



1.3 Plate from Thomas Horsfield's *Zoological Researches in Java* (1822). The Green Broadbill (*Calyptomena viridis*), now extinct on the island, was described by Raffles when he was in Singapore in 1822.

tions under Raffles' patronage. According to Bastin, the two Frenchmen failed to honour an agreement to publish their discoveries in England, and this 'forced Raffles to seize their collections and undertake a scientific description of them himself.'¹⁰ Raffles prepared a *Descriptive Catalogue* to accompany the collection which he shipped to London in 1820. Although the collections were essentially those assembled by Diard and Duvaucel, and the catalogue itself largely the work of William Jack, it established Raffles's reputation as a zoologist.

During Raffles' last visit to Singapore in 1822–3, he met up with Wallich, who was on the island on sick leave. Raffles joined him in botanical excursions on the island and was encouraged by Wallich to establish a botanical garden in Singapore. This he did by allocating a piece of land on Government Hill (later Fort Canning) for this purpose. Raffles returned to Bencoolen in July 1823 with 'a variety of natural history collections from Singapore' and others from Sumatra. Alas, this material was all to perish in the tragic fire that engulfed his vessel, *Fame*, in February 1824.

Bastin tells us that Raffles' interest in natural history straddled its whole range from geology, to ichthyology and entomology. The curtailment of his political activity following the establishment of the settlement in Singapore in 1819 were perhaps, Bastin says, 'the happiest period of Raffles' life when, after assiduous study and close associations with a number of naturalists over many years, he enjoyed the necessary leisure to engage in natural history research for himself.'

According to John Bastin, Raffles' interest in natural history intensified during his 1816–17 visit to London where he met with London's leading naturalists, including Sir Joshua Banks and Dr Joseph Arnold. Together with the latter, Raffles later discovered the world's biggest flower, the carnivorous *Rafflesia* (*Rafflesia arnoldi*) in 1818. Alas, life was very hard for naturalists in the tropics and Arnold died only four months after arriving in Sumatra. After failing to persuade the Company to send a replacement, Raffles met Dr William Jack through Dr Nathaniel Wallich, the Danish superintendent of the Botanic Garden in Calcutta who was also surgeon and botanist. Jack was a talented naturalist and although he too, died prematurely, aged 27, in 1822.

Raffles also employed two French zoologists, Pierre-Médard Diard and Alfred Duvaucel, who amassed a large zoological collec-



1.4 The *Rafflesia arnoldii*, the world's biggest flower, which is named in honour of Raffles and his friend Joseph Arnold (1782–1818) even though it was first discovered by French explorer Louis Auguste Deschamps (1765–1842) in Java in 1797. Raffles and Arnold collected a specimen of this plant in Sumatra in 1818.