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OPTIMA *Newsletter*

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EDITORIAL

When a newsletter mainly includes "olds" rather than news – as is bound to happen when it is produced every few years rather than several times per year – there is a problem. When we accepted to take charge of the OPTIMA Secretariat at its new Palermo location we were well aware of that problem and were determined to solve it. Once again, finding and implementing a solution has taken some time, but now we are there – or so we hope.

The new style OPTIMA Newsletter is a complement to the OPTIMA Web pages, or if you wish, it is a consolidated version of recent, relevant contents of that Web site. It is produced once every year, to be sent by electronic mail to all Members; it also exists as a printed version, mainly for the purpose of its permanent deposit at the libraries of OPTIMA's Institutional members, for archival documentation.

You are receiving today your electronic copy of the first electronic OPTIMA Newsletter, and will continue to receive that Newsletter in the future. If you prefer hard copy, we recommend that you just print it out. Alternatively, you may obtain your printed copy by writing to the Secretariat, adding 5 € in cash for postage and printing cost (you may also order it electronically, using the PayPal system for payment; or you may subscribe to future hard-copy Newsletters by adding 5 € to your membership fee).

In addition, you will receive OPTIMA's news items in advance, if and when they become available, also in the form of an e-mail attachment. Note that these advance news items will not be formatted nor edited linguistically, as they will be when subsequently incorporated into the annual consolidated version.

Speaking of language, you may note that all texts in the present issue are written in English. This is not, may we stress, a departure from OPTIMA's basically bilingual nature. Texts submitted to us in French are acceptable as before. However, expediency and practical considerations prevent us from producing bilingual versions of news items, as was done before. In our experience, all but every OPTIMA Member has a reading knowledge of the English language, and for the few who have not, automatic translation programmes are now freely available (admittedly, they may still produce funny results occasionally – have fun!) A non-edited sample of this paragraph, using Voilà traduction (http://tr.voila.fr/traduction_voila.php), follows.

En parlant de la langue, vous pouvez noter que tous les textes dans la présente édition sont écrits dans l'anglais. Ce n'est pas, pouvons nous insister, un départ de la nature fondamentalement bilingue d'OPTIMUMS. Les textes soumis à nous dans le français sont acceptables comme auparavant. Pourtant, la convenance et les considérations pratiques nous empêchent de produire des versions bilingues d'articles de forum, comme a été fait auparavant. Dans notre expérience, tous sauf chaque Membre d'OPTIMUMS ont une connaissance de lecture de la langue anglaise et pour peu qui n'ont pas, les programmes de traduction automatisée sont maintenant librement disponibles (de l'aveu général, ils peuvent toujours produire des résultats bizarres de temps à autre – amusez-vous!) Un échantillon non-révisé de ce paragraphe, en utilisant Voilà traduction (http://tr.voila.fr/traduction_voila.php), *suit.*

We have some wishes and requests of our own that we want to submit to you.

Input and feedback: We would be most grateful for receiving your critical opinion and possible suggestions on the present Newsletter – and future ones. Also, think of sending us items (announcements, requests, information) suited for circulation among the Optima Membership.

Address changes: should your e-mail address change, please notify the OPTIMA Secretariat immediately.

Tailoring our services to your needs: The default option is for OPTIMA Members to receive the news items and consolidated Newsletter in full, as e-mail attachments. At your discretion, you may cancel that service; or, to save mailbox space, you may replace it by e-mail notification of the corresponding link to the OPTIMA Web pages. Please instruct.

Palermo, April 2009

Werner Greuter and Gianniantonio Domina

PUBLICATIONS OFFER

THE MED-CHECKLIST *COMPOSITAE* VOLUME AVAILABLE AT LAST!

Werner Greuter, Med-Checklist. A critical inventory of vascular plants of the circum-Mediterranean countries, 2. *Dicotyledones (Compositae),* edited by Werner Greuter and Eckhard von Raab-Straube (*Pilosella* by Siegfried Bräutigam & Werner Greuter; *Taraxacum* by Jan Kirschner, Jan Štěpánek & Werner Greuter). OPTIMA Secretariat, Palermo, Med-Checklist Trust of OPTIMA, Genève, and Euro+Med Plantbase Secretariat, Berlin (ISBN: 978-2-8279-0011-4). cclxxxvii + 798 pages; cloth.

The Med-Checklist series started in 1978, under the scientific authority of the Organisation for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area (OPTIMA). It was planned to comprise 6 volumes, of which volumes 1, 3 & 4 have been published so far. Some 20 years after the appearance of the latest Med-checklist volume, vol. 4 (1989), a new one recently (end of December 2008) saw the light! The book is devoted to Compositae, the largest family in the Mediterranean area. It comprises: (1), an introductory chapter explaining the historical background and nature of Med-checklist, its relation with the Euro+Med Plantbase project, taxonomic and geographic coverage and arrangements, preparation of the book, sources and references, acknowledgements, etc.; (2), a Checklist (synonymic catalogue, on 798 pp.) of the Compositae species and subspecies growing in the wild in the countries of the Mediterranean area; the taxa are arranged in alphabetical order by genera, then by species within a genus (or section, in Taraxacum), and by subspecies within a species; (3), a list of basic Floras (Appendix I); (4), additional references (Appendix II); (5), a list of genera arranged by tribes (Appendix III); (6), an alphabetical list of the genera with tribes (Appendix IV); (7), a list of excluded hybrids (Appendix V. Hybridae exclusae); (8), an index of new names and combinations published in the volume (Appendix VI); and (9), an index of scientific names.

The first impression of the book is the awesome bulk, requiring physical strength and sufficient space to consult it! Surprisingly, it is not that heavy (printed on thin paper) with its 1085 pages reflecting the huge amount of work carried out mainly by Werner Greuter, one of the founders of the series! The introductory part tells the reader how the book was prepared. Many collaborators from the Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin-Dahlem have taken part. An international network of experts have provided data and advice on particular countries and regions, and thus contributed to the accuracy, completeness and reliability of the volume. Siegfried Bräutigam co-authored the account of Pilosella; Jan Kirschner and Jan Štěpánek that of Taraxacum. Editorial work was shared with Eckhard von Raab Straube.

The Checklist is a comprehensive synonymic catalogue of all species and subspecies of the Compositae in the Mediterranean area, providing a correct nomenclature under current taxonomic standards. Furthermore, it gives territory-by-territory distribution for all listed taxa up to the aggregate level. A total of 278 genera, 4 337 species and additional 2 384 subspecies (6 721 species and subspecies) are accepted, and more than 19 000 names are recorded in the volume! The geographic coverage includes all countries surrounding the Mediterranean sea plus Portugal, Bulgaria, Crimea (Ukraine), and Jordan. Whenever the latest comprehensive and competent studies on particular groups for the Med-checklist area were available, they were taken into account and featured in the checklist, including for delimitation of genera, species and subspecies. Therefore, numerous differences from the well known taxonomic scheme in Flora Europaea, vol. 4 (1976), are to be found.

A few innovations were introduced in this book as compared to the previous Med-checklist volumes. For instance, one can find sections listed under Taraxacum which was never allowed in the earlier volumes. And most importantly, one can find new names and combinations validly published here (listed in Appendix VI).

The reader may disagree or feel uncomfortable with the taxonomic schemes adopted in some of the groups. As a person working on Hieracium s.l., I myself strongly favour the separation of Pilosella and Hieracium s.str. as two distinct genera, as accepted in Med-Checklist. I also favour the taxonomic treatment of the former genus, but I dislike the taxonomic concept adopted in the latter one (very broad species, most of them with numerous subspecies of unknown relations). However, I do have to admit that this is probably the best (if not the only possible!) treatment of this taxonomically very complex group for such a large area, considering the scarce information and lack of any contemporary work for most of the Mediterranean countries.

The Med-checklist, vol. 2, provides very exhaustive, nomenclaturally correct information about the Compositae and sets up a “common language” for all botanists and other interested experts from all Mediterranean countries. I am very glad to have this volume at my personal disposal and strongly recommend anyone interested in the Compositae taxonomy and distribution, authors of Floras and Field Guides, botanical libraries, etc. to obtain a copy. It is an excellent reference book, available for only Euro 120 (plus shipping charges) from: OPTIMA Secretariat, c/o Orto Botanico, Via Lincoln 2/A, 90123 Palermo (secr@optima-bot.org) (25 % discount for regular OPTIMA members!).

Vladimir Vladimirov, Sofija
(vdvlad@bio.bas.bg)

ORDINARY AND INSTITUTIONAL OPTIMA MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO REDUCTIONS ON THE PRICES OF SEVERAL PUBLICATIONS

The following publications are available for sale at the OPTIMA Secretariat

Med-Checklist. Volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4. Membership discount: 25 %.

Flora Mediterranea, volumes 1 to 18 (all published). An international scientific journal on plant geography, floristics and systematic botany in its widest sense, relating to Mediterranean plants of all groups, whether living or fossil; published annually by the Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum under the auspices of OPTIMA. Membership discount: 70 % (Members receive current issues for free, but may wish to purchase back issue to complete their run). Volume 11 is no longer available.

Bocconea, volumes 1-5 and 7-22 (70% and 20% discount). A series of monographs, with the same subject coverge as *Flora Mediterranea,* published at irregular intervals by the Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum under the auspices of OPTIMA. Membership discount: 20 %:

Vol. 1: Results of the First “Iter Mediterraneum” in south-eastern Spain, June-July 1988.

Vol. 2: A check-list of Sicilian fungi.

Vol. 3: Results of the Second “Iter Mediter-raneum” in Israel, March-April 1989.

Vol. 4: Current research on the biology of threatened plant species of the Mediter-ranean Basin and Macaronesia: a database.

Vol. 5: Proceedings of the VII OPTIMA Meeting in Borovetz, 18-30 July 1992, (I and II).

Vol. 6: Contributions towards a checklist of Mediterranean Lichens (**out of stock**).

Vol. 7: Proceedings of the Workshops on “Con-servation of the Wild Relatives of European Cultivated Plants”.

Vol. 8: Catalogue des plantes vasculaires rares, menacées ou éndemiques du Maroc.

Vol. 9: The systematics of *Anthemis* L. (*Compositae, Anthemideae*) in W and C North Africa.

Vol. 10: An annotated checklist of the flora of the Abruzzo

Vol. 11: Results of the Fourth “Iter Mediterraneum” in Cyprus, April 1991

Vol. 12: Catalogue of the benthic marine macroalgae of the Italian coast of the Adriatic Sea

Vol. 13: Proceedings of the IX OPTIMA Meeting. Paris, 11-17 May 1998

Vol. 14: Checklist of the Lichens and lichenicolous Fungi of the Iberian Peninsula and Balearic Islands.

Vol. 15: The officinal Flora of Sannio (Benevento, SE - Italy).

Vol. 16: Proceedings of the X OPTIMA Meeting. Palermo, 13-19 September 2001, (I & II).

Vol. 17: Results of the Third "Iter Mediterraneum" in Sicily, May-June 1990.

Vol. 18: Identification key and description of Mediterranean maquis litter microfungi.

Vol. 19: Prooceedings of the VI Conference on Plant Taxonomy in Alghero, 31 May - 2 June 2003.

Vol. 20: A catalogue of plants growing in Sicily.

Vol. 21: Prooceedings of the XI OPTIMA meeting in Beograd, 5-11 September 2004.

Vol. 22: Check-list of the Hornworts, Liverworts and Mosses of Italy .

Proceedings of OPTIMA Meetings, published as independent volumes or in various journals. Still available for Meetings II, V-VII and IX-XI. Membership discount: 20 %. An overview of all Procedings follows:

[I, Iraklio 1975: no proceedings published.]

II, Firenze 1977: Proceedings in Webbia 34(1). 1979.

[III, Madrid 1980: Proceedings in Anales del Jardín Botánico de Madrid 37(2). 1981.]

[IV, Palermo 1983: Proceedings in Webbia 38. 1985.]

V Istanbul 1986: Proceedings published independently. 1993.

VI Delphi 1989: Proceedings in Botanika Hronika 10. 1991.

VII Borovec 1993: Proceedings in Bocconea 5(1-2). 1996/1997.

[VIII Sevilla 1995: Proceedings in Lagascalia 19. 1997.]

IX Paris 1998: Proceedings in Bocconea 13. 2001.

X Palermo 2001: Proceedings in Bocconea 16(1-2). 2003/2004.

XI Beograd 2004: Proceedings in Bocconea 21. 2007.

XII Pisa 2007: Proceedings in Bocconea (forthcoming).

OPTIMA Newsletter, published by OPTIMA. Still available (mostly in a very limited number of copies): Nos. 5-37(2). Membership discount: 50 %.

OPTIMA Leaflets, distributed by OPTIMA. Still available (some in a limited number of copies): Nos. 24-29, 81-95, 113-215. Details of authors and titles can be seen on the Web (www.optima-bot.org/publications/leaflets/). Membership discount: 50 %.

Publications on Orchids, distributed by OPTIMA on behalf of its Commission for Mapping the Orchids of the Mediterranean Area. Eight items (see details on the Web at http://www.optima-bot.org/publications/orchid) were issued, all still available Membership discount: 50 %.

1: Index der Verbreitungskarten für die Orchideen Europas und der Mittelmeerländer. 1979.

2: Orchideenforschung und Naturschutz im Mittelmeergebiet. 1981.

3: Die Orchideenflora von Euböa (Griechenland). 1981

[4]: Orchidee spontanee dell'Argentario. 1981.

[5]: Die Orchideenflora Albaniens. 1984.

[6]: **Die Orchideenflora des Gargano** (Italien). 1987.

[7]: **Die nomenklatorischen Typen** der von Linnaeus veröffentlichten Namen europäischer Orchideen. / **Die Gattung *Serapias*** L. – eine taxonomische Übersicht. 1989.

[8]: **Die Orchideen in em Bilderwerk des Carolus Clusius** (Libri picturati 16-31). 1990.

[9]: Die Orchideen in dem Bilderwerk des Carolus Clusius (Libri picturati A. 16-31). Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Orchideen im 16. Jahrhundert, by S. Künkele & R. Lorenz [Mitteilungsbl. Arbeitskr. Heim. Orchideen Baden-Württemberg, 22(3): 541-691]. 1990. – Analytical description of a collection of orchid paintings assembled and used by Carolus Clusius, presently kept in the Cracow University library.

Publication on Lichens, distributed by OPTIMA on behalf of its Commission on Lichens. P. L. Nimis & J. Poelt, **The lichens and lichenicolous fungi of Sardinia** (Italy). (Studia Geobotanica 7, Suppl. 1). 1987. Membership discount: 50 %.

Various Publications, published or distributed by OPTIMA. All these items are sent for free to those interested against refund of the shipping cost!

[1]: H. W. Lack, **Current projects on the Mediterranean Flora.** 1979.

[2]: [Same] **Second edition.** 1984

[3]: W. Greuter, H. M. Burdet & G. Long, **Med-Checklist I. Pteridophyta** [Preliminary Edition]. 1981.

[4]: P. V. Arrigoni, E. Nardi & M. Raffaelli, **La vegetazione del parco naturale della Maremma** (Toscana). 1985.

[5]: M. G. Dia, G. Miceli & F. M. Raimondo, **Check-list dei Muschi noti di Sicilia.** (Webbia 41: 61-123). 1987.

PRICE LIST

(* Of asterisked items few copies are left: enquire on availability before making a payment!)

Med-Checklist

Volume	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
1	€ 68	€ 51	€ 32
2	€ 120	€ 90	€ 11
3	€ 80	€ 60	€ 32
4	€ 96	€ 73	€ 44

Flora Mediterranea

Vol. 1-10, 12-18	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
per volume	€ 50	€ 15	€ 10

Bocconea

Volume	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
1	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
2	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
3	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
4	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
5 (1 & 2)	€ 180	€ 144	€ 11
7	€ 65	€ 52	€ 10
8	€ 40	€ 32	€ 10
9	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
10	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
11	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
12	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
13	€ 65	€ 52	€ 10
14	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
15	€ 40	€ 32	€ 10
16 (1 & 2)	€ 130	€ 104	€ 11
17	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
18	€ 40	€ 32	€ 10
19	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
20	€ 85	€ 68	€ 10
21	€ 45	€ 36	€ 10
22	€ 40	€ 32	€ 10

Proceedings of OPTIMA Meetings

Number	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
II	€ 60	€ 48	€ 10
V *	€ 125	€ 100	€ 10
VI	€ 60	€ 48	€ 10
VII, IX, X, XI	see Bocconea vol. 5, 13, 16, 21		

OPTIMA Newsletter, issues:

5*, 6*, 7*, 8-9*, 10-11*, 12-13*, 17-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30*, 31*, 32*, 33*, 34*, 35*, 36, 37(1), 37(2)

	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
per issue	€ 5	€ 10	€ 6

OPTIMA Leaflets, issues:

24-29, 81-95, 113, 114, 115-124*, 125-129, 130-134, 135-140, 141-147, 148-156, 157-164, 165-171, 172-177, 178-189, 190-198, 199-200, 201-215

	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
per issue	€ 16	€ 8	€ 6

Publications on Orchids, issues 1, 2, 3, [4], [5], [6], [7], [8]

	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
per issue	€ 20	€ 10	€ 6

Publication on Lichens

	Normal Price	Member Price	Shipping cost
Sardinia	€ 30	€ 15	€ 6

Various Publications, items [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]

per item	unavailable	free	€ 6

Orders:

Send all orders to the OPTIMA Secretariat, via Lincoln 2/A, I-90123 Palermo, preferably by fax (+39 091 6238203) or e-mail (secr@optima-bot.org). **Advance payment is required. Please contact the Secretariat for multiple dispatches.**

Payment:

Payment may accompany the order, preferably so when a single item is ordered. When ordering several items simultaneously, inform yourself beforehand of likely savings on the shipping cost. Information on the actual cost may be obtained from the OPTIMA Secretariat which, on demand, will issue a pro-forma invoice.

The following options for payment are available:

- Bank transfer to OPTIMA, account No. 240-39619900D (IBAN: CH51 0024 0240 3961 9900 D; BIC: UBSWCHZH80A), Union Bank of Switzerland , CH-8400 Winterthur, Switzerland.

