

# Phuket Gazette

February 4 - 10, 2017

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‘OUR ROOTS, AND THOSE OF OUR ANCESTORS, ORIGINATE FROM HERE’

## HOME AT LAST

■ Six sea gypsy families cleared of land-encroachment charges in Phuket

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

ABOUT a hundred emotional Rawai sea gypsies gathered outside a Phuket court that ruled in their favor on January 31, resolving years of disputes about land ownership and encroachment.

Coconut trees in the pictures of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 1959 visit to the area were among key pieces of evidence that acquitted four long-time residents of land encroachment charges.

The court threw out encroachment cases against four members of the community, namely Aew Hadsaithong, Woranan Hadsaithong, Bancha Hadsaithong and Nirun Yangpan.

“The court has examined several pieces of evidence, including pictures of His Majesty King Bhumibol that were taken in 1959. Included in the pictures are coconut trees, which the plaintiff claims are just 10 years old, but which were present even 60 years ago, at the time of His Majesty's visit,” Mr Nirun said.

Sea gypsies gathered outside the court to express moral support for the four defendants, many of them crying tears of joy after hearing the court's verdict.

The land owner, who held a title deed (*chanote* #8342) declaring him to be the owner of the land, had been at loggerheads with the sea gypsies for years, who say that their families have been living in the area for a century.

Exasperated by the never-ending battle over land ownership rights, some land owners had previously even offered to sell their plots to the government in order to resolve the dispute.

The sea gypsies, however, turned down the provincial governor's offer to purchase 19 rai of disputed land, insisting that the land deeds must be revoked entirely.

*Chanote* # 8342, which was previously presented as proof of land ownership in court, impacted nine families in total. The



Nirun Yangpan is one of the four members of the Rawai sea gypsy community who was cleared of land-encroachment charges on January 31. Photo: Gazette file

court has so far ruled in favor of six families, four on January 31 and two on December 13, while three cases remain undecided. The title holder did not show up at court to hear the verdict.

“We are the real owners of the land and have been living there for decades before the *chanote* was even issued in 1955,” said a visibly emotional Mr Nirun.

“We have made a life for ourselves here. Our roots, and those of our ancestors, originate from here. We have been here for more than a 100 years.”

A court had previously ruled against the sea gypsies, citing ‘lack of evidence’, but the appeals court, after taking into account evidence presented by the Department of

Special Investigation (DSI) and DNA evidence from dating skeletal remains found in the area, ruled in the sea gypsies favor.

Additionally, a student-enrollment list from Wat Sawang Arom Rawai, one of the oldest schools in the area, shows that sea gypsy children were enrolled there in 1954, a year before the *chanote* was issued.

“We hope the remaining three families get a favorable ruling as well. We want to thank everyone who has helped us; without the support of the DSI, police and other relevant officials, we would never have been here today, despite being the true owners of the land,” a sea gypsy villager said after the court ruling was announced.

*Additional reporting by The Nation.*

### Australian in hospital with mounting medical bills

AN Australian tourist, involved in a head-on collision with a truck, is hospitalized with a 1.47 million baht medical bill in Phuket. The victim's travel insurance doesn't cover her accident costs due to an issue with her driving licence.

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### BUSINESS



The ‘right time’ to invest always depends on your personal circumstances.

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### PROPERTY



A ‘how-to’ guide on adjusting to transience in the Phuket property market.

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### LIFE&STYLE



Ibiza comes to Phuket: the party towns of Ibiza and Phuket have more in common than one might think.

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## LOCAL NEWS

## Briefly

## Last warning on display at Racha Island

THE Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) has issued a 'last warning' to all tourists visiting Racha Island.

Signs explaining what constitutes illegal behavior have been set up Ao Patok, Ao Siam and Ao Tue, in Thai, English, Russian and Chinese.

The rules prohibit boats from dropping anchor when parked at Racha Yai Island, and visitors from standing on coral; touching, collecting or feeding marine animals (including coral); and polluting the environment.

"All tour guides must first bring visitors to a central meeting point, where they will undergo an 'orientation' and be informed about these laws and guidelines," said Suchat Rattananuengsri, head of DMCR Region 6.

The maximum penalty in these cases is a one-year jail term, a 100,000 baht fine, or both.

