

# Prabha Rajini Amarasinghe

## CONTACT INFORMATION

---

Florida Museum of Natural History, Department of Biology, University of Florida,  
1659 Museum Rd, Gainesville, FL, 32611 USA

Email: [pamarasinghe@ufl.edu](mailto:pamarasinghe@ufl.edu)

## EDUCATION

---

- 2015 to date **PhD (candidate) - Plant Biology**, Florida Museum of Natural History, Department of Biology, University of Florida (Advisor: Dr. Nico Cellinese)
- 2011- 2013 **MS in Molecular Life Sciences**, Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2005- 2009 **BS in Agricultural Technology and Management**, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka - Major in Agricultural Biology

## RESEARCH AND TRAVEL GRANTS

---

*Total: \$4,155*

- 2017 Botanical Society of America Graduate Student **research award** (\$800)
- 2017 American Society of Plant Taxonomists Graduate Student **research grant** (\$500)
- 2017 **Davis graduate fellowship** in Botany, Department of Biology, University of Florida (\$350)
- 2016-2018 American Society of Plant Taxonomists **travel grants** for Botany (\$1005)
- 2017 Spring **travel awards**, Florida Museum of Natural History, UF (\$500)
- 2016 International Association for Plant Taxonomy **research grants** in Plant Systematics (\$1000)

## ACADEMIC AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

---

- 2018 **Tropical Botany Scholarship**, Fairchild Botanical Garden -declined
- 2012 **Plants of Tropical Asia Fellowship, China**, a field botany course at Xishuangbanna Botanic Garden, Chinese Academy of Science, Kungmin, China
- 2009 **J.W.L. Peiris Gold Medal in Agricultural Biology**, for the best performance in Agricultural Biology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

---

- 2015-2016 Research assistant, Dr. Nico Cellinese lab, Florida Museum of Natural History University of Florida (fieldwork: Sri Lanka and South Africa)
- 2012-2013 Master thesis: DNA barcodes and chemical profiles for a Sri Lankan medicinal plant *Plectranthus hadiensis*, University of Colombo (fieldwork: Sri Lanka)
- 2008-2009 BS degree: Morphological characterization of *Rhinacanthus* species in Sri Lanka University of Peradeniya (fieldwork: Sri Lanka)

## FIELD EXPERIENCE

---

- 2017 Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal, **South Africa**. Research on *Memecylon*
- 2008-2017 **Sri Lanka**. Researches on *Rhinacanthus*, *Plectranthus* and *Memecylon*
- 2012 Kunmin, **China**, a field botany course at Xishuangbanna Botanic Garden, Chinese Academy of Science, Kungmin, China

## PUBLICATIONS

---

Total 3, Citations 2, h-Index 1.92

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6930-5094>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=xDc5s5UAAAAJ>

### Peer Reviewed Journals:

2. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.** & D.S.A. Wijesundara, 2011. A new species of *Rhinacanthus* (Acanthaceae) from Sri Lanka, *Edinburgh Journal of Botany*, Cambridge University Press, UK. 68 (3): 333-337.

1. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.**, D.A.S. Siriwardhane, R.R. Samarasekera & O.V.D.S.J. Weerasena, 2015, Development of DNA Barcodes and Optimization of DNA Isolation and PCR Protocols for a Medicinal Plant *Plectranthus hadiensis*. *International Journal of Science and research*. India. 6(4): 2852-2856.

### Oral and Poster Presentations (selected):

7. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.**, J. Jantzen, D. Soltis, P. Soltis and Nico Cellinese, 2018. Developing tools to capture loci of two distant clades of Melastomataceae. Botany 2018, Rochester, MN.

6. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.** and Nico Cellinese, 2017. Niches, distribution and natural history: towards understanding the drivers of diversification of *Memecylon* (Melastomataceae). Botany 2017, Fort Worth, TX.

5. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.** and Nico Cellinese, 2016. A preliminary molecular phylogeny of *Memecylon* (Melastomataceae) reveals novel insights into its biogeographic patterns. Botany 2016, Savannah, GA: 263.

4. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.**, R.P. Karunagoda & D.S.A. Wijesundara, 2010. Morphological characterization of *Rhinacanthus* species of Sri Lanka. *Planta Medica*, Georg Thieme Verlag KG Stuttgart, New York, 76 (5): 514.