- Payment by PayPal, charging your Credit-card (or your PayPal account, if it exists). Please contact the Secretariat by e-mail (secr@optima-bot.org)
- International bank cheque drawn on a Swiss bank, extended to OPTIMA, mailed to the Secretariat. **Add € 10 to the total amount to compensate our banking fees.**

OPTIMA MEMBERSHIP

Membership categories

Ordinary members receive the electronic Newsletter and News Announcements, a free subscription to *Flora Mediterranea*, reduced rates on publications and at OPTIMA Meetings, and all the benefits of being a full member.

Institutional members, in addition to the above, receive a free subscription to *Bocconea* and a printed copy of the Newsletter.

Associate members receive the electronic Newsletter and News Announcements, but are not entitled to any other benefits.

Associate membership will become effective immediately upon receipt of the application form. Ordinary or institutional membership will become effective upon receipt of the application form and payment of the membership fee for the current year.

Current membership rates:

Ordinary (personal) members: ..... € 30.-
Life membership: ..... € 450.-
Institutional members: ..... € 100.-

Payments can be made in one of the following ways:

- Bank transfer to OPTIMA, account No. 240-39619900D (IBAN: CH51 0024 0240 3961 9900 D; BIC: UBSWCHZH80A), Union Bank of Switzerland, CH-8400 Winterthur, Switzerland.
- Payment by PayPal, charging your Credit-card (or your PayPal account, if it exists). Please contact the Secretariat by e-mail (secr@optima-bot.org)
- International bank cheque drawn on a Swiss bank, extended to OPTIMA, mailed to the Secretariat. **Add € 10 to the total amount to compensate our banking fees.**

Make sure that your full name is quoted with your payment. Advance payment for two or more years, at current membership rates, are accepted. A pro-forma invoice (also for life membership) and receipt of payment will be sent by e-mail upon request (make sure to mention your correct e-mail address).

Please send your application to: OPTIMA Secretariat - Dr. G. Domina, via Lincoln, 2/A, I-90123 Palermo, Italy. An apposite application form is provided on the OPTIMA Website (http://www.optima-bot.org/organization/membership1.htm), that you can either download and print or, preferably, fill in directly on the screen and mail electronically.

Barter SPECIMENS for OPTIMA membership and Bocconea

Through an agreement between OPTIMA and the Herbarium Mediterraneum Foundation, you may pay OPTIMA membership fees, or purchase volumes of *Bocconea,* by sending herbarium specimens to the Herbarium Mediterraneum in Palermo. The following conditions apply:

1. Only specimens from the following areas are acceptable: peri-Mediterranean countries (except Italy and France), plus Portugal and Bulgaria, the Atlantic Islands (Macaronesia), and the domain of Boissier's "Flora Orientalis" (Middle East, Transcaucasia, Crimea). Material from the country of residence (if part of this area) should be given preference.
2. The herbarium specimens must be unmounted, in good condition, identified, and contain complete information on readable, durable labels. The Herbarium Mediterraneum reserves the right to return specimens judged to be of insufficient quality.
3. Each herbarium specimen will be worth 1 €. Each delivery will consist of a minimum of 30 herbarium sheets.
4. Each mailing will include the sender's name, the number of herbarium specimens sent, the credit earned and and the purpose it is to be used for.
5. The specimens and form will be mailed to: Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum, Via Lincoln 2/A, I-90123 Palermo, Italy.
6. Please also send a communication by e-mail, to the OPTIMA Secretariat in Palermo (secr@optima-bot.org).

OPTIMA NEWS

by Gianniantonio Domina

OPTIMA Newsletter nº 38 maintains the cover and format launched with NEWSLETTER 37. It includes a huge Notices of Publications section, as might be expected in view of the long break since the previous issue.

As you will know, OPTIMA Meeting XII is to be held in Antalya (Turkey) on 22-26 March 2010. The First Circular is included here. Please make sure you pre-register as soon as possible and then register and submit your abstracts in due time. With the hard work and great motivation of our colleagues in Turkey, we are sure the XII OPTIMA Meeting will have great success.

INTERNATIONAL BOARD

2004-2007. The former Board members approved the Annual Reports for the years 2003-2006.

In 2004 the International Board approved the recommendation of the Prize Commission to attribute the Gold Medal to Nikola Diklić. It appointed Santiago Pajarón and Adrián Escudero as auditors for the year 2004, renewing that decision in the two following years. During the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade it confirmed the recommendations submitted to it by the Councel, detailed below.

In 2007, it followed the recommendation of the Prize Commission and attributed the OPTIMA Gold Medal to Vernon Heywood.

International Board elections were due for the 2007-2013 term. Most of the members of the International Board expresed their willingness to serve for another term, if elected. The few who declined proposed another candidate from their country. The OPTIMA Secretariat did not receive any additional proposals from members of the International Board or Ordinary members of the organization (Art. 16.4 of the OPTIMA Constitution). Thus, the total number of candidates (including ex-officio members) was equal to thirty, and as no more than two candidates of any one country of residence were proposed, the election was tacit (Art. 16.8 of the OPTIMA Constitution).

The new Board met in Pisa at the XII OPTIMA Meeting, to appoint the Executive Council Members and Officers for the term 2007-2013. The governance of our Organisation underwent a substantial change. Francesco Maria Raimondo, former Vice-President (in which function he was replaced by Georgia Kamari) is the new President. The former President, Werner Greuter, was unavailable for re-election but accepted to serve a Secretary, on the condition that his task be alleviated by the appointment of a supplementary officer with the function of Treasurer. This required the first ever change in OPTIMA's constitution of 1974, a change that was approved by the Board and became effective upon tacit agreement by the OPTIMA Membership. The new Treasurer (and in effect Deputy Secretary) is Gianniantonio Domina, of Palermo. There were further profound changes in the OPTIMA Council, as no less than four of its members of long standing decided to leave their place to new, and often younger, blood. José Iriondo, who had been managing OPTIMA as its Secretary for 12 full years, had long announced that he would step down; his example was followed by Nikola Diklić, Eleonora Gabrielian and Joël Mathez. The Board, having duly honoured their long years of devoted support, appointed in their stead Mohammed Fennane, Daniel Jeanmonod, Benito Valdés, and Olja Vasić. It also appointed Pietro Mazzola and Giuseppe Venturella as auditors for 2007, a mandate subsequently renewed for the years 2008 and 2009.

Other important decisions were taken at the Board Meeting in Pisa. One was to accept the invitation by Turkish botanists, presented by Tuna Ekim, to hold the next OPTIMA Meeting in Turkey, namely in Antalya in the spring of 2010. Themes and titles suitable for the symposia of that Meeting

were discussed, and pertinent recommendations were made to the new Council. The mandates of all OPTIMA Commissions were renewed for a six-years term, with only two changes. As proposed by the Commission for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Resources its name was changed to Commission for Threatened Plants. And the Programme Committee for the XII OPTIMA Meeting, that had fulfilled its mandate, was supplanted by the new And the Programme Committee for the XIII OPTIMA Meeting.

In 2008, the Board approved the annual report and the financial report for 2007, submitted by the Secretary on behalf of the President and the Executive Council.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

In 2004 the Executive Council approved the Prize Commission's nominations for the award of the OPTIMA Silver Medals.

At its meeting held at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, the Council decided to submit the following recommendations to the International Board:

Location of the XII OPTIMA Meeting. The Council studied the invitation received from Pisa and recommended that the Board accept it.

Establishment of a new Commission on Mediterranean Herbaria. Fennane proposed the creation of a network of herbaria for the Mediterranean region and the creation of a herbarium information system linked to the Herbarium Mediterraneum. The objectives of the new Commission would be to establish links and coordinate activities between herbaria, such as information concerning availability of holdings, the presentation of herbarium specimens on the internet or lobbying for the network. These activities should follow GBIF standards. The Council, subject to the Board's assent, designated Gianniantonio Domina and Mohammed Fennane as Secretary and President, respectively.

Programme Committee. The Council recommended that the Programme Committee of the XI OPTIMA Meeting be disbanded, with thanks for services rendered, and that a new Scientific Programme Committee for the XII OPTIMA Meeting be established.

Acting upon a proposal from the Commission for Fungi, the Council approved the nomination of Boris Ivančević and Cvetomir Denčev as new members of the Fungi Commission.

The Council decided that the OPTIMA membership fees for 2005 be kept unchanged.

In 2005 the Council approved the themes for the twelve symposia of the XII OPTIMA Meeting to be held in Pisa, Italy in 2007.

In 2006 the Council decided to maintain the OPTIMA membership fees for the year 2006 at their current rate. The Council also appointed the organisers of the twelve symposia of the XII OPTIMA Meeting to be held in Pisa, Italy, in September 2007.

In 2007, a new Executive Council was appointed by the new International Board. It approved the members proposed for the OPTIMA Commissions and Committees for the period 2007-2013 and confirmed the themes for Symposia to be held at the XIII OPTIMA Meeting, selecting suitable organisers for each or, when none was at hand, defining the responsibility for their selection. It also decided to raise the OPTIMA fees, which starting from the year 2008 are expressed in Euros rather than Swiss Francs, the amount being unchanged.

SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat was transferred from Madrid to Palemo in fall 2007. Here and there, it was active managing OPTIMA's accounts and the accounts of the Publications Commission and Prize Commission. It also managed the membership files and the distribution and sale of OPTIMA's publications. The OPTIMA Secretariat worked as a liaising center for the Council and Board members and the working groups and commissions of our Organization.

After a first preparatory year, during which the new team familiarised itself with its tasks and set up the necessary procedures and routines, the Secretariat now feels fully operational, able and willing to cope with its many and far from trivial duties. It is hoped that in the months to come the contacts with the general membership, and also with the Commissions and other organisms of our Organisation, can be rebuilt and intensified. Considerable attention is devoted, in particular, to the design and updating of the OPTIMA Web page, an instrument of which, we hope, the members will mak good and frequent use. Visit us soon at www.optima-bot.org!

DEATHS

Sadly, we have to report the demise of several OPTIMA members, well known within and far beyond our Organisation. We apologise for possible omissions in this list.

Rodolfo Pichi Sermolli, Italy, died 22 April 2005.

Suzette Puech, France, died 3 February 2006.

Dimitrios Babalonas, Greece, died 14 March 2006.

Max Dübendorfer-Derrer, Switzeralnd, died 5 April 2006.

Pierre Broussalis, Turkey, died in August 2006.

Günther Kunkel, Spain, died 4 September 2007.

Carmela Cortini Pedrotti, Italy, died 29 April 2007.

Nicola Diklić, Republic of Serbia, died 16 November 2008.

Hellmut Baummann, Switzeralnd, died January 2009.

Ernest Mayer, Slovenia, died 17 March 2009.

Obituaries of Carmela Cortini Pedrotti (vol. 17), Pierre Broussalis and Nicola Diklić (vol. 18) have been published in *Flora Mediterranea.*

UPDATES ON COMMISSIONS

PUBLICATIONS COMMISSION

Chair: F. M. Raimondo, Palermo

Secretary/Treasurer: G. Domina, Palermo

Members: J. Iriondo, Madrid

S. L. Jury, Reading

W. Greuter, Berlin

U. Plitman, Jerusalem

2004. The Herbarium Mediterraneum published the 14th volume of Flora Mediterranea, which was distributed to the regular members of OPTIMA free of charge. Volume 17 of Bocconea on the III Iter Mediterraneum to Sicily in 1990 was also published.

2005. The Herbarium Mediterraneum published the 15th volume of Flora Mediterranea, which was distributed to the regular members of OPTIMA free of charge. Volume 18 of Bocconea, entitled, “Identification key and description of mediterranean maquis litter micro-fungi”, by M. Pasqualetti, was also published.

2006. The Herbarium Mediterraneum published the 16th volume of Flora Mediterranea, which was distributed to the regular members of OPTIMA free of charge. Volume 19 of Bocconea, entitled “Proceedings of the VI Conference on Plant Taxonomy Alghero, 31 May – 2 June 2003”, was also published.The Commission met in Pisa (2007).

In 2007 and 2008 the Herbarium Mediterraneum published the 17th and 18th volume of Flora Mediterranea, which were distributed to the regular members of OPTIMA free of charge. Volume 20 of Bocconea, entitled “A catalogue of plants growing in Sicily”, and volume 21, entitled “Proceedings of the XI OPTIMA Meeting Beograd, 5-11 September 2004”, were also published.

Publication of the Newsletter is being resumed in 2009, in electronic format for distribution to the membership and in a low number of hard copies (150), for archival purposes and distribution to Institutional Members. Personal members may purchase the Newsletter for an extra 5 €.

COMMISSION FOR THREATENED PLANTS (FORMERLY: COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF PLANT RESOURCES)

Chair: D. Zohary, Jerusalem

Secretary: J. M. Iriondo, Madrid

Members: T. Constantinidis, Patras

D. Draper, Lisboa

T. Ekim, Ankara

E. Gabrielian, Erevan

V. H. Heywood, Reading

A. Santos, Puerto de la Cruz

2004. At the Commission meeting held at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade in September 2004, three priority areas of action were outlined. The first area involved the creation of new seed banks in the Mediterranean region and the establishment of a network of Mediterranean seed banks. In this respect, Commission members were to compile a complete inventory of seed banks in the Mediterranean area, and funds would be sought for the organization of a workshop to co-ordinate actions among these seed banks. In this line, two EU-funded projects entitled ENSCONET (European Native Seed Conservation Network) and GENMEDOC (Genetic Resources of the western Mediterranean) were approved in 2004. The second priority area was the conservation of medicinal and aromatic plants in the Mediterranean. IPGRI was to be contacted and asked to revitalize these activities in the Mediterranean, and a meeting was to be organised with specialists and institutions working in this field. The third priority was the creation of a databank on selected genera of wild relatives of crops. Contacts would be made with the aim of continuing current efforts (PGR Forum Network) with emphasis on the Mediterranean region.

PGR Forum Network, the EU thematic network on the in-situ conservation of crop wild relatives, held two workshops. The first, organised by José Iriondo, took place in Minorca in April 2004 and dealt with producing methodologies for the management and monitoring of European crop wild relative taxa. The second, which took place in the Azores in September 2004, focused on genetic erosion and pollution assessment.

2005. PGR Forum Network, the EU thematic network on the in situ conservation of crop wild relatives, held two workshops. The first took place in Denmark in April 2005 and dealt with threat and conservation assessment of European crop wild relative taxa. The final dissemination conference, which took place in Italy in September 2005, comprised the First International Conference on Crop Wild Relative Conservation and Use.

The Commission met in Pisa (2007). it decided that in the coming six years, it will focus its efforts on the study of the reproductive biology and genetic systems of selected genera of higher plants, their distribution and adaptation to different ecological environments, in order to optimise the existing strategies for *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation. As possible first target genera, *Tulipa* and *Origanum* were suggested.

COMMISSION FOR FLORISTIC INVESTIGATION

Chair: B. Valdés , Sevilla

Secretary: E.Vitek, Wien

Members: S. Bančeva, Sofia

R. Baldini, Firenze

T. Constantinidis, Patras

G. Domina, Palermo

T. Ekim, Ankara

M. Fennane, Rabat

O. Fragman, Jerusalem

D. Jeanmonod, Genève

J. Mathez, Montpellier

J. Molina, Montpellier

F. M. Raimondo, Palermo

S. Redžić, Sarajevo

2004-2006. At the Commission meeting held at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, this Commission discussed the XII Iter Mediterraneum. This expedition was originally to take place in Libya in 2003. Plans had been going well, when contact with the host country was suddenly lost and the expedition had to be adjourned. Turkey was suggested instead as a possible destination for the XII Iter Mediterraneum, and Prof. Neriman Özhatay from Istanbul University was tentatively proposed as organiser. Another possibility was to organise an expedition to the former Yugoslavia or Albania with the aid of Dr. Vladimir Stevanović from Belgrade. A third option mentioned was an expedition to Sardinia.

The publication of the accounts of former Itinera Mediterranea was also discussed. The first four accounts had been published, but not the other seven. Ways to speed up the process were examined.

The Commission met in Pisa. It took note of the promise that the material from Greece, still in Patras, would be distributed before the end of 2007, and requested that Palermo produce labels as soon as possible for all expeditions for which the labelling was still pending. It noted that publication of the results of past Itinera was increasingly lagging behind, as for seven of them (to Calabria, Morocco, Bulgaria, Armenia, S. France, Greece, and W. Spain and Portugal) nothing had happened so far. Therefore, the idea of devoting a separate volume of Bocconea to the results of each expedition was abandoned. Such results as were obtained could be published in Flora Mediterranea. As to future Itinera, small, under-explored areas were seen as a priority, N. Africa being the most interesting general target. Possible destinations and organisers are being considered. In the future material is to be labelled with provisional (field) identifications, and distributed immediately. There will be a single central database for all Itinera, including those of the past, to be managed by the Commission Secretary. The Commission envisaged resuming former activities such as a registry of expeditions and the publication of a Desiderata column in the OPTIMA Newsletter. The Internet was seen as a good instrument for handling such issues. Digital pictures from the expeditions can also be made available through the OPTIMA Website.

PRIZE COMMISSION

Secretary: W. Greuter, Berlin

Members: V. Heywood, Reading

D. Phitos, Patras

F. M. Raimondo, Palermo

B. Valdés, Sevilla

The Commission received and considered nominations for the 2007 OPTIMA Gold and Silver Medals, to be awarded at the XII OPTIMA Meeting in Pisa in September 2007. It recommended that they be bestowed upon Vernon Heywood (Gold), Ilana Herrnstadt, Toni Nikolić & Jasenka Topić, and Pier Virgilio Arrigoni (Silver).

COMMISSION FOR THE MAPPING OF ORCHIDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

Contact: H. Baumann, Böblingen

This Commission was dissolved during the Pisa meeting for lack of specific activity. Prof. Del Prete remains in charge of having the text of the “Atlas of Mediterranean Orchids” reviewed from a scientific point of view. Hopefully, the chorological Atlas will soon be published and made available to OPTIMA members at a reduced price.

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE FOR THE XIII OPTIMA MEETING

Don't miss the XIII OPTIMA Meeting in Antalya, 2010!