— Winai Sarot

## Facebook user reunited with hóngbao

A STACK of red envelopes filled with cash left behind at a

## Phuketians rehabilitate endangered pangolin



A night guard named Sanya Rittoworking in Rawai discovered a rare and endangered mammal on January 27 and quickly sprang into action to protect the creature from harm. A second guard, named Rungroj Jaengmeg, dug up anthills with his bare hands to feed the pangolin, despite being continuously bitten. Bob Windsor, the estate developer at 'Rawai Villas' at which the pangolin was found, contacted the head of the wildlife department and managed to find it a rehabilitation facility. They named it 'Houdini' as it managed to break through the cage pictured above. Photo: Bob Windsor

Phuket Town restaurant were returned to their original owner within a few hours with the help of a Facebook post on January 27.

The red envelopes, known as 'hóngbao', are generally distributed to employees, or to children during the Chinese New Year celebrations.

"At about 4pm, I posted a pic-

ture of the envelopes after a good Samaritan dropped them off to our station," said Maj Natthanawat of Phuket City Police. "People started sharing my post to help locate the owner."

By 7:30pm, Issarapown Khanongsuwan arrived and showed proof of ownership to Lt Col Rachan Panwai, who was at the police station at the time.

"Ms Issarapown told us that she had breakfast at the restaurant in a hurry and left the envelopes behind. She searched her office and checked CCTV footage but couldn't find them. Then she saw the post on Facebook and came here," explained the Colonel.

"These are for my employees at my jewelry store – it makes me truly happy to see that there are still good people around to help one another," said Ms Issarapown.

— Winai Sarot

## Russian man's death shrouded in mystery

POLICE are working to unravel the mystery of a Russian

man's death at a Bang Tao house on January 27.

Lt Col Sakon Krainara of Cherg Talay Police received a call from the victim's wife, Elena Yasen, at about 5:45pm. Rescue workers and police arrived at the house to find her unconscious.

"We had to revive her when we arrived. She strongly smelled of alcohol. There were dry blood stains and bloody footprints at the entrance and inside the house, and a key was found on the floor near the door," said Col Sakon.

"The body of the victim, Vladien Yasen Lazo, 49, was sprawled on the floor in one of the rooms, with his chin perched on the edge of the bed. Mr Lazo's feet were bloody, and there were some bruises on his back. We also found pieces of broken ceramic nearby."

Rescue workers estimated that the victim had been dead for at least 12 hours. Officials have yet to release Ms Yasen's statement about what happened.

"There was no sign of a break-in or robbery. We have called in specialists to investigate further. At the moment we cannot say whether this was an accident or something else," he added.

"Ms Yasen was in the ambulance carrying her husband's body to the hospital."

The couple had been living in Phuket for almost two years, and ran a property company for Russian tourists and expats.

— Winai Sarot

## Serial thief apprehended in Phuket

A PHANG NGA man was arrested on January 25 for multiple thefts in Wichit and Kathu earlier this month.

Col Nikorn Somsuk of Wichit Police presented the suspect, Parkpoom Thinglim, at a press conference the next day.

"We received several reports of snatchings by a man on a motorbike, thrice in Wichit and once in Kathu. At about 4:15pm, we spotted him on CCTV footage and started searching the area near Prince of Songkla University. At 11:40pm, we tracked him down to the side of the road where he was sitting with his motorbike," explained Col Nikorn.

He was brought back to Wichit Police Station and charged with theft and using a vehicle to commit a crime.

"Mr Parkpoom confessed to snatching various items. He told us that he intended to sell what he stole to buy drugs," he said.

"We then called in the January 9 snatching victims to identify the man. We would also like to invite other victims to come and identify him and file a report."

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

## Bangla club catches fire

THE cause of a fire at 'Seduction' discotheque on Soi Bangla, Phuket's infamous party street, is believed to be an electrical malfunction in a ceiling fan.

The fire started at about 7:45pm on January 28.

Six firetrucks arrived at the scene, with fire-fighters working for at least two hours to calm the flames that took over and extensively damaged the second and third floor of the four-storey building.

Firefighters were able to control the blaze from spreading to the fourth floor.

An employee named Prakarn Suwee was treated for smoke inhalation, but no other injuries were reported.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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# Funds pour in to help hospitalized Australian

By Zohaib Sikander

AN AUSTRALIAN tourist, who was reportedly involved in a head-on collision with a truck in Koh Lanta on January 15, was hospitalized in Phuket with a mounting medical bill that is not covered by her insurance.

Dawn Weldon-Schupp, a nurse, was travelling on a motorbike with her 14-year-old son, Josh, when the accident occurred. She reportedly suffered a brain injury, fractured skull, punctured lung and eight broken ribs, while Josh escaped with minor injuries and has since flown home.

