

## Survey and Herbarium Study of Medicinal Vascular Flora of Doi Mae Soi

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### ABSTRACT

*The herbarium now includes over 10,037 specimens from 238 families (270 fam. in the world) kept in Medicinal Plants Herbarium, Faculty of Pharmacy, Chiang Mai University. From October 1991 until December 1993, a total of 740 species had been collected from Doi Mae Soi valley catchment, Chom Tong District, some of which are of considerable economic, medicinal and botanical interest. These plants which have been collected belong to 136 plant families. Doi Mae Soi valley, c.300–1,650 m. above MSL, compose of deciduous plants, mixed with evergreen plants and the area over c.1,000 m. are bedrock and granite. Plants found on the limestone differ from those species found on the granite area. So, vegetation collected from different level and habitat area will point to the development of natural forest in the future.*

**Key words:** Doi Mae Soi, Herbarium specimens, Medicinal plants museum

### INTRODUCTION

Mae Soi conservation area is situated about 65 km south of Chiang Mai City and includes an area of nearly 70 km<sup>2</sup>. It is named after the Mae Soi stream which, along with its tributaries, originates in the uplands of the region, flows through a wide valley and eventually joins the Ping River at Mae Soi Village. The elevation of the area is 300 m at the base of the valley and rises to over 1,625 m at the top of the ridge. The bedrock is mostly granitic with limestone along the southern (c.400–c.1,100 m) and north-eastern (300–450 m) parts of the area. The main reference points are a Buddhist Meditation Centre in the centre of the valley and a Hmong (hilltribe) village, Ban Bah Gluay, on the ridge at c.1,400 m. Most of the area is officially under the auspices of the Watershed Management Division of the Royal Forest Department.

The lowlands of the area, continuously degraded for decades, are essentially clear-cut and abandoned by the early 1970. Because of this blatant ecological insult and the detrimental effects from this loss of habitat and resources, Pra Ajahn Pongsak, abbot of Pah Laht Temple on Doi Sutep in Chiang Mai, established a meditation centre in the Du Boo Cave area through which the Mae Soi stream passes. This meditation centre has prevented further forest destruction which, if continued, would have denuded and destroyed the cave area. Since Pra Ajahn