Chair: T. Ekim, Istanbul

Members: A. Güner, İstanbul

V. Heywood, Reading

J.M. Iriondo, Madrid

K. H. Kan Başer, Eskisehir

G. Kamari, Patras

F. Medail, Aix en Provence

N. Özhatay, Istanbul

U. Plitman, Jerusalem

Y. Roskof, Reading

T.Stuessy, Wien

F. Valladares, Madrid

O. Vasić, Belgrade

E. Vitek, Wien

This Committee is busy preparing the Scientific Program for the XIII OPTIMA Meeting scheduled to take place in Antalya in 2010. For more information, see the First Circular in the Meetings section of this Newsletter.

COMMISSION FOR KARYOSYSTEMATICS AND MOLECULAR SYSTEMATICS

Chair: G. Kamari, Patras

Secretary: C. Blanché, Barcelona

Members: M. Ančev, Sofia

M. B. Crespo, Alicante

M. Erben, München

E. Nazarova, Erevan

C. Oberprieler, Berlin

N. Özhatay, Istanbul

D. Papeš, Zagreb

L. Peruzzi, Pisa

S. Šiljak-Yakovlev, Orsay

R. Verlaque, Marseille

Mediterranean Chromosome Number Reports & Molecular Systematic Data

At the Commission Meeting held on 4 September 2004 in Belgrade, the Commission Secretary reported that the column “Mediterranean Chromosome Number Reports” in Flora Mediterranea had been published for fourteen years. So far, 1,414 chromosomal records had been published, covering most of the Mediterranean countries or territories included in the Med-Checklist area and Caucasia. It was noted that compared to the number of contributions in Flora Mediterranea 9-11, there had been a 60% decrease, in line with the trend of research toward molecular studies. The Commission recognised the importance of encouraging karyosystematic work among young scientists.

The karyological database "PhytoKaryon" continued to be operational thanks to a small grant from Patras University. "PhytoKaryon" contained over 45,000 records pertaining to more than 11,000 plant taxa and drawn from more than 1,200 bibliographical units. Provisions had been made for the addition of biosystematic data and a sample data set had been tested. Part of the data included in the database was available for online consultation.

“PhytoKaryon” also provided links to four other notable karyological databases:

- BSBI Database – Cytology at http://rbg-web2.rbge.org.uk/BSBI/ from the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh, covering taxa of the British and Irish flora.
- Chromosome numbers for the Italian flora at http://www.dsb.unipi.it/chrobase from the Department of Botanical Sciences of Pisa University (F. Garbari).
- Cromocat (part of the general Catalan biodiversity database BIOCAT at http://biodiver.bio.ub.es/biocat/homepage.html University of Barcelona (C. Blanché).
- Index to Plant Chromosome Numbers (Missouri Botanical Garden – w3TROPICOS) at http://mobot.mobot.org/W3T/Search/ipcn.html.

The Commission suggested that it would be of interest to link a bibliographic database to the Euro-Med and Med-Checklist databases.

With regard to molecular systematics, the Commission decided to include this category of data in the existing column in Flora Mediterranea and invited S. Šiljak-Yakovlev to join the editorial

team, and to take charge to add such data both to the Column and to “PhytoKaryon”.

2005. The Commission prepared its “Mediterranean chromosome number reports” edited by G. Kamari, C. Blanché and F. Garbari as a standing column in Flora Mediterranea. This year the column contained contributions on 42 taxa.

2006. The Commission prepared its “Mediterranean chromosome number reports” edited by G. Kamari, C. Blanché and F. Garbari as a standing column in Flora Mediterranea. This year the column contained contributions on 160 taxa.

2007. The Commission met in Pisa. For the seventeenth successive year, the Commission had prepared its “Mediterranean chromosome number reports”, edited by G. Kamari, C. Blanché and F. Garbari, as a standing column in Flora Mediterranea. This year the column contained contributions with 233 records, bringing the total number to 1,644.

As, the tendency, increasingly, is to produce molecular systematic rather than chromosome data, it remains desirable (as already suggested in Beogradthree years before) to include reference to such data under the Committee’s responsibility. The best way was a new standing column in “Flora Mediterranea”, with critically evaluated “Molecular Systematic Data”, under separate editorship: C. Oberprieler, S. Yakovlev and M. Crespo were to be asked..

The database “PhytoKaryon” remains operational. Thanks to funds from Patras University, the data inputting continues. The database now holds more than 47,000 records. New spinoffs are being designed. The database is temporarily offline but will be accessible again soon.

For more information on this Commission’s activities, contact: G. Kamari, E-mail: mailto:kamari@upatras.gr

HERBARIUM MEDITERRANEUM COMMISSION

Chair: W. Greuter, Berlin

Secretary: F. M. Raimondo, Palermo

Members: G. Kamari, Patras

J. M. Iriondo, Madrid

S. Jury, Reading

B. Valdés, Sevilla

G. Venturella, Palermo

The Foundation "pro Herbario Mediterraneo" has an Administrative Council as its governing body, in which OPTIMA is represented by its Secretary, a member resident in Palermo, and the Chairman of the Scientific Committee. The scientific activities to which funds from the Foundation are affected are controlled by a Scientific Committee of five, four of them designated by OPTIMA and one by the Dipartimento di Scienze Botaniche of Palermo University.

Since 2004 the Herbarium Mediterraneum Foundation has upheld its offer to accept herbarium specimens in exchange for OPTIMA fees and/or the purchase of Bocconea volumes. Each herbarium specimen was accepted as equivalent to 1.67 Swiss Francs; currently, the equivalent is 1 €. Between 2004 and 2007, the Herbarium in this way received a total of 1508 herbarium specimens.

In 2005, OPTIMA member S. W. Breckle donated his private herbarium of over 4,000 specimens to the Herbarium Mediterraneum, because his home base, the Herbarium in Bielefeld (BIEL) ceased to exist upon his retirement. In 2007 the Herbarium Mediterraneum received in bequest the Herbarium of Girolamo Giardina, consisting of about 10,000 specimens mainly collected in Sicily. The gift, early in 2009 of the Herbarium and Botanical Library of Werner Greuter is mentioned elsewhere in these pages. Further donations and bequests are welcome!

Research visits of OPTIMA members to the Herbarium Mediterraneum are welcome.

As the budget of the Foundation has been halved due to the drop in interest rates (6% to

3%), external sources have to be tapped to secure the publication of Bocconea volumes. Among those recently published are the Proceedings of the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, Bocconea 22, funded by subscription.

Two research grants were funded by the Herbarium Mediterraneum. The recipients of these grants, Svetlana Bančeva from Bulgaria and Mariam Aghababyan from France, presented the results of their studies in the form of posters at OPTIMA Meetings.

After several meetings with architects and with the assistance of the present Commission, the Foundation "Pro Herbario Mediterraneo" submitted an outline project to the Government of the Regione Siciliana for restoring the building that is to house the Herbarium Mediterraneum. At the request of the President of the Regione Siciliana, this project, estimated at 12.5 M€, has been placed on a list of realisations that is to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Unification of Italy. The Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Government participates in the funding of these works, which are expected to be completed by the end of 2011. Unfortunately there are still some problems with one of the former owners of the building, although a solution is in sight.

WEB COMMISSION

Chair: G. Venturella, Palermo

Secretary: G. Domina, Palermo

Members: C. Blanché, Barcelona

P. Bareka, Patras

J. M. Iriondo, Madrid

S. Onofri, Viterbo

R. M. Ros, Murcia

N. Surano, Palermo

E. Vitek, Wien

2004-2006. This Commission was established to promote and expedite the co-ordinated presence of OPTIMA on the Internet by using WWW access facilities. At a Meeting held at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, the Commission discussed a protocol for maintaining OPTIMA's Web page up to date. It was envisaged that the maintenance of the OPTIMA Web page be transferred to Palermo, where Natale Surano and Giuseppe Bazan could take care of it. Information was to be provided and updated by Commission Secretaries and the OPTIMA Secretariat.

The Commission met again in Pisa in 2007. Transfer of the Web pages of OPTIMA to Palermo was finally decided there and has since been implemented. The contents were transferred from the server in Berlin-Dahlem to a commercial server in Italy.

The OPTIMA Web pages now contain a News column where relevant information can be added if and when available, to be consolidated from time to time (perhaps annually) into a formal OPTIMA Newsletter. Not only that Newsletter but also individual news items of import will be distributed electronically, to all interested OPTIMA members at the time when they are placed on the OPTIMA Web page. Free distribution of hard copy will henceforth be limited to Institutional Members. Other members who so wish can request it against payment of 5 €.

Commission Secretaries have been instructed to constantly update their respective Web pages, irrespective of whether they are physically held on a Web server at their home base or, rather, at Palermo.

COMMISSION FOR THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE ON MEDITERRANEAN PLANTS

Secretary: U. Plitmann, Jerusalem

Members: V. H. Heywood, Reading

J. M. Iriondo, Madrid

J. Mathez, Montpellier

O. Vasić, Beograd

The Commission for the Diffusion of Knowledge on Mediterranean Plants convened at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, in 2004, and again at the subsequent Meeting in Pisa (2007). on both

occasions, it was confirmed that the book "Plant Landscapes of the Mediterranean" was to be published commercially. Prof. Heywood, who undertook contact publishers such as Oxford University Press, received a detailed list of contents and synopsis of the book from the Commission Secretary, as well as a description of the rationale behind the book, a list of contributors, expected target groups and estimated numbers of buyers.

At the 2004 Meeting in Belgrade, highlights or extracts of some chapters were presented in the frame of the symposium "Landscape Ecology of the Mediterranean". By then most of the chapters had been revised, but those on "cultivated landscapes", Sicily, the Balkan Peninsula and Lebanon-Syria were still in preparation. A translator was needed to translate into English three chapters submitted in French (on North Africa, France, and Corsica). Later on, authors would be approached with a request to provide photographs and maps.

By the 2007 meeting in Pisa, little progress, if any, could be noted. Heywood's contacts with prospective publishers had been unsuccessful so far. Publication by OPTIMA, perhaps through the Herbarium Mediterraneum and with help from the Publications Commission, is the best available option. The Committee's preference is for a book in DIN-B5 overall size, with a print layout of 11.8 x 19 cm and a Times New Roman 11.5 points font for the general text and 10 points for indices, footnotes and literature cited.

Plans for future books (Red Book of Mediterranean plants, Orchids of the Mediterranean) will have to wait till after the present one is completed.

COMMISSION ON BRYOPHYTES

Secretary: R. M. Ros, Murcia

Members: M. Aleffi, Camerino

T. Blockeel, Sheffield

W. El-Sayed El-Saadawi, Cairo

Adnan Erdag, Aydin

A. Ganeva, Sofia

I. Herrnstadt, Jerusalem

H. Kürschner, Berlin

V. Mazimpaka, Madrid

M. Sabovljević, Beograd

C. Sérgio, Lisboa

2004. This Commission held a virtual meeting in July 2004 via e-mail, as the majority of its members were unable to attend the Meeting in Belgrade.

2006-2007. During that period, the main activity of the Bryophyte Commission has been the preparation of a manuscript entitled "Hepatics and Anthocerotes of the Mediterranean. An annotated checklist", edited by Rosa María Ros (the Commission's Secretary) and Vicente Mazimpaka. A total of 26 authors from 18 research centers contributed, representing 14 Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean countries. The names of all hepatics and anthocerotes published up to the end of May 2007 and occurring in the Mediterranean countries plus Bulgaria, were compiled in an annotated, synonymic checklist of 403 accepted species and 12 infraspecific taxa, with critical notes on ambiguous and disputed names. By the time when the Commission met in Pisa, that checklist had been published in the journal "Cryptogamie, Bryologie".

The main difficulties encountered were the establishment of the current taxonomic identity of many old names in Mediterranean literature, the accurate assessment of the authors of many such old names, and the lack of literature on hepatic names and of regional lists.

Also, upon request of the editor of the Bryological Times, a report on the Bryophyte Commission was prepared by the Secretary (published in Bryological Times 122: 6. 2007), so as to inform bryologists worldwide on the Commission's aims, composition, and activities.

The goals of the Commission for the six–year period 2007-2013 will be: (a) to prepare a check-list of Mediterranean mosses; (b) to meet in three years' time, either at a Symposium within the XIII OPTIMA Meeting or at a workshop organised by the Commission, to include both field work

and presentation of papers; (c) to begin with the preparatioin of the Red Data Book of Mediterranean bryophytes.

Bryological excursions are being organised, taking into account the former offers of Marko Sabovljevic for field work in ex-Yugoslavia and of Tom Blockeel for Greece. Funds are being sought to organise bryological courses on problematic genera. The Commission Secretary, assisted by members, is compiling a list of recent bryophyte literature.

The Commission stands ready to participate, for bryology, in the organisation of an OPTIMA meeting devoted exclusively to Cryptogams, as proposed by the OPTIMA Commission for Fungi, to which the Lichens Commission is also invited. It suggests the following topics as being of common interest to specialists of the various groups: Biodiversity and Conservation; Taxonomy; Databases; Inventorying and mapping; phylogeny and phylogeography. For additional information, contact R. M. Ros (mros@um.es).

COMMISSION ON FUNGI

Chair: S. Onofri, Viterbo

Secretary: G. Venturella, Palermo

Members: C. Denčev, Sofia

D. L. Hawksworth, Madrid

B. Ivančević

D. Minter, U.K.

J. Mouchacca, Paris

2004. A checklist of Italian Basidiomycetes ("Check-list dei funghi italiani - Parte I - Basidiomycetes") was prepared, with the financial support of the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Instruction, University and Research. It includes accepted names, nomenclatural references, synonymy, critical notes, indication of endemic or exotic status, rarity, legal protection, distribution by regions, and pertinent bibliography. It was published in 2005 by the publisher Carlo Delfino, with funding by the Italian Botanical Society and the University of Tuscia. The 384-pages volume contains a list of 4198 fungal taxa.

At a forum of Mediterranean mycology held in Palermo, the need for a working group of Mediterranean mycologists was recognised. Thus, one of the objectives of the Fungi Commission was to consolidate the different groups of Mediterranean mycologists working in parallel. Promoting a meeting or round table discussion on Mediterranean mycology was envisaged.

A new international journal on mycology entitled "Mycologia Balkanica" has been created, with the participation of OPTIMA member Cvetomir Denčev from Bulgaria. Volume 2(1) of that journal corresponds to the "Catalogue of the lichenized and lichenicolous fungi of Bulgaria"; it was published in February 2005.

2007. The Commission met in Pisa, where several new members were appointed. It supported the idea of organising an OPTIMA meeting on fungi and, subject to participation of the other avascular plants' Committees, lichens and bryophytes. Such a meeting might take place in Montpellier in autumn 2009. It could have a common theme of relevance to all major groups, such as Conservation and Biodiversity, and could be organised jointly with other (e.g. national) mycological or phytopathological associations.

The Commission will work toward a Mediterranean Checklist of Fungi (for which the Italian Checklist constitutes the starting point) and intends to create a database of Mediterranean mycological literature, to be made available on-line.

COMMISSION ON MEDITERRANEAN HERBARIA

Chair: M. Fennane, Rabat

Secretary: G. Domina, Palermo

Members: D. Jeanmonod, Geneva

J. Mathez, Montpellier

J. Molina, Montpellier

J. M. Montserrat, Barcelona

P. A. Schäfer, Montpellier

E. Vitek, Wien

R. Vogt, Berlin

This Commission was set up at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, in 2004, with the aim to establish links between herbaria and coordinate their activities. Based on GBIF standards, information on the availability of holdings was to be compiled, the presentation of herbarium specimens on the internet was to be promoted, and lobbying for a the network of Mediterranean herbaria was to ensue.

2007. The Commission became operational at the Pisa Meeting, when a first attempt was made to prepare a questionnaire for distribution to the European and Mediterranean Means to improve the links between herbaria by traditional and modern technologies were discussed.

A top priority is to improve the accessibility of collections, in particular by encouraging and coordinating databasing of label information and preparation of high-resolution specimen images. Other Commission tasks are those initially defined in Belgrade.

Contacts are being sought with the Index Herbariorum, in order to ascertain the conditions a herbarium must meet to be registered and to suggest that exceptions be made for historical or geographical reasons. Additional Commission members are to be sought in countries such as Israel, Turkey and the Balkan states.

COMMISSION FOR LICHENS

Secretary: M. Seaward, Bradford

Members: nominations pending

2004-2006. Checklists for most of the countries or territories of the Mediterranean had been published or were well advanced. The Commission planned to link these lists on the Internet and to wanted to promote the application of the extant data to generate new outputs such as predictive maps by means of a GIS.

Regrettably, P. L. Nimis' resignation as Secretary of the Commission resulted in misunderstandings and resulted in a lack of communication. It was only after the Pisa Meeting (2007) that the Lichen Commission was revived, under a new leadership. The Commission supports the idea to hold its own meetings every few years, at a convenient locality, not necessarily to coincide with the venue of the main OPTIMA Meeting. The idea of a joint Meeting with Mediterranean specialists for other groups of avascular cryptogams is favourably envisaged.

OBITUARY NOTICES

NIKOLA DIKLIĆ

Dr Nikola Diklić (1925–2008), one of the greatest Serbian botanists, passed away on 16 November 2008. The scientific value of his results, his contribution to the knowledge of the flora of the Balkans, his influence on maintaining high standards of floristic and taxonomic studies in Serbia, and his contribution to the education of young researchers place him among the outstanding scientific personalities of his country. None of the databases on the flora of Europe can do without the data included in the Flora of SR Serbia / Flora of Serbia edited by him. During over half a century he published numerous papers, collected plants for the General Herbarium of the Balkan Peninsula, which he scientifically processed. Nikola Diklić became a member of OPTIMA in 1977, he has been member of its International Board, Executive Council and Commission for Collections and Herbaria, served as Vice-President for the term 1989-1995, and was president of the XI OPTIMA Meeting Programme Committee, Belgrade 2004. At that Meeting, in 2004, he was awarded the well earned OPTIMA Gold Medal.

Olja Vasić

INSTITUTIONS

HERBARIUM MEDITERRANEUM: THE GREUTER HERBARIUM AND LIBRARY TRANSFERRED TO PALERMO

by Francesco M. Raimondo

The *Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum* (PAL) is proud to announce the receipt of the personal herbarium and botanical library of Werner Greuter, former director of the Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin-Dahlem. The herbarium comprises well over 100,000 specimens, including Greuter's own gatherings (particularly important for Greece), material sent to him in exchange or as gift, and two historical herbaria he had acquired. It will remain a separate unit within PAL, to be referred to as PAL-Gr. These collections, donated to the Università degli Studi in Palermo with the explicit aim to strengthen the scientific potential of the Palermo Herbarium, are available for consultation by visitors, and digital images of specimens will be prepared on request.