Ms Weldon-Schupp had travel insurance, but found out she wasn't covered for the accident. An Australian news agency, *news.com.au*, reported that the insurance company rejected Ms Weldon-Schupp's claim because the moped had enough power to be classified as a motorbike and she didn't have a licence to ride one.

Donna Saalfeld, a friend of



Ms Weldon-Schupp and Josh before their Thailand trip. Photo: GoFundMe

hers, flew in to be with her. She said the hospital refused to let Ms Weldon-Schupp leave until her medical costs are cleared. She set up a *GoFundMe* page with details of the accident and a picture of a Phuket hospital bill totaling 1.47 million baht.

She asked for help via social media.

"[This is] not the Thai people's fault. Just a misunderstanding and a lack of transparency from insurance

companies – she's not the first and won't be the last, unfortunately, but I hope our story can globally educate people to ensure they have correct licences and travel insurance," Ms Saalfeld posted on her Facebook page on January 29.

Later the same day, she added that through donations from friends, family and strangers, they have been able to raise enough money to cover Ms Weldon-Schupp's hospital bill.

# Pythons in Phuket have no place to go



The team poses with the bags containing snakes. Photo: Winai Sarot

THE Kusoldharm Rescue Foundation Phuket has reported that at least 16 reticulated pythons were captured from people's homes in Kathu and Phuket City during the month of January.

"We classified the reptiles by weight; five of them weighed under 5kg and were released into the Khao Phra Thaew Nature and Wildlife Education Center Non-hunting restricted area," Phongchart Churhom, head of the Khao Phra Thaew facility, told the *Gazette*.

The remaining 11 pythons that weighed more than 5kg and were sent to Phang Nga Wildlife Nursery.

"These days, an increasing number of snakes have been making their way into people homes because their natural habitat has been destroyed. What used to be wild jungle is now a city," Mr Phongchart said.

"We are working to find a good long-term solution for this issue" he added.

– Winai Sarot








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# A good time to invest in Phuket

## Finance

By David Mayes

I AM ASKED so often about Phuket real estate that I find it a good topic to address from time to time. Of course, there are legal hurdles to consider, but I will leave that aside for today and focus simply on the issue of timing. Is now a time to be buying or fleeing the island?

Now I am far from a real estate guru, but as with any investment, the first thing one needs to consider is their time-frame and risk tolerance. A zillionaire looking to park cash somewhere for generations and a working class family looking to buy their first home will obviously consider very different things. When trying to decide if now is the time to buy, or even if 'here' is the right place to buy, it's best to look at it from a few perspectives.

There seems to be an ever increasing amount of supply on the island – new condos and other developments continue to emerge in every corner. One advantage of being an avid cyclist is that I am always exploring new parts of the island or revisiting old ones to see how they change over time. New developments continue to



When buying off-plan, you risk a hundred per cent if construction never happens. Photo: Pixabay

spring up all over and as we could be approaching the end of a cycle, I would be wary of buying off-plan at the moment.

First off, when considering any investment, you want to look for a return that is disproportionately bigger than the risk. By buying off-plan, you may gain an additional small percentage by receiving a discount to the prices that units sell for once construction has been completed. This often entices buyers to buy off-plan, but

my own personal opinion is that the increased risk is disproportionate to the gain. In general, you want to look for asymmetric risk to return in investing. This means you risk losing a little in return for a lot of potential upside.

However, when buying off-plan, you risk a hundred per cent if construction never happens. In the current environment, I think this risk is greater than normal. In fact, some units on the island end up selling for less than the

off-plan price in the end, so the additional updraft from buying off-plan is not guaranteed.

If you buy finished construction units, you are still not guaranteed that in the short-term, the price of what you bought will go up rather than down, but at least you know what you have in terms of bricks and mortar. I personally don't think there is a bad time to invest in real estate if your investment horizon is correct. In 30 years, I'm sure we will

look back and wish we could buy at today's prices. In 3-4 years, however, we would need a crystal ball. This means, if you can afford to get money tied up, you need not worry about short-term price direction. If you can afford to lose a deposit on an off plan purchase without batting an eye, then the risk of a developer going bust is not that big of a worry.

As with everything in life, your own personal situation is often the key to knowing if any asset class is right for you at a given point in time. If the population of Asia continues to grow as anticipated and projects like the light rail connecting the bridge, airport, Patong and Chalong come to fruition, then now is a great time to be buying in Phuket. I believe in the future of our little island, and I absolutely love it here. For me, another question with real estate is "would you want to live in it?", and for me this means the answer to Phuket real estate is a resounding yes.