3. **Amarasinghe A.P.P.R.**, D.A.S. Siriwardhane, R.R. Samarasekera & O.V.D.S.J. Weerasena, 2014, Chemical profiles and DNA barcodes for a Sri Lankan medicinal plant *Plectranthus hadiensis*, Abstracts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Traditional Medicine, December 2014, IIM, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka 2(1): 105.

2. W.A.D.K. Wijesooriya, A.R.P.D.U.K.R. Ambadeniya & **A.P.P.R. Amarasinghe**, 2015. Development of chemical profiles and preliminary phytochemical screening for shoots of *Rhinacanthus* species (Acanthaceae) of Sri Lanka. 71<sup>st</sup> Annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Association of the Advancement of Science 71(4):108

1. S.H. Punchihewa, **A.P.P.R. Amarasinghe**, S.P. Senanayake & P.A. Paranagama, 2015. Preliminary phytochemical screening and evaluation of anti-inflammatory properties of *Albizia*. 71st Annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Association of the Advancement of Science 71(4):107

### Field Guide:

**A.P.P.R. Amarasinghe**, Senanayake S.P. & Amarasinghe A.P.G, 2016. A field guide to the economically important plants of Sri Lanka. Stamford Lake (Pvt.) Ltd., Sri Lanka. ISBN 978-955-658-254-3.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

---

- 2016 to date **Teaching Assistant**, Department of Biology, UF. Courses teaching: (BSC2011 Integrated Principles of Biology LabII, BSC2010 LabI & BSC2010 Lab-online)
- 2013-2015 **Lecturer (temporary)**, Department of Botany, University of Kelaniya. Courses taught: (Form, Structure and Classification of Angiosperms, Horticulture, Plant Systematics and Bioinformatics, Plant Physiology and Biochemistry)
- 2009- 2010 **Lecturer (temporary)**, Department of Agri. Biology, University of Peradeniya, Courses taught: (Botany of Field Crops, Crop Systematics and Plant Biochemistry)

**MENTORSHIP**

---

- 2014 S.H. Punchihewa (undergraduate)- phytochemical and anti-inflammatory screening of *Albizia*

**EDITORIAL ACTIVITIES**

---

- 2012-2017 **Peer Reviewer of Journal Articles** – Phytotaxa, Sri Lanka Journal of Indigenous Medicine ISSN 2012 – 9238
- 2014 **Reviewer of Abstracts** – Abstract book of Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science annual sessions

**OUTREACH AND SERVICE**

---

**To Academics and Policy**

- 2018-2019 Faculty search **committee member**, Department of Biology, UF
- 2013 **Nomenclature Committee Member** - Committee to change botanical name of Ceylon cinnamon to *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, appointed by Ministry of Minor Export Crop Promotion, Sri Lanka
- 2014 **Organizing Committee Member** – National symposium of Invasive Alien Species (IAS 2014), Sri Lanka

**To the community**

- 2018-2019 Green house **representative** and seminar support **committee member**, University of Florida Biology Graduate Student Committee
- 2018 **Volunteer** Summer teaching camp for high school teachers (May)
- 2017 **Invited Resource Person** - Workshop on Biogeography, National Herbarium of Sri Lanka
- 2016-2018 **Volunteer** various events at the Florida Museum of Natural History (Earth Day - April, She's a scientist (for girl scouts) – November, One tree-one planet – Summer 2018)
- 2017 **Guest Speaker**-Niches and natural history of taxa, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2017
- 2016 **Science Fair Judge** - Kanapaha middle school, Gainesville, USA
- 2014 **Invited Resource Person** - Workshop on DNA barcoding, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
- 2013 **Guest Speaker** - Identification of medicinal plants using morphology, Department of Indigenous medicine, Municipal Council of Colombo, Sri Lanka

**SOCIETAL MEMBERSHIPS**

---

- 2016 to date **Student Member**, Botanical Society of America
- 2014 to date **Student Member**, American Society of Plant Taxonomist
- 2018 to data **Student Member**, Society for the Study of Evolution
- 2016 **Member**, International Association for Plant Taxonomy
- 2016 to 2018 **Student Member**, Torrey Botanical Society
- 2016 to 2017 **Student Member**, Society of Herbarium Curators

- 2014-2015 **Secretary**, Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS),  
Agriculture & forestry section, Sri Lanka
- 2013-2014 **Committee member**, SLAAS, Agriculture & forestry section, Sri Lanka