The collections are kept in the original, historical location of the Palermo Herbarium, the SW wing of the neoclassical building known as the Gymnasium, built around 1790, following plans by the French architect Léon Dufourny. They will be curated by the donor himself, who has elected Palermo as his part-time residence, and are expected to continue growing indefinitely in the future, maintaining their primarily Mediterranean profile (Mediterranean in the wide sense, extending to the Macaronesian Islands, Central Europe, Caucasia, and other regions with a Mediterranean climate, such as Australia and southern Africa). PAL-Gr welcomes gifts of publications related to any pure and applied aspects of Mediterranean botany anf of plant specimens from this area. Exchange is also possible (please enquire).

WEB NEWS *

by Gianniantonio Domina

THE NEW OPTIMA WEBSITE WWW.OPTIMA-BOT.ORG

Following the transfer of the Optima Secretariat from Madrid to Palermo, the correlated activities and services have been moved to the new office location. Among them is the care for the Optima Website, in which is now hosted by a server in Palermo and is updated directly from the Secretariat.

The Website, for the time being, maintains its familiar layout so as not to confuse the users. Howwever, the contents are now continuously updated, and new sections have been added.

A section with book notices and reviews of recently published works (http://www.optima-bot.org/Rec_publ/default.htm) is a choice means for bringing your own publications to the attention

* Please send all items suitable for publication under this heading to the editor of this column: Gianniantonio Domina. OPTIMA secretariat, via Lincoln, 2 I- 90123 Palermo, Italy. secr@optima-bot.org

of a large interested audience. To ensure a quick spread of the information, all newly received items are initially added as bibliographic references. A proper review is being added as soon as time allows. Once every year, the reviewed items in this column are integrated into the consolidated OPTIMA Newsletter.

Since 2008 there is the possibility to pay membership fees and ordered books by Credit Card through the Pay-pal system, or for those having their own account, directly by Pay-pal transfer. All information can be found on the relevant Web pages (e.g., http://www.optima-bot.org/organization/membership2.htm

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN IN MADRID (CSIC)

Madrid's Royal Botanic Garden, on account of its rich and long history, has a magnificent collection of old botanical books. Apart from the intrinsic value as part of Spain's historic and scientific patrimony, the collection is a much used tool of research, consulted by students of the classification and distribution of botanical organisms, or verifying the link between scientific names and the plants they designate.

Globalization of communication now provides the means to make the collection available directly to anyone interested. Work on digitizing the ancient books started in 2003. Its product you can now see and use through the Internet. The operation was successfully completed thanks to the considerable efforts of the person in charge, Félix Muñoz Garmendia, and for Web design and development, the assistance of the company Viaintermedia Interactive. The work was finished in 2005, just in time for the year the Royal Botanic Garden's 250th anniversary celebratation.

Currently, more than 1600 titles and 4000 volumes are available at:
http://bibdigital.rjb.csic.es/ ing/index.php

(Gonzalo Nieto Feliner, Director, Real Jardín Botánico).

PROJECTS

'RIBES' – A NATIONAL ITALIAN NETWORK TO IMPROVE SEED CONSERVATION OF WILD NATIVE SPECIES

by C. Bonomi, G. Rossi & G. Bedini

In order to improve the coordination of *ex situ* conservation activities in Italy, an 'Italian Seed Bank Network for the *ex situ* conservation of the Italian native flora' was created, named RIBES (Rete Italiana Banche del germoplasma per la conservazione ex situ della flora spontanea italiana). RIBES was formally constituted on 3 December 2005 in Trento when the Constitutive Act was officially signed, before a public officer, by the legal representatives of the 18 founding members. It was decided that RIBES would focus on native plant conservation and would promote all necessary collaborative actions needed for the *ex situ* conservation of two different but interrelated categories of plants:

1. Native species threatened with extinction on an international, national or local level, according to international, national or local legislation or scientific documents;
2. Native species particularly important from a biogeographical and ecological point of view, that might be utilised for the purpose of land stabilization and habitat restoration projects.

From a formal point of view, RIBES is a scientific not-for-profit association, based on a participative and democratic approach. Its activities are regulated by a charter and various by-laws.

The specific objectives of RIBES, as included in its statute, are the following:

1. Promote the dissemination, at local and national level, of the knowledge on critical issues and state-of-the-art facilities and operating procedures for the *ex situ* native plant conservation by means of newsletters, congresses, workshops, etc.;
2. Set and update minimum standards to be adopted for the proper management of *ex situ* conservation programmes.
3. Make sure, as far as possible, that *ex situ* collections are managed and conserved according to internationally approved standards.
4. Disseminate, as far as possible, information on EU and National programmes centred on *ex situ* plant conservation.
5. Create a national registry of the species that are currently conserved *ex situ*.
6. Contribute to other programmes and initiatives for the conservation of biological diversity.
7. Develop research activities to gain a better understanding of *ex situ* conservation and plant propagation techniques that might be used in reintroduction projects.
8. Set up and put in operation specific information systems to document native germplasm collections, in order to certify origin.
9. Develop at local and national level specific education programmes, aimed at schools and at the wider pubic, to raise awareness on the importance of the *ex situ* conservation of biological diversity.
10. Promote training activities on *ex situ* conservation of native species.
11. Cooperate with other institutions having similar aims.

These objectives are implemented through an action plan and apposite working groups that address specific issues such as seed collecting, seed curation and germination, data management, and dissemination. The working groups are run with a participative approach and adopt a national perspective in setting priorities for conservation at the national level. They discuss best practice and operating protocols and set minimum and recommended standards for *ex situ* conservation of wild species. Although the network is not focused primarily on crop wild relatives, those that are members of the Italian native flora will be considered. Furthermore, RIBES aims to establish active links with the crop wild relative conservation community in order to integrate possible areas of overlapping interest, for mutual benefit.

Members of the network are mainly university botanic gardens but also include local governmental agencies, national parks, not-for-profit organizations, and private companies. They represent most Italian regions and include key players that are already involved in other EU networks such as ENSCONET and GENMEDOC, thus providing a link with the European context:

1. Germplasm Bank of the south-western Alps, Cuneo natural parks management agency (B. Gallino)
2. Lombardy Seed Bank, Lombardy centre for the Native Flora (G. Rossi)
3. Trentino Seed Bank, Trento Natural History Museum (C. Bonomi)
4. Germplasm Bank of Padua Botanic Garden, University of Padua (G. Cassina)
5. Laboratory for the conservation of Liguria plant diversity, Hanbury Botanic Gardens, University of Genoa (S. Giammarino)
6. Germplasm Bank of Pisa Botanic Garden, University of Pisa (G. Bedini)
7. Livorno Germplasm Bank, Livorno District Council (M. Lupi)
8. Germplasm Bank for the conservation of anfi-Adriatic species, Polytechnic University of the Marche (E. Biondi)
9. Germplasm Bank of Viterbo Botanic Garden, Tuscia University (A. Scoppola)
10. Germplasm Bank of Rome Botanic Garden, University of Rome La Sapienza (A. Scoppola)
11. Germplasm Bank of the Central Appennine, National Park Gran Sasso and Laga (I. Londrillo)
12. Germplasm Bank of Majella National Park (M. Di Cecco)
13. Germplasm Bank of Molise, University of Molise (A. Stanisci)
14. Germplasm Bank of CODRA Mediterranea s.r.l. (E. Lanzillotti)
15. Germplasm Bank of Sardinia, University of Cagliari (G. Bacchetta)
16. Germplasm Bank of Palermo Botanic Garden, University of Palermo (A. Scialabba)
17. Germplasm Bank of Catania Botanic Garden, University of Catania (P. Pavone)
18. Germplasm Bank of the Mediterranean ONLUS (I. Li Vigni)

RIBES will liaise with relevant stakeholders that hold key information on the conservation status of threatened species, such as the Italian Botanical Society and the botanic gardens community. RIBES also bridges the gap between scholars of plant and seed science and plant conservation managers based in natural parks and protected areas, providing the latter with means, techniques and opportunities to experiment plant reintroduction and populations reinforcement. RIBES will seek to operate in close connection with the CBD Focal Point, the Ministry of the Environment, offering it a powerful means to implement the CBD and the GSPC.

RIBES therefore plans to contribute effectively to the national implementation of several GSPC targets. It is hoped that it will also activate transnational cooperation with other nations and wider biogeographical areas, e.g. the Alpine and Mediterranean regions.

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MEETINGS

REPORT ON THE XII OPTIMA MEETING PISA, ITALY - 10-15 SEPTEMBER 2007

by Fabio Garbari and Gianni Bedini

The XII OPTIMA Meeting started on Monday, 10 September, noon, at the "Polo Didattico Universitario Porta Nuova".

After the welcome address by Fabio Garbari, President of the Organising Committee, the Deputy Rector for International Relations of the University of Pisa, Enrico Giaccherini, conveyed the greetings of the Rector, Marco Pasquali. Then the Vice-Minister for the Universities and Scientific Research, Luciano Modica, outlined the difficulties faced by Italy's education and research systems and underlined the Government's commitment to support this sector of public administration. Werner Greuter, President of OPTIMA, thanked all participants, in particular the organisers and the speakers. Gianni Bedini, Meeting Secretary, has surveyed the general programme and noted relevant logistic points.

The OPTIMA Gold Medal, awarded every six years to a botanist who, by his or her activity, is considered to have made an outstanding contribution to the phytotaxonomy of the Mediterranean area. In Pisa, this prestigious medal was presented to Vernon H. Heywood. The recipient is a scientist with a very prominent academic career and international radiance. One of OPTIMA's founding members, and indeed a driving force in the group of four who conceived OPTIMA and ensured that it became real, he started as a young man to work in the Mediterranean area, notably southern Spain. His later work on a variety of principally Mediterranean groups (to name but Petrorhagia in Caryophyllaceae and Daucus in Umbelliferae) was mostly part of his commitment with the Flora Europaea Project, to which he served as Secretary from the onset. Among his numerous scientific activities, his efforts toward the study and conservation of Plant Biodiversity take a prominent place, focusing especially on the conservation and sustainable use of medicinal and aromatic plants, as well as wild relatives of cultivated plant species. With his presence and active contributions he has enlivened almost all OPTIMA Meetings to date and will hopfully continue to do so in the future.

To conclude the Opening Ceremony, Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, Deputy Rector and expert of the history of arts, delivered a lecture on "Botanical Sciences and Visual Arts: the flowering of a partnership in early modern Tuscany".

Previously, on Sunday 9 September, OPTIMA's Scientific Commissions had held their meetings at the Pisa Botanic Garden. So did the International Board and the Executive Council on Monday morning, while participants registered and set up their posters.

On Monday afternoon the first plenary Symposium, organised by Sandro Pignatti, was devoted to "Phytotaxonomic studies in Italy". Tuesday morning, Symposium 2 on "Vegetation and plant landscapes in Italy", organised by Carlo Blasi, and Symposium 3 on "Plants and Man. Symbiosis and antagonism through the times", organised by Avinoam Danin, were held in parallel.

The plenary session of Tuesday afternoon was devoted to Symposium 4 on "Karyology and palynology of Mediterranean plants: case studies", jointly organised by Sonia Šiljak-Yakovlev and Georgia Kamari. Wednesday morning again saw two concurrent events, Symposium 5 on "Herbaria: maintenance, management and digitisation of holdings", organised by Ernst Vitek, and Symposium 6 on "Invasion and extinction in man-made and natural habitats", organised by Montserrat Vilà.

Wednesday afternoon was devoted to the presentation and discussion of posters, a session

organised by Giuseppe Venturella. In the evening, the volume "Linnaeus in Italy" was presented by Andres Bjurner, Ambassador of Sweden in Italy, and Claudio Pogliano, science historian. The evening was enlivened by a cocktail, offered by the Swedish Embassy in Italy and "Diritto allo studio universitario", and a concert performed by the Chamber Ensemble of the Pisa University Youth Orchestra, with a financial contribution by Volvo Trucks Italy.

Thursday 13 September had been set aside for the three mid-Congress excursions: one to the Apuan Alps, guided by Fabio Garbari; one to the Monterufoli-Caselli Nature Reserve, guided by Federico Selvi; and the third to the Leghorn hills, guided by Pier Virgilio Arrigoni.

Symposium 7 on "Tempo and mode of speciation in Mediterranean plants", organized by Tod Stuessy, was held on Friday morning. In the afternoon, concurrently, Symposium 8 on "The study and inventory of Mediterranean *Compositae*", organised by Norbert Kilian, and Symposium 9 on "Bryofloristics and bryotaxonomy", organised by Rosa María Ros, took place.

Two more concurrent sessions ran on Saturday morning, Symposium 10 on "Plant-plant and plant-animal interactions", organised by José María Iriondo, and Symposium 11 on "Seaweeds and freshwater algae in and around the Mediterranean", organised by Giovanni Furnari.

The plenary Symposium 12 on "Maintaining economically important wild plants and relic crops in the Mediterranean", organised by Vernon H. Heywood, took place on Saturday afternoon, followed by the Closing Ceremony, the last official act of Werner Greuter in his function of President. The assembly warmly thanked him for his outstanding services during the past terms, and at the same time heartily welcomed Francesco Maria Raimondo as newly elected President, who was to benefit of the ongoing support of Greuter in his new capacity of Secretary.

At the Closing Ceremony, it was officially announced that the XIII OPTIMA Meeting will take place in spring 2010 in Turkey. Tuna Ekim presented the invitation on behalf of himself and his Turkish colleagues, receiving a warm applause. Also, reports from the various Commissions who had met prior to the Congress were summarised; and the OPTIMA Silver Medals, awarded to the authors of the best work on Mediterranean plant taxonomy published in each of the three foregoing years, were presented as follows:

For 2004, to Ilana Herrnstadt for the book, jointly authored by Clara C. Heyn and herself, "The bryophyte flora of Israel and adjacent regions" (Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Section of Sciences, Jerusalem). – This volume summaries over 20 years of research in Israel, a small area with an unexpectedly high bryophyte diversity, as pointed out by Uzi Plitmann who presented the Medal.

For 2005, to Toni Nikolić and Jasenka Topić for their book "Crvena knjiga vaskularne flore Hrvatske" (Ministarstvo Kulture, Državni Zavod za Zaštitu Prirode, Republika Hrvatska, Zagreb). – This sizeable and heavy new Red Data Book presents, in monographic detail, the treatment of 760 plant species and subspecies that are at risk, nearly threatened or potentially under threat in Croatia. In the absence of the awardees the Medal, presented by Vernon H. Heywood, was handed over to Dražena Papeš.

For 2006, to Pier Virgilio Arrigoni for the first volume of his "Flora dell'isola di Sardegna" (Società Botanica Italiana & Carlo Delfino, Sassari, 2006). This is the first of a series of volumes summarising the results the author's floristic research of more than 30 years in Sardinia. The Medal was presented by Francesco Maria Raimondo.

During the following three days, from 16 to 18 September, about 20 participants took part in the post-congress excursion to the Elba and Pianosa islands in the Tuscan Archipelago, guided by Fabio Garbari and Bruno Foggi.

The Meeting in Pisa was attended by 236 delegates from 25 countries (Algeria, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Herzegovina, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, United

Kingdom, United States, Switzerland, and Turkey). Invited speakers gave 62 symposium lectures, other participants presented 77 posters: 37 on the systematics, phytogeography, biodiversity, ecology, biology, and conservation of phanerogams, 8 on cryptogams (bryophytes, fungi and lichens), 22 on floras, check-lists, herbaria, databases and botanic gardens; and 10 in the applied botany, ethnobotany and phytochemistry section.

For about 30 % of these contributions, the authors submitted their texts to the editors of the Proceedings, Fabio Garbari and Gianni Bedini. The Proceedings, a Bocconea volume scheduled for release by the end of 2009, will include at least 42 papers, corresponding to 12 lectures and 30 poster presentations.

The Congress took place under the auspices of an Honorary Committee with Anders Bjurner, Ambassador of Sweden in Italy; Luciano Modica, Vice Minister for the Universities and Research; Marco Pasquali, Chancellor of Pisa University; Andrea Pieroni, President of Pisa Province; Paolo Fontanelli, Major of Pisa; Amedeo duca d'Aosta, President of the Pro Herbario Mediterraneo Foundation; and Werner Greuter, President of OPTIMA.

The Scientific Programme Committee consisted of Fabio Garbari, President; Gianni Bedini, Secretary; and Carlo Blasi, Avinoam Danin, Giovanni Furnari, Vernon H. Heywood, José María Iriondo, Georgia Kamari, Norbert Kilian, Sandro Pignatti, Rosa María Ros, Sonia Šiljak-Yakovlev, Tod Stuessy, Montserrat Vilà, and Ernst Vitek, Members.

The following formed the Organising Committee: Fabio Garbari, President, Guido Moggi, Vice President; Gianni Bedini, Secretary; Alessandro Chiarucci and Federico Selvi, Members.

The Organisers are grateful to the following Sponsors: Pisa University, Pisa Chamber of Commerce, Volvo Trucks Italy, Natural Park of Migliarino San Rossore Massaciuccoli, Pro Herbario Mediterraneo Foundation, Municipality of Pisa, and Club Alpino Italiano of Carrara. The University of Pisa kindly cared for logistics and administration.

XIII OPTIMA MEETING
ANTALYA 22-26 MARCH 2010
First Circular

Dear Colleagues,

I feel honoured to invite you on behalf of our Executive Board of the Flora Research Society to the 13th OPTIMA Congress, to be organized in Antalya between March 22 and 26, 2010. This Congress is organized by the Flora Research Association under my presidency. Also, we shall try to get the support of Akdeniz University which is a valuable scientific institution of the region.

As is known OPTIMA, Organisation for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area, organises congresses for the plant taxonomists of the Mediterranean and other countries to meet and exchange views on the flora and the vegetation of this region, every three years in a different country of the Mediterranean region. The previous OPTIMA congress in Turkey was organised in 1986 in Istanbul.