*David Mayes, MBA, lives in Phuket and provides health, wealth and life coaching to expatriates around the globe. He has been involved in financial markets for 15 years and specializes in tax efficiency and UK pension transfers. He can be reached at lifeisamazingthailand@gmail.com*

## Billion baht budget set aside for Phuket

A BILLION-baht budget for infrastructure development has been approved for Phuket, Governor Chokchai Dejamornthan announced last month.

The budget is slated to improve traffic congestion and overall infrastructure development, including building and maintaining roads; installing CCTV cameras; burying overhead cables; beach development; and building and maintaining underpasses.

Additionally, Governor Chokchai has re-ignited interest in the light rail project.

"Traffic is the biggest problem in our daily lives and it affects everyone. If this could be done as fast as possible, it will benefit everyone on the island, including locals and tourists," said Gov Chokchai.

- Pruth Kulprasit



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## Phuket Gazette

# Save the snakes

REPORTS that a record number of large snakes were captured by emergency rescue workers here in Phuket last month is just the latest indicator of how badly the remaining natural habitats on the island are being destroyed by the relentless 'development' that Phuket has undergone in recent decades.

Snakes do not rate highly in our anthropomorphic view, which tends to favor animals more likely to be perceived as 'cute'.

Think puppy dogs, kitty cats, pandas, teddy bears – all the usual suspects. You probably already have a warm, fuzzy feeling coming over you. You might even have a sudden urge to check your Facebook feed. It is nothing to be ashamed of – we are all basically wired the same way.

Now think 'snake' and you can just as quickly feel that delightful fuzziness evaporate into feelings of fear, disgust and apprehension.

We even have a name for it: ophidiophobia, the 'abnormal' fear of snakes. In fact, ophidiophobia is just a sub-brand of an even wider phobia known as herpetophobia, which is not the fear of Soi Bangla-induced cold sores, but rather the fear of reptiles and amphibians in general.

The human fascination with snakes is certainly alive and well here in Phuket. When the *Gazette* was first able to gauge reader interest based on the number of 'clicks' more than a decade ago, we were astonished at just how popular any story involving snakes would instantly become.

Yet, in all this time, we cannot remember a single incident in which a human life has been lost as a result of a snake bite. This is quite remarkable when one considers how many cobras there are on the island and how relentlessly we have been driving them out of their natural habitats.

One of the most popular Facebook stories on the island in recent weeks has been a local effort by one NGO to stop Koreans from eating 'man's best friend'.

While mental images of Rover being served up at the Korean BBQ are certainly compelling, maybe it is time we also step back and consider sending a little love to some of the other species that have called our island home for eons and still play crucial roles in maintaining balance in what remains of our vanishing natural ecosystems.



## Animals don't belong to people

Re: *Panicked Phuket elephant rampages into forest, Jan 31*

When will it finally be banned? These animals don't belong to people, they belong to nature. Leave them alone and in peace.

Wolf  
Gazette forum

### Always the same reasons given

Re: *Electrical malfunction believed to be cause of Patong nightclub fire, Jan 30*

In Thailand, it's always electrical malfunction. For road accidents, it's brake malfunction and when farangs die it's only suicide.

Michel Mog  
Facebook

### What happens if you have no money

Re: *Critically injured Aussie hospitalized in Phuket [video], Jan 31*

What happens if someone hasn't got the money to pay their bill? Do they stay in the hospital forever? Do they go to jail? What happens?

Foot  
Gazette forum

### Phuket too crowded

Re: *Phuket's snakes have no place to go, Jan 31*

If small creatures like snakes, who adapt well, cannot

## Letters to the Editor

Do you have an opinion to voice?  
Email [Editor@PhuketGazette.net](mailto:Editor@PhuketGazette.net)

The sad fact is that without the tourist trade, who would be bothered to look after them? And where would they live if set free?

Peter Rawai  
Gazette forum

### Yet another shot in the foot by officials

Re: *Penalty, jail term announced for Koh Racha rule breakers, Jan 27*

Yet another shot in the foot – prosecute the tourists, not the Thai guides and agencies who have responsibility for ensuring their foreign customers comply with local laws.

Next we will hear that an 'accident' was caused by an overweight tourist causing a bus's brakes to fail. Responsibility? Deny it, deny it, deny it.

