



ASSOCIATION FOR TROPICAL BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION Asia Pacific Conference

" Bridging the elements of biodiversity conservation
save, study, use "

10-13 September 2019
MAS ATHENA, THULHIRIYA, SRI LANKA

PROCEEDINGS



A case study on *Vanda tessellata* (Roxb.) Hook. ex G. Don trade in Sri Lanka

R.S. Gunasekara^{1*}, K. Yakandawaka¹, S. Jayakody², and D.S.A. Wijesundara³

¹Department of Horticulture & Landscape Gardening,
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka.

²Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka,
Makandura, Gonawila, Sri Lanka,

³National Institute of Fundamental Studies, Kandy, Sri Lanka

Vanda tessellata commonly known as Anuradhapura orchid, is an indigenous species occurring in the dry and intermediate zones of Sri Lanka. It is protected under the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance and listed under the Vulnerable (VU) category of The National Red List. *Vanda tessellata* is well known for the characteristic tessellations with a wide range of floral polymorphism. Population of *Vanda tessellata* has heavily declined within the last 20 years. This study was conducted with the objective of analyzing the magnitude and trends in the present trade of *V. tessellata* in Sri Lanka during the period of 2007-2018. Data were gathered at the natural habitats, from the data bases of Sri Lanka Customs, Department of Wild Life Conservation, Department of Forest Conservation, National Plant Quarantine Division, National Botanic Gardens, court cases, international websites (CITES, WCO, WCMC, TRAFFIC Int'l), intelligence gathered, literature surveys, market surveys, interviewing individuals (n=132) in Sri Lanka and Thailand; and print, electronic and social media. CITES trade data from 2008-2017 were analysed. According to CITES data base 17 live plants and 125 dried flower samples of *V. tessellata* have been exported. There were four attempts of smuggling the *V. tessellata* from Sri Lanka detected by SL Customs and one such attempt was detected by the Department of Forest Conservation. Results indicated that *V. tessellata* is the most heavily traded indigenous orchid in Sri Lanka. Seven Illegal local sale sites have been detected and two local suppliers of *V. tessellata* have been identified. The law enforcement regarding the species is very poor. Results highlight the importance of enforcing conservation measures by habitat protection, scientific study on unique germplasm of identified varieties of the species, which contain it's rich floral polymorphism. Ex-situ conservation for uncommon colour varieties in protection of the species is recommended.