Approximately 300-400 botanists participate in this Congress, and the participating scientists listen to the lectures given by learned plant taxonomists and other scientists in 10-12 Symposia, each on a different topic and organised by a prominent scientist.
Turkey has made remarkable progress in the Floristic Plant Science within the last 30 years, and the universities in Turkey abound with experienced and young botanists. However, the lack of communication and interaction between the Turkish and foreign scientists is seen as a big handicap. This Congress will provide scientists an opportunity to meet each other and interact. The Congress will be held at a holiday resort in the Belek region of Antalya in South Turkey. The congress will consist of lectures and a 1-day excursion to the nearby Taurus mountains to observe the rich and diverse spring flora, especially the geophytes and *Abies cilicica* above the high plateaus. Besides, participants will have the opportunity to visit other historical and floristic sites in Antalya, including regional plant associations such as natural forests of *Cedrus libani, Cupressus sempervirens,* etc. This Congress will give an important and unique opportunity to the botanical scientists interested in the plant life of Turkey and the Mediterranean region to get acquainted with a typical plant geographical context with high diversity and attractive natural beauties. blended with cultural and historical riches.

On behalf of the Flora Research Society

Tuna Ekim, President

For further details please contact us at
info@flora2010.org

Fill in the preliminary registration form now

at: http://www.flora2010.org/kayit_eng.php

to make sure that you receive the Second Congress Circular

Location and dates

The XIII OPTIMA Meeting will take place in Antalya on March 22-26, 2010; the detailed programme is to follow.

Official languages

English and French

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

The Executive Council defined the following themes for Symposia to be held at the XIII OPTIMA Meeting, and selected suitable persons to organise each Symposium as its Convener, subject to their willingness to serve.

Botany in Turkey I. Convener: Adil Güner.

Botany in Turkey II. Convener: Hüsnü Can Başer.

Effects of global change on Mediterranean plant life. Convener: Fernando Valladares.

History of Mediterranean Botanical Explorations. Convener: Ernst Vitek.

Rare and threatened plants and habitats. Convener: Jose Maria Iriondo.

Archaeological and xenophytic fossil flora. Convener: Uzi Plitman.

Plant differentiation on heavy-metal soils. Convener will be announced later.

Mediterranean Leguminosae. Conveners: Yuri Roskof and Olja Vasić.

The role of irano-turanian elements in the evolution of Mediterranean Flora. Convener: Frédéric Medail.

Socio-economic and ecological effects of plant introductions in the Mediterranean. Convener: Vernon Heywood.

Integrating molecular and "traditional" taxonomy. Convener: Tod Stuessy.

Geophytes. Conveners: Georgia Kamari and Neriman Özhatay.

REGISTRATION FEE

No.	Category	Payment in Euros		
		Until 1th November 2009	After 1th November 2009	On-Meeting
1	Regular OPTIMA Members	300	350	400
2	Associated members	350	400	450
3	Non-members	350	400	450
5	Students	250	300	350
6	Accompanying	150	200	250

Registration fee covers:

Full (1-3): book of abstracts, program, all printed meeting documents; welcome reception, farewell dinner, reception, break refreshments; one-day excursion, Transportation (Airport – Hotel – Airport).

Students: book of abstracts, program, welcome reception, break refreshments, one-day excursion. The farewell dinner will be available at extra cost.

Regular registration rates apply to payments made prior to 1th November 2009. After that date, late registration rates will apply. Details of payment will be announced in the second circular.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

22-29 June 2009

Biodiversity Hotspots in the Mediterranean Area

45° International Congress of Società Italiana di Scienza della Vegetazione & International Federation of Phytosociology

Cagliari, Italy

The congress will cover the following subjects in three different sessions: Flora and evolution in the Mediterranean area, Phytosociology as plant synecology, Towards an ecological characterisation of mediterranean landscapes.

The first day will also be devoted to 2 parallel side-events: Plants species and communities in the Mediterranean mining areas: biodiversity, landscape evolution and their use in phytoremediation; Important plant areas in Italy and in the Mediterranean context. The second day will be dedicated to the following side-events: Origins of endemic plants to the Corso-Sardinian microplate: an integrative phylogenetic approach; Conservation studies on threatened plants in the Mediterranean area. The Congress will include social events and the visit of the Botanical Gardens and Museum of the University of Cagliari. Two post-congress excursions (IGIS: Iter Geobotanicum Insulae Sardiniae) to the Sulcis-Iglesiente biogeographic sector and to the Gennargentu and Supramonte areas, with a limited number of participants, will be organised on 25th to 29th June.

For further information. see:
http://www.biodiversityhotspots.it/indexen.htm.

Specific enquiries can be made to: e-mail: info@biodiversityhotspots.it.

5-10 July 2009

7th International Congress of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology, ICSEB 7

Veracruz, Mexico

"Extending the Darwinian Panorama"

Celebrating the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth, 150 years since publication of Darwin's Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, plus observing 150 years since the passing of Alexander von Humboldt, the Father of ecological biogeography.

The International Congress of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology (ICSEB) is convened approximately every six years, the last one having being held in Patras, Greece, in 2002. The scope of these congresses is to bring plant, animal, and microbial systematists and evolutionary biologists together to discuss and debate topics of general interest. The focus of this congress, in context of significant historical backdrop, is on modern and forward-looking ideas, concepts, and methods in systematic and evolutionary biology. Due to its location, a strong emphasis will also be placed on understanding biodiversity in Latin America.

For further information, see:
http://www.botanik.univie.ac.at/ICSEB7/index.htm.

Specific enquiries can be made to: e-mail: icseb.evol @univie.ac.at.

7-11 September 2009

The 80th ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLICATION OF TURRILL'S "PLANT LIFE OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA"

Belgrade, Serbia

Eighty years have passed since the publication of Turill's study "Plant life of the Balkan Peninsula". In the following period, numerous new informations and results have been brought to light showing an ever-accelerating rate of progress in flora and vegetation research of this part of Europe. The future holds even more promise.

The aim of the meeting is to bring together all botanists involved in research of the plant life of the Balkan Peninsula with the emphasis on the conservation of the biodiversity of this extremely rich flora and vegetation. The purpose of the congress is also to provide an excellent opportunity to hear the latest results, to share research experience and expertise and to develop new and closer contacts with colleagues from different countries.

The programme will include four lecture days (oral and poster presentations), social events, a mid-congress excursion and four days of post congress field trip.

The official language will be English.

For further information see:
http://5bbc.bio.bg.ac.rs/.

Specific enquiries can be made at:
5bbc@bio.bg.ac.rs.

NOTICES OF PUBLICATIONS[*]

by WERNER GREUTER

General Topics

1. **Franco PEDROTTI – Cartografia geobotanica.** – Pitagora, Bologna, 2004. (ISBN 88-371-1487-7). VIII + 236 pages, illustrations (photographs, drawings, graphs, maps) in black-and-white and colour; laminated cover.

With the present volume Franco Pedrotti offers to students and practitioners a complete textbook for botanical mapping purposes. Using the traditional, wide definition of the term geobotany, he presents definitions, examples and procedural rules for any conceivable kind of map, from chorological representations (showing the distribution of genotypes in populations, of individual species or higher taxa, or vegetation units) through classical vegetation maps to the spatial assessment of diversity or the visualisation of developmental prospects and impacts. Mapping procedures and techniques are discussed for each of these many categories, which are generously illustrated with concrete examples not only from Italy but anywhere in the world.

The book is not, in the first place, an aid for interpreting maps. Rather, it offers guidance to authors in the choice of the type of map and procedure of mapping best suited for their given subject and scope. It may also, coincidentally, provide the critical reader with sound criteria for assessing the merits of relevant publications.

W.G.

2. **Charlie JARVIS – Order out of chaos. Linnaean plant names and their types.** – Linnean Society of London & Natural History Museum, London, 2007. (ISBN 978-0-9506207-7-0). XI + 1017 pages, photographs and facsimiles in black-and-white and colour; hard cover with dust jacket.

What a beautiful title: "Order out of chaos". It is doubly appropriate, first in recalling the great Linnaeus's achievement, to order by means of his new System the previously chaotic botanical knowledge and make it readily accessible through the shortcut of binominal designations; and again in referring to the major uncertainty and disorder into which Linnaeus's nomenclature and the application of his names had fallen in the course of a quarter millennium, and setting matters straight with the panacea of this book.

Charlie Jarvis has been in charge of the Linnean Plant Name Typification Project since it was launched in 1981, based at the Natural History Museum that had been founded in South Kensington exactly one

[*] Please send all items for announcement or review directly to the column editor: Prof. W. Greuter, Herbarium Mediterraneum, Giardino Botanico, Via Lincoln 2/A, I-90123 Palermo.

century before. This book is the synthesis of well over 25 years of labour, during which Charlie's own skilled efforts have been assisted by several enthusiastic and competent associates, only to name Norman Robson, Fred Barrie, Nick Turland, Steve Cafferty, and Katherine Challis. In so far as the type designations for Linnaean names are concerned, their results have been databased and are available for direct Internet consultation. The major portion of this volume mirrors faithfully these results, or rather, is present a snapshot image of the state of the data in the moment when the book was set in type, a time when the work had reached a certain degree of stability not to say completeness. This portion, bound to become outdated progressively as the years go by, will be used mainly in situations when one has no Web access of when – as happens all too often – the database's Web site is temporarily inaccessible.

Jarvis's central contribution, very much his own, are the book's introductory chapters, over 250 pages of text and images. At core they are a tribute to the great master of Linnaean studies, William Stearn, and for sure no one could have been more delighted than he, had he lived to see them published. While building extensively on Stearn's experience and writings, this introductory portion expands the subject considerably. The chapters on literature and herbaria consulted by Linnaeus are extremely rich in relevant information that cannot be found easily elsewhere, and the portion on collectors and suppliers of material used by him is novel and most informative. Among other subjects treated, let me mention the presentation of the life and writings of Linnaeus himself, the treatise on the foundations and practice of type designation, and the analyses of protologues in Linnaean writings. These chapters may not be innovative nor greatly original, but they share a trait that is characteristic of the whole book. Jarvis's style of writing fluid and extremely didactic; he has the gift to turn an essentially dry and hermetic subject into an easily understood, all but fascinating account. Add the lavish, skilfully selected illustration, and you have a book that is unrivalled as a basis for teaching Linnaean nomenclature. Discounting its bulk and weight, this is the best possible tool for making Linnaeus's botanical achievements palatable and even popular among the new generation of botanists.

Publication was made possible by support from the Linnean Society of London and the Natural History Museum. Both may be assured that their sponsorship was well earned, and their money well spent.

W.G.

Cryptogams

3. C. Clara HEYN & Ilana HERRNSTADT (ed.) – The bryophyte flora of Israel and adjacent regions. [*Flora Palaestina Series*.] – Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, 2004. (ISBN 965-208-004-4, 965-208-152-3). xi + 721 pages, 246 plates of drawings, XVI plates of black-and-white photographs, coloured frontispiece, 8 plates + 2 unnumbered extra plates of colour photographs, 247 maps + 1 map in colour; cloth with dust jacket.

The bryophyte flora of Israel, including the Palestinian Authorities plus Mt. Hermon and the Golan Heights, comprises 86 genera with 249 species (210 mosses, 39 liver- and hornworts), plus a few varieties and a couple of subspecies. The treatment includes keys for identification, full synonymy, detailed descriptions, indication of habitat and distribution, and critical notes. Illustrations are plentiful and of outstanding quality. With minor exceptions every taxon is illustrated by a full page of drawings, with shoot habit and analytical, including anatomical, details, plus a map showing, by grid squares, the known distribution within the territory. In addition, 60 species are shown on 62 colour photo-

graphs, and there are 136 scanning micrographs with spore surfaces of 116 species.

The book consists of two parts with different authorship. The first and by far larger portion is by the editors themselves and treats the mosses. The second, with the horn- and liverworts, was written by Hélène Bischler and Suzanne Jovet-Ast in Paris, at the Laboratoire de Cryptogamie; Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle. The whole work should better not be considered the fifth volume of Zohary's and Feinbrun's *Flora Palaestina*, as some have suggested, as it differs from the latter in many important respects, including the area covered; and while bibliographically it is an (unnumbered) part of the Flora Palaestina Series, it is the seventh such part in a chronological sequence.

As always in a work of large size and ample scope, the critical minded may raise a few negative points (e.g. the occasional failure to conform to the self-set standards of author and literature citation, or the absence of references to the colour photographs in the text) – but these are minor quibbles indeed. On the whole, the book is a remarkable achievement. Ilana Herrnstadt, the only surviving author and editor, has recently been awarded the OPTIMA Medal in Silver for what was considered the most outstanding publication in Mediterranean taxonomic botany published in 2004, and that award is well deserved. This flora will doubtless prove one of the most useful, or rather, indispensable tools for Mediterranean bryologists. Its importance is enhanced by the fact that narrow endemism in bryophytes is almost unheard of, and so the phrase "around the Mediterranean" appears in the general distribution statement of a large majority of species.

W.G.

4. Giuseppe VENTURELLA – L'iconografia micologica di Giuseppe Inzenga. – Archimede, Palermo, 2005 (ISBN 88-8820-409-1). Pages 3-271, 3 photographs, 400 facsimiles in colour; hard cover with dust jacket.

Giuseppe Inzenga (c. 1816-1887), son of the writer and poet Pompeo, was a colourful figure in Sicilian botany. Basically an agronomist, he was appointed to lifetime directorship of the Istituto Agrario Castelnuovo in Palermo in 1844, and in 1860 to a professorship of Agriculture at Palermo University. He published on a wide range of subjects, both in his own field and in botany, notably mycology, most often in the journal "Nuovi Annali di Agricoltura Siciliana" founded and edited by him. His main independent botanical work was "Funghi siciliani", published in two centuriae in 1865 and 1869 and illustrated with 18 colour plates. Of the 200 species of Sicilian fungi there described, several were new but most or all remained unassessed.

Giuseppe Venturella found the original Inzenga herbarium, still faithfully kept in the library of the Istituto Agrario, containing most of the species described in the two published centuriae and the materials for a third, unpublished one. Associated with several of the specimens were Inzenga's handwritten descriptions, and almost all were accompanied by original colour illustrations. Venturella was able to study these materials and, in many cases, establish their modern identity. For the present volume he transcribed the manuscript information, adding notes of his own for each item. Most importantly, he included colour reproductions of the full set of illustrations, most of which, obviously, had never before been published. The text of his book is in Italian (or Latin), but a full English translation has been provided of both the introductory, biographical chapter and the author's own notes.

The book is splendidly produced but not well organised and difficult to consult, partly due to numbering. The author's notes and the facsimile illustrations have been given new numbers (1 to 260) that neither corre-

spond to the numbering in the Centuriae, nor to the (unexplained) figure numbers apparently inscribed by Inzenga on the sheets, nor do they appear in the first and main text portion, with the transcribed manuscript notes. Correlating the two sets of notes, and the first set with the figures, is problematic. The rationale of the new numbering is unclear. The order is not systematic, perhaps it reflects the sequence of the items in the parcels. Adding to complexity, ongoing study while the work was being printed resulted in a substantial number (46) of new or revised identifications, to be looked up in an appendix at the end.

Inzenga's work presents some bibliographic problems that might have been addressed but remain unexplained. The original publication of the "Centuriae" is said to have occurred in several parts in the "Giornale di Scienze Naturali ed Economiche", the first between 1865 and 1868 and the second in 1869-1871. No details of the instalments are given, but they are said to have been consolidated in book form – in 1865 and 1869, respectively. So, either the latter, presently accepted dates are wrong, or publication in the journal, somewhat illogically, was later. An 1869 review is mentioned, but it is unclear whether it concerns both volumes, or the first only. A matter, perhaps, to be clarified by Venturella in the future.

W.G.

5. M. PASQUALETTI, A. RAMBELLI, B. MULAS & S. TEMPESTA – Identification key and description of Mediterranean maquis litter microfungi. [*Bocconea* (ISSN 1120-4060), **18.**] – Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum, Palermo, 2005 (ISBN 88-7915-020-0). 176 pages, 132 figures, 4 plates of drawings, table; paper.

Mediterranean maquis is mainly formed by sclerophyllous woody species whose leaves are unpalatable for the common saprotrophic fungi of other habitats. Litter formation in a maquis environment depends on a limited number of specialised deuteromycetes, often dwelling on the shed leaves of only one or a few species. Knowledge of these saprobionts is of mycologycal as well as general ecological interest.

The present volume has been written as a practical tool for identifying fungi known to occur on litter in maquis communities. It is restricted to species that have been found in Sardinia – 122 in total, belonging to 62 different genera; but as the component shrubs of maquis communities are widespread all over the Mediterranean area, one may expect that it will be found useful in a much wider area. Clearly, in regions where the maquis communities are richer and the woody flora more diverse than on Sardinia, supplementary components of the litter mycoflora are to be expected. Basically, however, this identification aid with its practical key to genera and species and its artless but informative drawings will nevertheless retain its usefulness, that is enhanced by the listing of known substrata for each treated species.

W.G.

6. Luis Alberto PARRA SÁNCHEZ – *Agaricus* L., *Allopsalliota* Nauta & Bas, tribu *Agariceae* S. Imai, part I. [*Fungi Europaei* **1**[1].] – Candusso, Alassio, 2008 (88-901057-7-1). 823 pages, 461 photographs or micrographs in colour, 104 figures in black-and-white, 42 coloured facsimile plates; hard cover.

Luis Parra, a veterinary doctor by profession, is entirely a self-made mycologist. In this he is not of course alone, but among his many peers he is doubtless one of the most enthusiastic, knowledgeable and polyvalent.

The present book bears witness of Parra's many talents. It is the first half of a full-sized monograph of European representatives of the tribe *Agariceae*, encompassing the two genera mentioned in the title. The contents of the second half are not specified; but as there are 11 sections of *Agaricus* pre-

sent in Europe, of which 5 are treated here, one may surmise that tome 2 will cover the remaining 6 sections plus the genus *Allopsalliota*. The present, first portion consists of a general, introductory part of c. 120 pages; the systematic treatment of the 35 species concerned (more than 400 pages) generously illustrated with drawings, photographs and facsimiles in black-and-white; 240 pages of colour illustrations (photographs, micrographs, facsimiles); and the final bibliography and indexes. The text is bilingual (Spanish and English) throughout except for the introduction and keys that are trilingual (Italian in addition).

