

SIR JULIAN HUXLEY LECTURE 2019

As systematists, where should our current priorities be?



Peter Ashton, Professor Emeritus, Department of Organismic & Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University

6.00pm Thursday 14th November 2019, The Linnean Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BF

One of the founders of tropical ecology, Peter Ashton, recounts how ten years spent living in Borneo opened the opportunity to master a complex flora and to specialise in the family of dominant canopy emergent trees, the Dipterocarpaceae, to interpret its floristic ecology and history. The results have spanned 60 years and have significantly impacted our current understanding of forest structure and ecology in the tropical Asian region. The resulting body of research covers a broad range of fields including systematics, natural history, interactions with other organisms, evolutionary history, species diversity, biogeography and past and present human impact. This talk will explore hypotheses explaining patterns of species diversity in the Asian tropical forests and subsequent to the events of the past 60 years, how have events constrained continuing research, and what must our priorities be for ensuring an Anthropocene future for this biome, its inhabitants and its students?

The meeting is open to visitors and wine will be served after the lecture to members and guests