pointed out, *Heirostylis Rubrifolius* lives in the wet mountainous area at 700 to 800 altitudes. Its red leaves are lanceolate. When this species was discovered, there were more than twenty plants, but after eight eight flood, only two plants were preserved in Dr. Cecilia Koo Botanic Conservation Center. These two plants are still "in the recovery room" now, This kind of plant seems to be an annual plant. Up to the end of 2009 none of them grew new sprouts. It is thus worrying that this newly-recognized species may come to a short end.

Under the support of National Science Council, Professor Chia-Wei LI and Dr. Cecilia Koo Botanic Conservation Center spent a great effort collecting tropical and semitropical plants. On its 20 ha. site are nine green houses, which together conserve more than thirteen thousand kinds of plants from the world, including a lot of rare species such as *heirostylis rubrifolius*, *quesnelia testudo* Lindm etc. This center has the richest collection of plants in Asia. Its collections of orchidaceae, bromeliaceae and pteridophytes are especially the most comprehensive ones in the world.

Related message:

[Taiwan Environmental Information Center 2008/01/19](#) (Chinese)

Further Information:

[Merit Times 2010/04/08](#) (Chinese)[China Times E-paper 2010/04/08](#) (Chinese)[The Liberty Times 2010/04/08](#) (Chinese)[RTI 2010/04/07](#) (Chinese)[National Education Radio 2010/04/07](#) (Chinese)

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