With over 10 printed pages per species on average, the monographic part is unusually detailed. The amount of micromorphological data, in particular, is awesome. Observations on many different relevant aspects are provided. The synonymic treatment is as detailed as one may desire (except for the wanting typification of synonyms) and shows that the author, initially shy, has now adopted nomenclature as one of his cherished specialties. [This being so, may I point out to him that *Agaricus* sect. *Campestres* cannot be lectotypified because *A. campestris* is the automatic type under Art. 22.6; and that Art. 60.2 specifies that capitalisation of epithets is not a question of orthography but merely a matter of typography.]

Illustration is of unprecedented abundance and quality. The photographic material brought together by Parra, himself a skilled photographer, by itself makes the book a worthwhile acquisition. The micrographs of spores, basidia and cystidia are useful additions, illustrating those tiny details that so often are crucial for species identification.

Numerically, the twin volume on *Agariceae* is first in the ambitious series "Fungi Europaei" published by the Edizioni Candusso – but chronologically it comes after volumes 2 to 10, which appeared in 12 tomes between 1991 and 2005. The same publisher also produces the series "Fungi non delineati" (see e.g. OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 57. 2004). He deserves being associated with the author in our positive appreciation of the present book.

W.G.

7. Luis Alberto PARRA SÁNCHEZ – Nomenclatural study of the genus *Agaricus* L. *(Agaricales, Basidiomycotina)* of the Iberian Peninsula and Balearic Islands. [*Cuad. Trab. Fl. Micol. Ibér.* (ISSN 1132-0605), **21.**] – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 2005 (ISBN 84-00-08316-4). 101 pages + one sheet of errata; paper.

Luis Parra's nomenclator of Iberian *Agaricus* is a surprisingly learned and detailed work. The author has undergone painstaking labour to not only achieve completeness of coverage but, most commendably, check all cited names to their original source. He has furthermore documented in unusual detail the reasons for all his nomenclatural decisions and assessments, always with reference to the relevant provisions of the Code. His reasoning, often repeated, may perhaps at first sight seem tedious and pedantic to the specialist, but they have obvious educational merit in a field where amateurs that are often unfamiliar with the laws of nomenclature are prominent stakeholders. One would wish that equally thorough compendia were available for other groups of fungi as well.

In one case at least, one may well feel that Parra is being exaggeratedly meticulous: when he ascribes a new species to himself (as is normal) by using "L. A. Parra ex L. A. Parra" as author citation.

W.G.

8. Ana Rosa BURGAZ & Isabel MARTÍNEZ – *Peltigerales*: *Lobariaceae, Nephromataceae, Peltigeraceae.* [*Flora liquenológica ibérica* (ISSN 1696-0513), [**1**].] – Sociedad Española de Liquenolo-

gía, Murcia, 2003. 61 pages, 10 plates of drawings, map; paper.

The first issue of the ambitious new lichen Flora for the Iberian Peninsula and Balearic Islands is at the same time intended to serve as a model for all further treatments. It will therefore be received and studied with particularly keen attention, as it foreshadows what we are to expect in the future.

The new Flora is being based on Llimona & Hladun's 2001 inventory of Iberian lichen-forming and lichenicolous fungi (see OPTIMA Newslett. 36. (3). 2002). Its treatments are of an exemplary, submonographic style, with full keys, high-standard nomenclatural treatment (except that no types are cited for synonyms), detailed taxon descriptions and copious illustration, by original drawings, of a majority if not all of the species. Distribution (both overall and by Iberian provinces) is summarised but not mapped. Ample space is given to observations of all kind. The language adopted is Spanish.

The present, initial instalment treats three of the four *Peltigerales* families present in the area: *Lobariaceae* (including *Sticta*), *Nephromataceae*, and *Peltigeraceae* (including *Solorina*); the fourth, *Placynthiceae*, being left for the future. This amounts to a total of 6 genera with 44 species, of which over one half (24) belong to *Peltigera*. The only infraspecific rank accepted here is subspecies, but informal use is made of the term "morph" to designate individuals with different algal symbionts.

Except for some wrong references to figures, perhaps due to a late relettering of plate 2, we found the treatment to be flawless. Best wishes for the new Flora's future fate and its speedy progress!

W.G.

9. Volkmar WIRTH, Ruprecht DÜLL, Xavier LLIMONA, Rosa María ROS & Olaf WERNER – Guía de campo de los líquenes, musgos y hepáticas. – Omega, Barcelona, 2004 (ISBN 84-282-1266-x). 589 pages, numerous colour photographs, 12 black-and-white figures; hard cover.

This new field guide to common and characteristic lichens and bryophytes is the first to have been produced in Spanish and intended for use in Spain. It is due to the collaborative effort of two lichenologists and three bryologists, half from Spain and half from Germany. Nicely illustrated by colour photographs showing more than 500 common and easily recognised species, it is meant to provide an opportunity to all who love nature, notably those familiar with wildflowers in the first place, to delve into the realm of the humble and unobtrusive yet incredibly diverse and fascinating higher avascular cryptogams.

The question may be asked: is this a new book or not? The answer is somewhat ambiguous. In the foreword it is declared a "Spanish edition", resulting from the translation of a German book to which elements of the Spanish flora were added. The German model, discretely cited on the penultimate page, is Wirth & Düll's "Farbatlas Flechten und Moose", published in 2000. But as no less than 133 lichen and 101 bryophyte species have been newly added – almost one half of the total – this is better considered as an original, independent work.

How practical and reliable it is, users will tell. The basic concept appears to be well suited to the needs of its potential readership. From a botanist's point of view I would have liked to find a somewhat more explicit indication of where each species is found in Spain (and elsewhere), and certainly an indication of where the photographs were taken. Books of this kind are all but unknown for Mediterranean countries, and the present one is bound to be of use outside of Spain as well , e.g. in Italy and the Balkan Peninsula, the language barrier notwithstanding. Perhaps a future edition – supposing the present one sells as well as it

deserves – might take such needs and potentials into account.

W.G.

10. Juan GUERRA & Rosa María CROS (ed.) – Flora briofítica ibérica. – Sociedad Española de Briología, Murcia, 2000-2004 (ISSN 1696-0521). 9 unnumbered, paper bound fascicles received to date, each with a map of provinces, as follows (chronologically according to registration numbers):

María Teresa GALLEGO & María Jesús CANO – Género modelo *Aloina (Potticeae)* [as "vol. 0, fasc. 0"]. – 2000; 16 pages, 2 plates of drawings.

Juan GUERRA – *Pottiaceae: Weissia, Astomum, Trichostomum.* – 2002; 24 pages, 5 plates of drawings.

María Teresa GALLEGO – *Pottiaceae: Syntrichia.* – 2002; 31 pages, 6 plates of drawings.

Juan GUERRA – *Pottiaceae: Phascum, Acaulon, Aschisma, Protobryum, Leptophascum.* – 2003; 27 pages, 6 plates of drawings.

Alicia EDERRA – *Pottiaceae: Eucladium, Gymnostomum, Gyroweisia, Hymenostylium, Leptobarbula.* – 2004; 27 pages, 7 plates of drawings.

María Jesús CANO – *Pottiaceae: Hennediella, Tortula.* – 2004; 36 pages, 9 plates of drawings.

Rosa María CROS & Cecília SÉRGIO– *Andreaeaceae*: *Andreaea.* – "2003" [2004]; 27 pages, 9 plates of drawings.

Juan Antonio JIMÉNEZ – *Pottiaceae: Didymodon.* – 2004; 35 pages, 8 plates of drawings.

Felisa PUCHE – *Pottiaceae: Tortella, Pleurochaete.* – 2004; 23 pages, 5 plates of drawings.

What is designed to become the basic Flora for Iberian bryology started actively if modestly with the production of (so far) 9 unnumbered, printed fascicles in DIN A4 format. In layout and concept they resemble closely "*Flora liquenológica ibérica*" of which we have just presented the first issue (see item **8**, above; obviously, considering the dates of publication, the bryological concept takes priority over the lichenological one). The basic rules and tenets of the publication, repeated faithfully in each subsequent issue (which seems a bit of a waste of space), bear witness of a well conceived and stringent plan, although nothing is said as yet on how the eventual multitude of tiny fascicles to be expected is supposed to be arranged in the end.

So far as they are available to me, 8 of the fascicles deal with *Pottiaceae* (20 genera with 96 species in total, plus few subspecies and several varieties), *Didymodon* (18 species), *Tortula* and *Syntrichia* (16 each) being the major genera. The remaining fascicle treats the 8 Iberian species of *Andreaea (Andreaeaceae)*. In contrast to the lichen flora, each taxon (including varieties) is illustrated, if not by a habit drawing at least by details aiding identification. This I consider to be a major asset of the work, particularly since the drawings (by S. Gallego and, for *Andreaea*, A. Barrón) are faithful to detail and show remarkable artistic skill.

W.G.

11. Dino MARCHETTI – Le pteridofite d'Italia. [reprint from: *Ann. Mus. Civico Rovereto*, **19.**] – Museo Civico, Rovereto, 2003. Pages 71-131 + half-sheet of addenda and errata, maps; paper.

Of the c. 180 species and subspecies of pteridophytes deemed to be indigenous or naturalised in Europe no less than 129 occur in Italy, which is therefore one of the pteridologically most diverse European countries, rivalling with France and Spain. The present paper provides their inventory, full keys for their identification, and for each a standard profile with diagnostic description, habitat, distribution, and a map of its known occurrence in Italian provinces. Notes, sometimes of substantial size and always

informative and well written, are added for several taxa. As is customary with ferns, when different ploidy levels are known within a species they are assigned to different subspecies (in spite of the fact that autopolyploids are indistinguishable morphologically from their diploid ancestor, from which they may have arisen repeatedly), the only exceptions to this rule being in *Pteris* and *Cystopteris.*

Hybrids are not treated in full but enumerated at the end of their respective genus. Hidden among these lists is a validly published new combination *(Ceterach officinarum* nothosubsp. *mantoniae)* which, not being in any away highlighted or flagged as such in the summary, has so far failed to be picked up by indexers.

It is not the usual policy, in this column, to review papers appearing in a journal. The present work, however, deserves that an exception be made. It provides a new, solid basis for pteridological research in a major Mediterranean country, and will no doubt be found useful by non-Italian botanists as well.

W.G.

Gymnosperms

12. Robert P. ADAMS – Junipers of the world: the genus *Juniperus*. – Trafford, Vancouver, 2004 (ISBN 1-1420-4250-X). v + 275 pages, numerous black-and-white illustrations (photographs, maps, graphs), 8 tables, 4 plates with 96 colour photographs; laminated cover.

In his world monograph of the genus, the undisputed Nestor of juniper studies recognises 67 species grouped in three sections (plus several "varieties" in the old American sense, corresponding to modern subspecies). This taxonomic revision is based on a lifetime (38 years!) of scientific endeavour, including field work in many of the relevant areas, extensive herbarium studies and experimental work in the lab (essentially phytochemical and molecular, but not yet DNA sequencing). Even though some questions are still unanswered, we are now closer to an understanding of juniper taxonomy than ever before.

The Mediterranean is not the centre of species diversity for the genus, which is rather to be found in the Sino-Himalayan region and Mexico; but it is a good candidate for being its centre of origin, as the only area where all three sections occur. Indeed, what is likely the basic clade of *Juniperus*, the unispecific sect. *Caryocedrus (J. Drupacea),* is an E Mediterranean endemic. According to Adams's classification, 11 of the 67 recognised *Juniperus* species occur in the Mediterranean region proper, and three more if one adds the Caucasus and Macaronesia.

As compared with traditional treatments for the area, reflected in the enumeration in "Med-Checklist", the changes are considerable, especially in the needle-bearing group (sect. *Juniperus*). *J. communis* has merely two European varieties, "var." *communis* (including subsp. *hemisphaerica*) and "var. *saxatilis*" (i.e., subsp. *alpina*; encompassing *J. oblonga*). The changes are even more substantial in the *J. oxycedrus* complex, split into four species: *J. macrocarpa, J. navicularis* (the former subsp. *transtagana*), *J. oxycedrus* and *J. deltoides*. The two last named, taken together, equal traditional subsp. *oxycedrus,* representing its western (east to the SW Alps and Corsardinia) and eastern (west to peninsular Italy) populations, respectively. Large-fruited plants from the interior of Spain, which have often been considered as bridging the gap between *J. oxycedrus* and *J. macrocarpa,* are placed in the former as "var." *badia,* but judging from RAPDs they might even deserve species status.

In the scaly-leaved sect. *Sabina* the autonomous status of N African *J. thurifera* (as "var." *africana*) is confirmed. The distinction of a "var. *turbinata*" in *J. phoenicea,* however, and its equation with subsp. *mediterranea* and subsp. *canariensis* are at best provisional, as the taxonomy is still

unsettled (there is no clear correlation between phytochemical, molecular and morphological data) and the nomenclature sheer guesswork (no type of *J. turbinata* Guss. has been seen, nor has any Sicilian material been studied).

In summary, this is an extremely valuable publication, and it is a pity that, being cheaply produced, the quality in particular of its black-and-white photographs is inadequate. I have reviewed it at some length, as it is unlikely to reach all who should know it. Those interested may best obtain it directly from the author (www.juniperus.org).

W.G.

Dicotyledons

13. Friedrich Karl MEYER – Kritische Revision der *"Thlaspi"*-Arten Europas, Afrikas und Vorderasiens. Spezieller Teil. IX. *Noccaea* Moench. [*Haussknechtia* (ISSN 0863-6451), *Beiheft* **12.**] – Thüringische Botanische Gesellschaft, Jena, 2006. 343 pages, 110 plates of drawings; paper.

When Meyer in 1973 set out to pulverise the large, generally recognised genus *Thlaspi* he met with general scepticism. There were good reasons for the reluctance of many, including myself, to follow suit, foremost the lack of a detailed rationale, which one might have expected in support of such sweeping change. A bare conspectus of names, most of them new combinations, was unconvincing evidence. Also, Meyer had not even remotely considered the possibility to minimise nomenclatural change by conserving the familiar name *Thlaspi* with a type representing the largest split, *Noccaea*.

Time has passed, and Meyer at long last has taken the trouble to explain the rationale of his new classification. Furthermore, molecular work started in 1991 does in general terms support Meyer's conclusions based primarily on seed coat anatomy. The moment has probably come when the traditional point of view is best abandoned. The fact that a full monographic account for all segregate genera is now available facilitates this decision.

The present revision of *Noccaea* is the ninth and last in a series of papers published in "Haussknechtia" between 2001 and 2006, each treating one of the segregate genera, to name: *Thlaspi* s. str., *Neurotropis*, *Microthlaspi*, *Thlaspiceras*, *Noccidium*, *Kotschyella*, *Callothlaspi*, and *Raparia*. It is not a world monograph, because the area of *Noccaea* far exceeds the core area of former *Thlaspi* on which Meyer has concentrated. To the 67 species and 10 additional subspecies here recognised, perhaps half as many will have to be added when N and E Asia plus extra-tropical America are considered. Even so, a solid foundation has been laid. The detailed descriptions and extensive specimen citations, together with the large amount of careful if artless drawings of diagnostic details (apparently all by the author), suffice to make his taxonomic judgement understood and, why not, accepted.

W.G.

14. Ali Asghar MAASSOUMI –The genus *Astragalus* in Iran, vol. 5. [*Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, Publication* No. **362.**] – Islamic Republic of Iran, Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, Tehran, 2005 (ISBN 964-473-229-4). 786 pages, 213 photographic plates, graphs, tables; paper.

This is the fifth, concluding volume of Maassoumi's monumental revision of Iranian *Astragalus*, of which the three first (of 1986, 1989 and 1995) were reviewed earlier (in OPTIMA Newslett. 31: (2-3). 1997) and the fourth (not seen) was published in 2000. Qualifying it as monumental is not an exaggeration. From the final synopsis, arranged alphabetically by sections and species, one will see in the whole revision 70 sections and 804 numbered taxa (species or subspe-

cies), to which one may add 6 doubtful species, one that is only cultivated, and 26 were recently published ones and that were not treated in the revision itself. The synopsis appears on pp. 666-692 and mentions (by means of abbreviations explained only in Farsi) the life form of each section (A = annual, H = herbaceous, WO = woody) and, for each species, whether it is endemic (e), non-endemic (sh), described as new in the revision itself (n), etc.

Volume 5 treats 18 sections of *Astragalus* subg. *Cercidothrix*, with 216 numbered taxa, including 22 species described as new in an Appendix, but not including 11 that were published in May 2005 by Zarre and/or Podlech, too late for being inserted in full. This time no short version in English, is present, nor distribution maps as in some of the earlier volumes. For those not familiar with Farsi language and Arabic script the book is hard to use. Only the Appendix with the description of the new species (and with one apparently illegitimate renaming) is in English and Latin. To compensate, for almost every recognised taxon a specimen, often the type, is shown as full-page black-and-white photograph. All in all, this is a most valuable and welcome addition to the literature on *Astragalus* and on the Iranian flora.

W.G.

15. Attilio CARAPEZZA, Pietro PUCCIO & Manlio SPECIALE – Pomelia felicissima. Storia, botanica e coltivazione della plumeria a Palermo. – Kalós, Palermo, 2005. 131 pages, coloured illustrations (photographs, facsimiles, maps); paper.

A public show that presented in the summer and fall of 2005 by the Palermo Botanic Garden provided the opportunity to publish this excellent popular revision of cultivated *Plumerias*. Locally known by the corrupted but loving name "pomelia" (which, carried by some Sicilian emigrant, may well be the source of the designation "paw melia" used in Hawai'i), *Plumeria* is first documented in cultivation in Sicily in Gussone's 1821 edition of the catalogue of the Boccadifalco Garden at Palermo. It spread through Palermo's 19th century's "gardens of delight" to become one of the city's most generalised and best loved ornamentals, widely grown in backyards and on balconies.

What I have just designated as a "popular revision" is not a work of pure science but a many-faceted account partly written by professional botanist. It includes historical, horticultural and systematic chapters, and presents a full documentation of the 18 cultivars of *Plumeria rubra* extant in the Botanic Garden's collections followed by a survey of its other *Apocynaceae* holdings. As is usual for Palermo publications, the booklet is lavishly illustrated and produced with loving care. As a final surprise, it includes the facsimile of a work so rare that it went unnoticed by the compilers of TL-2: head gardener Vincenzo Riccobono's "Rivista monografica delle specie di *Plumeria*", published in Palermo in 1904, with 23 pages of text (reprinted from the "Bollettino della Società Orticola di Mutuo Soccorso") and 15 colour plates.