Mister Ree  
Gazette forum

### Impossible not to be able to locate owner

Re: *Video: Foreign boat hunted for anchoring on coral off Phuket, Jan 26*

The immigration department will know for sure. After all, they must have asked for several copies of its documents, not to mention the owners personal details, contacts and friends, shopping habits, bank account numbers and restaurants he frequents. How can it be possible not to find him?

Geoffrey Morris  
Facebook

survive on Phuket, does it not tell you that Phuket is over built, over congested & rapidly losing its appeal.

But you still have the 'big snakes' to worry about.

James H Miller  
Facebook

### Wish we could have the old Patong back

Re: *Thai woman complains about overpricing, January 26*

This, sadly, is just a tiny part of Patong's problems.

The standards have dropped in all areas and the prices have, and still are, rising for everything.

It's overpriced, but it is sadly what Patong has come to.

Simon  
Gazette forum

### Elephants suffer a sad fate in Thailand

Re: *Opinion: Protecting the Kingdom's gentle giants, Jan 30*

I hate seeing them chained up all day and fed a diet of pineapple plants, and wish domestic elephants were better cared for and loved.

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# Seeing through property transience



**Property Watch**  
Desmond Hughes

THERE are many themes of life in Phuket that are either interwoven or operate independently. It is possible, as many local Phuketians will testify, to exist in Phuket without even meeting your friends on a regular basis, because you live on 'different sides of the island', or 'I don't like driving over the hill' or because of the traffic jams.

In terms of property, infrastructure and amenity development, the Phuket transience can also rub off on behavior and business. This requires a lot of adaptation and many newcomers to Phuket and the property market can be taken by surprise by some of the more unusual practices and experiences they might encounter during an investment.

One big issue with transience is maintaining your property, but also watching the costs and being part of a committee or group of owners that oversee the property. If you are never here, your voice will often count for little, and you will be at the whim of



One big issue with transience is maintaining your property. Photo: Pexels

the most permanent resident's voice and actions.

When it comes to use of your property and rentals, unless you happen to have a lot of spare time, you will have to work out a good way to compete in a market where there is now a lot of property for rent. In many developments selling real estate, the first few years of post-purchase is backed by a rental program return, sometimes guaranteed at

a fixed rate. However, when that first period is over, you will be subject to the very lengthy monsoon season, with the bursts of monsoon even in the mostly-dry high season.

Therefore, your property will be rented out amid a lot of resort-style property that may be part of a hotel operation and have far more resources than you do in terms of marketing. This will challenge your potential to generate rental revenue, and it is a

significant factor in choosing your property – how can it make enough money over the high season to make up for the long low season, and what will that look like in terms of expenses over a year, which will fluctuate a lot less than the rental revenue.

In terms of reliance upon business people, their stability can be compromised by transient behavior and this can affect your business dealings and property investments. If your seller is leaving Phuket post-sale, or your agent is only going to be an agent now and again, floating in and out of Phuket and other places according to the closest commission payment, then if you have any complaints that need to be addressed or post-purchase care requirements, these are not likely to be addressed.

In a stable, non-transient environment, there is naturally more accountability, and an element of self-regulated behavior based on a desire to preserve good reputation over extended periods of time.

Phuket, with all its benefits, can therefore be disorienting for newcomers – even those possessing good business acumen and good standing – with

its 'temporary friends', some fly-by-night businesses and companies, and fortunately with a healthy mix of established families and businesses that have a track record even before roads were installed in the province, of success and investment.

In order to get the most out of a short or long-term investment into property in Phuket, I recommend that a careful analysis of the elements of your investment that are or could be transient, be conducted. This will help distinguish between a short-term promise, a temporary truth, and a fact that applies now and will apply in the future.

It can be difficult in Phuket to see past what can sometimes be a facade or presentation of success and prosperity, when the truth in most business environments and property markets, unless you are a committed gambling sort, is that appearances aren't everything but permanence, stability, certainty, substance, long-termism, planning and reputation will impact heavily on the success or otherwise of your investment.



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# Party it up like you're in Ibiza

DID you know that the Balearic island of Ibiza and the Andaman island of Phuket are within a few square miles of being the same size?

There are other connections too: quite a large chunk of Ibiza has UNESCO World Heritage status, while Phuket cuisine recently picked up the UNESCO seal of approval. Additionally, a significant and growing chunk of the island's population comprises of foreigners. Sounds familiar anyone?

On the tourism front, Ibiza's officials would very much like the island to move towards more quality, family-oriented visitors, going so far as to introduce rules that new hotels must be at least five star.