In addition to the Italian text, full or summary translations into English are provided.

W.G.

16. Luis CARLÓN, Gonzalo GÓMEZ CASARES, Manuel LAÍNZ, Gonzalo MORENO MORAL, Óscar SÁNCHEZ PEDRAJA & Gerald M. SCHNEEWEISS – Más, a propósito de algunas *Phelipanche* Pomel, *Boulardia* F. W. Schultz y *Orobanche* L. *(Orobanchaceae)* del oeste del Paleártico. [*Documentos del Jardín Botánico Atlántico (Gijón),* **6.**] – Jardín Botánico Atlántico, Gijón, 2005 (ISBN 978-84-89466-84-5). 127 pages, 4 figures, 3 maps, 4 tables, 25 plates, mostly colour photographs; paper.

This is the fourth contribution to *Orobanchaceae* taxonomy by a group of NW Spanish botanists (Grupo Botánico Cantábrico, or GBC) headed by Luis Carlón, this time with the addition of a Viennese co-author who is responsible for DNA sequencing; the first three having appeared in 2002 to 2005 as Nos. 1-3 of the same journal. It consists of a loose series of observations concerning species growing in, but often not limited to, Spain. Recent field work has led members of the group to explore S France, Portugal and the Canary Islands.

The authors split the genus commonly known as *Orobanche* into three genera which beyond doubt – whatever their rank – constitute natural units, well defined both morphologically and in molecular terms (principally ITS sequences, as there appears to have been some horizontal inter-group gene transfer at the level of chromosome DNA). These are *Orobanche* proper, *Phelipanche* (also known as *O.* subg. *Phelipanche* or sect. *Trionychon*), and *Boulardia* (or subg. *Ceratocalyx;* unispecific, to accommodate the peculiar *O. latisquama*).

Most of the present work concerns *Phelipanche*, a group in which species delimitation is notoriously critical and confused. Four new *Phelipanche* species are described, 5 new specific or subspecific combinations validated, and in a number of cases type material has been critically examined and lectotypes were designated. Distribution maps have been prepared, some showing the Iberian and others the total known distribution. Most importantly, some drawings and many good colour photographs are included, without which reliable identification would scarcely be possible (even with aid of the photographs, distinction, unless supported by personal experience in the field, is not an easy matter). Sometimes the authors appear to be overly optimistic in conveying their knowledge to others, or they talk themselves into recognising differences that vary according to the species being compared. As an example, flower position in *P. mutelii* when compared with *P. nana* is said to be "erect to erecto-patent" (table 1) but in comparison to other species is described as "patent, more rarely erect" (table 2).

Although the authors' missionary zeal in defending their creed is a bit disproportionate, they have made and continue to make welcome, valuable contributions to a better understanding of *Orobanche* sensu lato

W.G.

Monocotyledons

17. Goar Grantovna OGANEZOVA – Struktura semeni i sistema Lilejnyh. – Institut Botaniki, Nacional'naja Akademija Nauk Republiki Armenija, 2008 (ISBN 978-99941-2-109-0). 249 pages, 47 figures, one table; laminated cover.

When Huber in 1969 started to revolutionise monocot systematics by his studies of liliiflorous seeds, Oganezova soon set out to investigate that very subject on her own. Between 1978 and 1988 she performed an enormous amount of work, studying primarily the seed coat anatomy, embryology and endosperm features, and additionally fruit morphology and ontogenesis, of no less than 550 species of 182 different genera, currently placed in 32 families of the former *Liliiflorae*. Her present work was, basically, written and ready for publication by 1991, but only now could the opportunity be found to get it printed.

Oganezova presents her results in the frame of her initial set of 17 traditionally defined, medium-sized families. While for discussion she uses a modern family concept, essentially based on molecular criteria, she is rightly critical of the exclusive use of DNA sequences for classification purposes. She therefore endeavours to add her own, original data so as to refine and consolidate the concept and arrangement of liliiflorous families. Whereas the families she now

adopts represent the ultimate splitting tendency prevailing today, she also deplores this dramatic pulverisation and instead advocates the reintroduction of more broadly defined families subdivided into subfamilies. Whether this means that she would gladly downgrade the categories she uses by one notch, replacing superorder by order, order by family, and family by subfamily, we are left to guess.

Oganezova's own classificatory scheme groups the former *Liliiflorae* in three superorders, which she believes to have their root in the old Gondwana-Laurasia contact zone in SE Asia: a tropical branch, *Dioscoreanae* (with the unifamilial orders *Dioscoreales* and *Taccales*); and two closely related presumed sister groups, the predominantly N hemispheric *Lilianae (Liliales* plus the unifamilial *Alstroemeriales* and *Iridales)* and the mainly S hemispheric *Asparaganae (Asparagales* and *Amaryllidales)*. Outside of these, sharing some characters with each and others with none, *Haemodoraceae* appear to be very old, close to the origin of herbaceous plants and of unclear affinity.

Had it been possible to include in this book a significant share of the doubtless huge pictorial material generated by the author in her studies, it would have been a unique compendium of liliiflorous seed anatomy and fruit morphology, a source work for the discipline as a whole. As it is, the drawings provided are barely adequate to illustrate and justify the author's basic concepts. Even so, her conceptual contribution to monocot systematic is certainly significant.

W.G.

18. Niels BÖHLING & Hildemar SCHOLZ – The *Gramineae (Poaceae)* flora of the southern Aegean Islands (Greece). Checklist, new records, internal distribution. [*Ber. Inst. Landschafts- & Pflanzenökol. Univ. Hohenheim* (ISSN 0947-0778), *Beih.* **16.**] – Universität Hohenheim, Stuttgart, 2003. 88 pages, 8 figures (graph, maps), 2 tables; paper.

The authors of this new grass inventory have both visited the S Aegean islands, Scholz repeatedly since 1988, Böhling in 1997-2001. They have, in addition, made use of specimens collected by others and deposited in the Berlin Herbarium (B), but apparently not in any other herbaria. Even with this major limitation they have added a surprisingly high number of new distributional data to what uses to be considered as one of the best explored parts of the eastern Mediterranean. Their list of 234 wild and 7 widely cultivated grass taxa includes no less than 6 first records for Europe (4 of them aliens), 15 additions to the Cretan area, 19 to Crete alone, and 4, from Rhodes, previously unknown from the E Aegean area. The list also includes the enumeration of a large number of specimens that enlarge the known provincial or altitudinal distribution of taxa, or confirm old, sometimes doubtful records.

Scholz, the well known grass specialist, adopts a "modern", narrow generic concept. He therefore validates several new combinations in this paper, in the genera *Elytrigia* (split from *Elymus*), *Schedonorus* (traditionally placed in *Festuca*) and *Ochlopoa* (originally a section of *Poa,* here newly raised to generic rank). In other respects, however, his nomenclature is stubbornly antiquated, as in the cases of *"Monerma"* (correctly *Hainardia*) and *"Aegilops caudata"* (for *A. markgrafii*).

W.G.

19. Helmut BAUMANN, Siegfried KÜNKELE & Richard LORENZ – Orchideen Europas mit angrenzenden Gebieten. – Ulmer, Stuttgart, 2006 (ISBN 978-3-8001-4162-3). 333 pages, 639 colour photographs, map and figure on cover inside; laminated cover.

This field guide for European orchids is the work, so to say, of old battle horses: Baumann and Künkele (the latter sadly deceased in 2004) have published similar guides in 1982 and 1988 already, in the se-

ries "Kosmos Naturführer". Also, they have been coordinating for the past few decades the work on mapping Mediterranean orchids, carried out under OPTIMA's aegis. None better than they would know of the practical needs of those who want to recognise these lovely but highly variable plants in the field, and none could better cope with the restrictions in space and style that a handy field guide imposes.

An author team of such skill and knowledge could not fail to produce an excellent book. Speaking of conciseness, introductory matter has been limited to a single page of preface, the minimal necessary explanation of typographical conventions being relegated to the inside of the front cover flap. Author citations for scientific names are absent from the text but can be found in the index by those who need them. Information for taxa is organised under a few well chosen headers, such as (sparing) synonymy, morphology, variation, biology, diagnostic hints, habitat, and distribution. Commendably, a half line of text has been set aside to mention the place and date where each photograph was taken, and the identity of the photographer. Also, descriptions are not of uniform standard length but adapted to the needs of each case.

In a book with orchids as its subject the primary question, invariably, is: how many taxa do the authors recognise, at which rank, and how sensibly defined? Here again, the great experience of the authors, both with the plants and their orchidophile colleagues, have led them to adopt wise compromises. They have not foregone the recent, often excessive attempts to cast variation into a formal taxonomic framework, but neither did they feel compelled to adopt each and every new taxon proposed for a local variant or, in *Ophrys*, each population with a deviating pollinator. They have made fair and reasonable use of the subspecies category to accommodate the less stable and not so well defined, yet distinguishable morphs. By and large, the classification they have adopted is likely to withstand the test by the practical user. The fact that the new, molecular-based reclassification of the genus *Orchis* (see the next following item) has not been taken up testifies to the author's caution rather than to their recalcitrance to change.

Nowadays in an orchid book one expects that the illustrations meet highest quality standards. It would be surprising if this book were an exception to the rule, which it is certainly not. Its merits, therefore, lie not so much in the beautiful and impeccably neat pictures it presents, but in their usefulness for recognising the plants in the field. It is obvious that the authors have gone to great length to select the most typical and informative among the images at their disposal. When appropriate, as for *Himantoglossum* and *Serapias*, they have added dissections of flowers to the customary colour photographs.

My concluding wish and advice, then, is that an English edition of this book be prepared, because its being written in German will inevitably and unduly restrict its use among orchid lovers to the relatively few who are familiar with the Teutonic idiom. As one of those privileged few, I have been proud and pleased to find that the authors have chosen to dedicate their work to me.

W.G.

20. Horst KRETZSCHMAR, Wolfgang ECCARIUS & Helga DIETRICH – The orchid genera *Anacamptis, Orchis* and *Neotinea*. Phylogeny, taxonomy, morphology, biology, distribution, ecology and hybridisation. 2, edition – translated into English. – Echinomedia, Bürgel, 2007 (ISBN 978-3-937107-12-7). 544 pages, numerous photographs, facsimiles, tables, maps and graphs, mostly in colour; hard cover.

In his foreword, Richard Bateman refers to this book as an "integrated monograph". However defined, this term fits nicely. The authors have indeed contrived to approach

their subject under a variety of angles, starting with general thoughts on the history and theory of its classification and ending with an extensive presentation and discussion of known or supposed hybridisation phenomena.

Understandably, much weight is placed on the question of generic delimitation. All but three of the species here treated have been universally included in the single genus *Orchis* for almost two centuries. This is now split in three, with two of the outsiders *(Anacamptis pyramidata* and *Neotinea maculata)* providing the generic names for two of the splits – the third, *Aceras anthropophorum*, being integrated in what is left of *Orchis.* Not surprisingly, it is the use of molecular methods, viz. the sequencing of nuclear DNA, that is at the base of this revolution; and again predictably, this has led to much criticism or at least scepticism in the recent past. Yet in the case at hand there seems to be sound support for the revised scheme, both from (suitably selected) morphological criteria and the observed faculty of interspecific hybridisation. The present revision, which fits all taxa into the novel generic scheme, will no doubt greatly enhance acceptance of the new classification among botanists and orchid lovers. Lest new research disproves the soundness of the molecular results – a rather unlikely prospect – there is hardly an acceptable alternative in sight. The three recognised genera are paced far apart in the phylogenetic tree, so they cannot reasonably, as has been proposed, be downgraded to subgenera of a genus *Orchis* that would, in that event, be no more natural than it is at present.

In the main, monographic portion of their book the authors adopt a generously wide species concept, which they justify in the introduction. They treat as mere subspecies many taxa that have more often been accepted as distinct species, ending up with a relatively low total of 36 species: 11 in *Anacamptis,* 4 in *Neotinea,* and 21 in residual *Orchis*. On the other hand, they recognise a relatively large number of subspecies: 6 in *Anacamptis morio* and *A. papilionacea,* 5 in *Orchis mascula,* etc. They also freely use sectional subdivisions, many of them unispecific: 7 each in *Anacamptis* and 2 in *Neotinea,* which may well seem exaggerate but does no real harm. Of the 88 new combinations and 4 new taxa proposed, most concern sections, subspecies and hybrids, and only a single one, *Anacamptis cyrenaica*, stands for a species.

The book is generously illustrated, not only with colour photographs of plants in their natural habitat and close-ups of flowers but also with images of type specimens, SEM micrographs, and distribution maps. Its single major weak spot, as far as I can judge, are the keys. Not only does the integration of subspecies into the species keys result in the awkward, unintentional appearance of nonsense combinations like *"Anacamptis laxiflora* subsp. *palustris"* (p. 51) – which could have been avoided by a better typographic arrangement; but more seriously, the keys are obviously unsuited for determination. Just two examples. On p. 193, *Neotinea lactea* is contrasted against *N. tridentata* solely by the outside colour of the "helmet" (other characters mentioned in one lead are unmatched in the other), whitish to yellowish cream as opposed to pink to light red; however, colour as documented by Fig. 212/1 of Spanish *N. tridentata* subsp. *conica* and Fig. 216/1-2 of Greek *N. lactea* is identical, pale pink with greenish-purple veins. On p. 52, the diagnostic criteria given for *Anacamptis papilionacea* subsp. *expansa* with respect to subsp. *alibertis* are a dense inflorescence and but slightly upwardly bent lip margin; on which account, some of the plants shown under the former subspecies, e.g. the lectotype illustration (Fig. 160.1), key out as the latter.

This slight admonition is not meant to impinge unduly on the positive general impression given by the book; rather, it shows how difficult it is to convey to the inexperienced reader slight differences perceived through the observation of plants and populations in nature – which explains, perhaps,

why the study of terrestrial orchids is so difficult yet fascinating a subject.

W.G.

21. C. A. J. [Karel] KREUTZ – Die Orchideen von Zypern. Beschreibung, Lebensweise, Verbreitung, Gefährdung, Schutz und Ikonographie. **The orchids of Cyprus.** Description, pattern of life, distribution, threat, conservation and iconography. –Kreutz, Landgraaf, 2004 (ISBN 90-806626-3-1). 416 pages, numerous maps and photographs in colour; hard cover with dust jacket

The last of Karel Kreutz's gorgeous Orchid books that I had the pleasure to review was that on Rhodes and Karpathos, published in 2002 (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 64-65. 2004). The present one, dealing with the *Orchidaceae* growing on Cyprus, deserves equal prize as its forerunners with respect to the superior quality of its text, printing and illustration. Most photographs, once more, are by Kreutz himself; and again, the text is fully bilingual. Not counting the illustrations in the general introductory part, which include characteristic landscapes, the standard setting for each species is of two full-page colour photographs facing the German and English treatment, followed by two pages with (normally) 6 quarter-page photographs and a dot map showing the distribution on Cyprus.

The orchid flora of Cyprus is interesting and varied, but not exceedingly rich (unless one counts the many doubtful or plainly erroneous records, carefully discussed and dismissed at the onset) and, surprisingly, not very critical either. With the exception of the genus *Serapias* and the *Ophrys sphegodes-mammosa* complex, most taxa present appear to be well defined and can be distinguished with relative ease. It may, in many cases, be more difficult to establish their taxonomic identity (or otherwise) with plants growing elsewhere. As is usual with orchids, hybridisation plays a substantial role; but hybrids are not treated in full as is so often the case, rather, they are illustrated by a handful of striking and characteristic examples.

The orchid flora of Cyprus comprises 52 taxa (here: species) belonging to 12 genera, among which *Ophrys* (21 species) and *Orchis* (14) followed by *Epipactis* and *Serapias* (4 each) are prominent. Kreutz in this book still adopts the narrow species definition of his former publication but foreshadows a new, more synthetic approach for the near future, in which many of the less well defined units will be given subspecies rank. When one compares the taxa recognised here with those that Baumann & al. (item 19, above) have subsequently adopted on a European scale, one finds that there is hardly any difference in taxon number (only *Ophrys morio* has, perhaps unjustly, been synonymised with *O. alsatica*), and only a small decline (by 8) in the number of different species. This demonstrates if need be that Kreutz' population-based approach to taxon definition is sound and stands the test of his peers' critical scrutiny.

Should I be asked to mention a point of criticism, as is known to be my habit, I would pick out the Latin description of the single newly described species, *Ophrys morio*. In my young and pitiless days I have once dismissed a similar new taxon with the verdict: "diagnosis vix latina". One wonders why Kreutz, who was aided by a superb language editor for his English text, could not find a person with skills in botanical Latin to aid him with this little paragraph.

W.G.

Floras

22. Rui Manuel da Silva VIEIRA – Flora da Madeira. Plantas vasculares naturalizadas no Arquipélago da Madeira. [*Bol. Mus. Munic. Funchal (Hist. Nat.), Supl.* **8** (ISSN 0870-3876).] – Câmara Municipal do Funchal, Funchal, 2002. 281 pages, table, 18 plates with 72 pho-

tographs (16 in colour); paper with dust jacket.

Far-off islands are characterised by a species-poor indigenous flora with low competitive ability, and which by consequence is particularly vulnerable to alien invaders. The Madeira archipelago (Madeira proper and Porto Santo) is no exception. It is therefore a good thing to dispose of a full and up-to-date inventory of the islands' known exotics, both naturalised and occurring as casual escapes, to serve as a basis for monitoring their future fate and possible expansion.

Madeira is comparatively well explored botanically, yet the dynamics of invasive plants are considerable. Little wonder, therefore, that there are a number of new records among the 447 naturalised and 186 casually escaping species inventoried. No less than 14, now naturalised, had not been recorded before, and 11 previously know from a single island have been found on both. Furthermore, 82 species, already known in cultivation, have been newly found in the wild, either naturalised (20) or at least casual (62). Of the naturalised species, most are fortunately restricted to the lower, heavily built and cultivated belt, yet several, which occur at altitudes above 600 m, present a serious threat to the native laurisilva communities with their unique endemic flora.