As any *Gazette* reader will undoubtedly know, pushing for so-called "quality tourism" has received quite a lot of lip-service here in Phuket too.

But the most obvious parallel between these two sun-drenched isles is that – despite what their leaders would like them to be – they are both internationally renowned as party destinations.

Ibiza saw over 7 million visi-



The Ibiza Party at Xana Beach Club will feature 90s favorites Phats and Small. Photo: Supplied

tors last year, pretty much all of them drawn to the island for the chance to lose themselves within the deep house, electronic and Balearic beats emanating from Ibiza's club scene.

High on many visitors' must-dance-at lists is the Jacaranda Lounge.

Perched on a northeast headland with spectacular views out across the Mediter-

ranean, the Lounge is renowned for its sounds and parties and now Phuketians will have a chance to find out what all the fuss is about as Jacaranda Lounge takes the

party on the road.

With a flying saxophonist, as well as beats by Jamie Porteus and Rick Live, along with the return of 90s favorites Phats and Small, if you can't go to Ibiza, let Ibiza come to you.

The flying sax and the rest of the gang land in Phuket – at Xana Beach Club – on February 10 for a Friday full of sounds and spectacles that kicks off at midday and runs late into the evening.

You can also join in the action at Koh Samui at the Combo Beach Club, Chateau Dale Beach Hotel on February 14, or in Pattaya at the Cliff Pool Club on February 16.

A 15 per cent discount is available for *Gazette* readers on all tickets booked between February 3-6, 2017. The discount is valid for website purchases of standard tickets only, by using the code PG030217AV.

If you would like to experience what has made Ibiza such a popular party destination, book your tickets at [www.ibizaparty.asia](http://www.ibizaparty.asia).

– *Phuket Gazette*

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# Two valuable Mexican climbers

**Gardening**  
By Patrick Campbell

I AM not talking about social climbers or even those intrepid fellows who scale up the sheer cliffs at Railay. Rather I'm referring to two members of the vine brigade who have received less than their due footage in these columns.

I was reminded of the value of the garlic vine when I visited an estate, the common parts of which had been landscaped to mask unsightly concrete walls. Not yet in bloom, its foliage was already working away at the camouflaging process.

*Mansoa alliacea* has many merits. For a start it is self-supporting; the terminal leaflet is often modified into a tendril that clings to whatever is at hand. Moreover it has a profusion of deep lavender bell-shaped flowers with an attractive white throat. In the right conditions, these blooms appear at least twice a year. In fact, in my garden, they seemed to bloom whenever exposed to the sun.

Furthermore, it is a very vigorous grower: my specimen,



Yellow mandevilla vines can bloom all year round if they are given enough sun. Photo: Yercaud-elango

which developed a woody, two-inch thick stem, eventually reached 15 feet as it climbed into a neighboring devil tree. One important thing to be remembered is that the vine produces flower buds on new growth so it should not be pruned – as least if you want it to continue to bloom.

The climber possesses other unusual features which should endear it to any intrepid gardener.

The crushed leaves smell like garlic, and can be used as a garlic substitute. Moreover, the entire plant has medicinal uses, especially for respiratory ailments and to alleviate fever. It can even be used as a mosquito repellent and is considered lucky. What more could you ask for?

*Odontadenia* is equally valuable as a climber, but much less well-known. Indeed I have

only encountered it on one occasion, growing in a friend's trellised roof garden where its habit was so profuse that numerous sunbirds were nesting in its foliage. It also hails from Mexico and I suspect its introduction to Asia is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Now beginning to gain recognition, it deserves to be better known in Phuket. The two-inch

vivid yellow-orange flowers are bell shaped and are produced in great profusion – smaller but almost as spectacular of those of its relative, the *allamanda*.

Another close relative is called *pentalinon luteum*. It's a bit different in that the striking blooms are invariably neon yellow. Just to confuse things, it is sometimes known as the yellow mandevilla. These flowers are produced, as with the garlic vine, at the stem tips. Given enough sun, it will bloom all year round. In common with the garlic vine, it produces tendrils, which are important if one wants a low-maintenance climber. The riotous foliage, sap-green in color, is a real bonus.

I currently have one, taken from a cutting, and growing in a pot: I will keep my fingers crossed when I transfer it to a wall-side setting – it's too precious to lose.

If you have gardening or environmental concerns, contact Patrick at [drpaccampbell@gmail.com](mailto:drpaccampbell@gmail.com). Many of his creative and academic publications can be found at his website: [GreenGardeningWordpress.com](http://GreenGardeningWordpress.com).







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