W.G.

23. Mohamed FENNANE, Mohammed IBN TATTOU, Aïcha OUYAHYA & Jalal EL-OUALIDI (ed.) – Flore pratique du Maroc. Manuel de détermination des plantes vasculaires. Volume **2,** *Angiospermae (Leguminosae-Lentibulariaceae).* [*Travaux de l'Institut Scientifique, Série Botanique* (ISSN 1114-1174), **38.**] – Institut Scientifique, Université Mohammed V, Agdal, Rabat, 2007 (ISBN 9954-8347-4-5). XI + 836 + [1] pages, map, 73 plates of drawings + 111 figures; cloth with dust-cover.

Eight years after the warmly welcomed first volume of this new, concise flora of Morocco (see OPTIMA Newslett. 35: (6-8). 2000), there comes the next. With its almost 1500 species and 304 genera it corresponds to roughly one third of the total flora, leaving the last, presumably largest third for the final volume. *Leguminosae* are by far the largest family treated, followed in order of magnitude by *Labiatae, Umbelliferae, Scrophulariaceae* (defined in the traditional sense) and *Boraginaceae*. These five taken together account for exactly 70 % of the total species number.

The editorial team has unfortunately lost its last French member, Joël Mathez, who regettably chose to sacrifice his mandate to his teaching commitments, but nevertheless contributed a most readable preface full of historical reminiscences. The team of authors shows again the active participation of many Moroccan botanists who are in a large majority among the 16 text authors. The single change of note with respect to the first volume concerns chromosome numbers, now given more liberally than before but no longer in the current text as before: they form an appendix of their own, with reference to their source.

Three new combinations have been validated in the text, one each in *Ballota, Globularia,* and *Scutellaria*. They all result from change in rank, either upgrading of former varieties or downgrading of a species. The family key appears again but with some improvements incorporated, whereas the glossary is reprinted unchanged (still containing terms relevant to the ferns, but not yet those that will be needed in the next volume for *Compositae* or grasses).

The first volume has, deservedly, received a special award at the 2001 OPTIMA Meeting in Palermo. The second volume fully matches its merits and qualities. Among its many positive aspects, let me mention the editors' firm promise that they will not stop short of completing the whole work.

W.G.

24. Pedro SÁNCHEZ GÓMEZ & Juan GUERRA MONTES (ed.) – Nueva flora de Murcia. Plantas vasculares. – DM, Murcia, 2003 (ISBN 84-8425-289-2). 501 pages, 486 colour photographs, 308 drawings, 3 maps; laminated cover.

The avowed purpose of this Flora is didactic. It has been written primarily to assist Murcia's university and college students to recognise the plants of their home region, and enable teachers to assist them. It is, by consequence, a simply but methodically written book, presenting concise information (keys but no descriptions) but rather generously illustrated so as to help users to ascertain that their results are indeed correct.

In view of its scope one might have expected a pocket book, which it is not by either size or weight. Also, the illustrations are of very unequal quality: good for the colour photographs but poor for the (mostly original) drawings, many of which are uncharacteristic and rather misleading. A minor incident, worth mentioning because it concerns the example used in the introduction, is the crippled synonym given under *Tetraclinis articulata*: *Callitris "quadrivalens"* instead of *quadrivalvis*.

As the impressum explicitly designates this issue as a "first edition", one wonders why the editors in the preface refer to an earlier edition of the book. The fact is that it is a remake, under a slightly different title, of Sánchez Gómez's "Flora de Murcia" (ed. 1, 1996; ed. 2, 1998).

In spite of the minor shortcomings mentioned, the Flora is likely to fulfil its purpose: to make the vascular plants of their area better known, appreciated and, hopefully, safeguarded. The information given on the habitat, distribution and abundance of each species is particularly helpful in this respect.

W.G.

25. Santiago CASTROVIEJO (gen. ed.), Juan Antonio DEVESA, Raúl GONZALO & Alberto HERRERO (vol. ed.) – Flora iberica. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. **Vol. XV,** *Rubiaceae-Dipsacaceae*. – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Real Jardín Botánico, Madrid, 2007 (ISBN 978-84-00-08567-4, volume; 84-00-06221-3, set). XLV + 449 pages, map, 90 plates of drawings; cloth with dust jacket.

26. Santiago CASTROVIEJO (gen. ed.), Santiago CASTROVIEJO, Modesto LUCEÑO, Antonio GALÁN, Pedro JIMÉNEZ MEJÍAS, Francisco CABEZAS & L. MEDINA (vol. ed.) – Flora iberica. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. Vol. **XVIII,** *Cyperaceae-Pontederiaceae*. – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Real Jardín Botánico, Madrid, 2008 (ISBN 978-84-00-08624-4, volume; 84-00-06221-3, set). XLVII + 420 pages, map, 93 plates of drawings; cloth with dust jacket.

27. Santiago CASTROVIEJO (gen. ed.), Carlos AEDO & Alberto HERRERO (vol. ed.) – Flora iberica. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. **Vol. XXI,** *Smilacaceae-Orchidaceae*. – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Real Jardín Botánico, Madrid, 2005 (ISBN 84-00-08305-9, volume; 84-00-06221-3, set). XLV + 366 pages, map, 43 plates of drawings, 100 full-page colour photographs; cloth with dust jacket.

It looks as though the editor had purposely chosen to publish "Flora iberica" in steps of three. Not quite so, if you look at the dates – but still… Well, sorry for the joke. The work certainly deserves to be considered seriously, as it still is, in my opinion, the flagship among Europe's Floras. I know I am repeating myself, but after 13 published volumes (out of a total of 21) it is not easy to find words of praise unsaid before. Under the ongoing if somewhat more relaxed leadership of Santiago Castroviejo, young capa-

ble Spanish botanists are now taking turns as volume editors, which has the welcome consequence of ensuring speedy publication of those parts for which the authors have completed their work.

Each of the three volumes under review has a single major family at its core, beside some minor ones. For volume 15 it is *Rubiaceae*, in which *Galium* (52 species), by Ortega Olivencia & Devesa, is the largest genus. *Cyperaceae* make up the bulk of volume 18, again with an undisputed generic leader: *Carex* (92 species), split up sectionwise among Luceño, Escudero and Jiménez Mejías. Finally, *Orchidaceae*, which fill the near totality of the final volume 21, include three major genera of comparable size: *Orchis* (19 species), authored by Aedo, *Epipactis* (14), by Crespo, and *Ophrys* (12), by Aldasoro & Sáez.

The "orchid volume" deserves to be discussed in some detail, as so much interest has centred on the orchid family recently. Those favouring a revolutionary approach in genus delimitation will be disappointed, as the editors, having given due consideration to the recent proposals of Pridgeon & Bateman, have opted for a conservative solution, identical with the treatment in "Flora Europaea". Theirs was probably a wise decision, as there was, and still is, scant acceptance of the novel scheme among botanists and orchidophiles (but see item 20, above). The notorious splitters, too, must be quite disappointed, because in *Ophrys* in particular the species concept adopted is very broad (excessively so in the case of *O. dyris*, which considered as a subspecies of *O. fusca* but belonging in reality to the but distantly related *O. omegaifera* complex). In *Orchis*, on the other hand, *O. conica*, a member of the critical and variable *O. tridentata* group, is recognised as a distinct species – which I definitely consider as excessive.

A word of praise must, once more, be said on illustration. The drawings (by R. Tavera for vol. 15, J. L. Castillo for the two others) is – as in past volumes – of superior quality, both with respect to scientific accuracy and artistic skill. Besides there is the final, surprising innovation of colour plates in vol. 21, with full-page colour pictures, by some of Europe's leading orchid photographers, illustrating (sometimes twice) every accepted species and subspecies.

W.G.

28. Daniel JEANMONOD & Jacques GAMISANS – Flora corsica. – Edisud, Aix-en-Provence, 2007 (ISBN 978-2-7449-0662-6). 921 + cxxxiv pages, 134 plates of drawings, 3 maps, 1 vegetation profile, 3 tables; plastic cover.

So far there has been no pocket flora for the island of Corsica, a surprising fact when one considers how popular the "Island of Beauty" is among tourists and nature lovers. Bouchard's "Flore pratique" was a scant surrogate, as even in its third edition of 1978 it is so full of imperfections that it is not even mentioned in the list of basic literature of the present book.

The wild flora of Corsica comprises almost 2400 species, including casual (10.5 %) and naturalised (6,4 %) aliens. Endemism is considerable, the 146 strictly endemic taxa corresponding to 6,3 % of the indigenous flora – a figure and proportion that will more than double when endemism in a wider, Tyrrhenian context is considered.

The new tenets of molecular-based phylogeny have been followed with respect to family sequence: three "basal" families *(Nymphaeaceae, Lauraceae, Aristolochiaceae)* precede the monocots, followed in turn by the dicots starting with *Ceratophyllum*. This means that the user, at least initially, will have to resort frequently to the index. Family delimitations, at least, have been kept as is traditional, with deviating modern alternatives (the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group's APG II family concepts) mentioned in brackets, subtitles or notes.

"Flora corsica" is a product of the "projet Flore Corse", based at the Geneva Con-

servatoire botanique. In spite of its 1050+ pages it is a handy volume, being printed on extra thin paper. Some concessions had to be made in order to save space, such as the absence of descriptions of families and genera, but species are treated in full, and infraspecific taxa (subspecies, varieties and even a few formae) are presented in even greater detail than is usual for critical Floras. Also, illustration is generous. A fair share of the species are portrayed in full or by diagnostic details, the latter either taken from the new Belgian Flora of Lambinon & al. (ed. 5, 2004) and a few other sources, or contributed by one of the authors, André Schlüssel. As to the full but much downscaled portraits, all are original, mostly by E. Sierra Ràfols.

"Flora corsica" cannot of course displace the much fuller "Prodrome" to which the following item belongs, but it is a very useful and much needed complement to it.

W.G.

29. Daniel JEANMONOD (ed.) – Compléments au Prodrome de la flore corse. *Asteraceae* – II, par Daniel JEANMONOD, André SCHLÜSSEL & Jacques GAMISANS. – Conservatoire et Jardin botaniques de la Ville de Genève, Chambésy, 2004 (ISBN 2-8277-0815-9). 256 pages, map, 97 black-and-white figures (photographs, drawings and maps); laminated cover.

The second of three projected *Asteraceae* parts in the series of complements to Briquet's "Prodrome de la Flore corse" treats two tribes: *Senecioneae* and *Cardueae*. Nine tribes had been dealt with in the first part (reviewed in OPTIMA Newslett. 33: (2-3) 1998), and a single but major one, *Lactuceae*, is left for the third. The number of genera included here is 24, of which *Centaurea* (12 species) and *Senecio* (11 species) are the largest and most critical. In the latter genus, extensive space is devoted to the *S. leucanthemifolius* group, in which (following a paper by Jeanmonod, published two years before) three Corsican or Corsardinian endemic species are recognised beside *S. leucanthemifolius* proper, which occurs only as a casual. These results must remain preliminary as long as no equally thorough revision of local native populations representing the complex elsewhere in the Mediterranean coastlands has been carried out.

Same as the previous parts of this series, the present one endeavours to take into account all recent changes due, for the most part, to novel results in the field of molecular systematics. However, progress is so fast that it is impossible to keep abreast. Since this account was published a new, important split has occurred in *Senecio*, whereby several species have been transferred to *Jacobaea*. Watch out: it is unlikely to be the last such rearrangement.

W.G.

30. Pier Virgilio ARRIGONI – Flora dell'isola di Sardegna, 1. – Delfino, Sassari, 2006 (ISBN 88-7138-414-8). 448 pages, 184 plates of drawings, 9 maps; hard cover.

There is an obvious tendency to large formats among Sardinian Floras, starting with Moris and more than matched by the present, new one (30 × 22 cm). But large size is not its main merit, far from it. Arrigoni presents us with a high quality product, resulting from a plan that has taken over three decades to mature since it was first made public, at the First OPTIMA Meeting in Iraklio, in the fall of 1975. Since then, Arrigoni has grown into the undisputed first expert of the Sardinian flora, on which he has published a great number of papers to foreshadow the final synthesis that is now taking shape.

As may be expected at the start of such an enterprise, the initial general chapters on the island's physical environment and biosphere, particularly its vegetation and flora, are given ample space. Each chapter ends

with its own bibliography, competently guiding the interested reader who may wish to delve deeper into a particular subject.

The linear arrangement of families follows phylogenetic criteria, with the Pteridophytes first, followed by Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons (arranged according to Cronquist's system) and Monocotyledons (after Dahlgren). Family delimitation, we are left to understand, will follow the same authoritative treatments. The arrangement of genera takes their affinities into account, with the notable (and illogical) exception of the family's name-bringing genus, which always comes first. Species, regrettably, appear in alphabetical sequence. Their treatment follows a clear, coherent pattern. There are source citations for adopted names and synonyms, and for the former the nomenclatural type is often but not always stated. The remaining information is clearly (but not space-economically) arranged under apposite subheadings, among which "First inventor" is an unusual and innovative feature. Sources of chromosome numbers are cited only when the counts are based on Italian material.

Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms and the first 23 dicot families (not counting casuals) are here treated. Among the latter, for which there is no key as yet, the largest is *Ranunculaceae,* and several are of medium size: *Amaranthaceae, Chenopodiaceae, Fagaceae, Fumariaceae,* and *Papaveraceae*.

Illustration is among the Flora's salient traits. With few exceptions, all species are illustrated by full-page drawings of habit and analytical details, most of them original and due to botanical artists of fame such as Anne Maury, Bernetti, Buonarroti and Mazzanti. When one looks at these drawings, one finds that Arrigoni himself has evidently exerted close control over their botanical accuracy, an aspect that botanists all too often tend to neglect!

The first volume of his Flora has won its author the award of a Medal at the recent OPTIMA Meeting in Pisa. A well deserved prize and excellent choice, not only in recognition of the outstanding qualities of the book but also as an incentive for the speedy production of the many (perhaps a dozen?) volumes yet to come.

W.G.

31. Kiril MICEVSKI – Flora na Republika Makedonija. Vol. **1(3), 1(4), 1(5), 1(6).** – Makedonska Akademija na Naukite i Umetnostite, Skopje, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2005. Pages 397-776, 777-1116, 1117-1432, 1433-1716; 4 tomes, paper. [Sodržina = index to tomes 1(1) (7 pages), 1(2) (11 pages) and 1(3) (13 pages), on loose sheets printed recto only, were distributed with tome 1(4)].

Since 1993 when the second tome of the first volume of this Flora was published (see OPTIMA Newslett. 30: (12). 1996) it has slowly but steadily kept progressing. It has now reached the end of the dialypetalous dicots (and presumably, to judge from the presence of a cumulative generic index, the end of volume 1).

The third tome treats 17 families including *Cruciferae* (48 genera), the fourth, 14 family among which are *Rosaceae* (24 genera), the fifth, 8 families but mainly *Leguminosae* (33 genera), and the sixth 21 families centred on *Umbelliferae* (51 genera). The largest genera in tome 3 are *Viola* (41 species), *Alyssum* (28) and *Rumex* (22); in tome 4, *Euphorbia* (36), *Potentilla* (35), *Alchemilla* (32), *Sedum* (22) and *Saxifraga* (21); in tome 5, *Trifolium* (56), *Astragalus* (30), *Vicia* (27) and *Lathyrus* (25); and in tome 6, *Geranium* (22) and *Linum* (18).

Names of new taxa, validated in Addenda, are mostly of varietal rank (in *Alyssoides, Alyssum, Anthyllis,* and *Medicago;* in tome 6 an *Erodium* variety is proposed invalidly, as the type herbarium is not specified). New species or binominal combinations are found in tome 4 *(Potentilla, Sempervivum),* but contrary to names in other tomes have apparently so far escaped notice by the indexers at Kew (as is also the case of

three new *Potentilla* species published by Micevski in a precursory paper, in 1996).

Sadly Kiril Micevski, the initiator of this important work and author of a large majority of treatments, died in 2002, shortly after tome 5 was published (see item 124, below). Vlado Matevski, who edited and partly authored the text of tome 6, has had to assume Micevski's role. We wish him every success as well as all the support he may need to bring this important new national Flora to completion.

W.G.

32. Jani VANGJELI, Babi RUCI, Alfred MULLAJ, Kolë PAPARISTO & Xhafer QOSJA – Flora e Shipërisë, 4. – Akademia Shkencave e Republikes se Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 2000 (ISBN 99927-654-2-9). 502 pages, 866 figures; paper.

Whereas it is always a pleasure to welcome the first published parts of a new Flora and discuss its promise and prospects, it is infinitely more satisfactory – and definitely less frequent – to announce completion of such a work. "Flora e Shipërisë", Albania's first major national Flora, has made it. Congratulations!

The four volumes have been produced at regular intervals of 4 years. Vol. 1 appeared in 1988, Vols. 2 and 3 in 1992 and 1996, respectively (see OPTIMA Newslett. 32: (7-8). 1997), followed in 2000 by the final volume, belatedly presented here. It covers the last dicot family, *Compositae*, and the whole monocots. Jani Vangjeli, already a member of former editorial teams, has been heading the present one as the principal editor.

The basic features of the Flora, naturally, have remained unchanged. Again, almost every species is illustrated by a line drawing, and again these line drawings, while obviously much reduced in size and suffering from paper of mediocre quality, show a good likeness to the portrayed plants. There are a few exceptions, though, such as the figure of *Ophrys bombyliflora* (p. 457) that is unrecognisable as such and might rather represent a caricature of *O. apifera*.

To gain full use of this work, readers are advised to learn Albanian. As many, including myself, will be hard put to follow this friendly advice, let me venture another suggestion: that an English translation of the Flora be produced. With raising prospects of tourism in Albania, it would certainly sell.

W.G.

33. Loutfy BOULOS – Flora of Egypt. Volume four. Monocotyledons *(Alismataceae-Orchidaceae)*. – Al Hadara, Cairo, 2005 (ISBN 977-5429-41-2). XVI + 617 pages, 129 plates of drawings + 52½ plates of colour photographs, map; hard cover with dust jacket.

One more major national Flora has been completed. Just as for the previous item it consists of four volumes in total, with the monocot treatment in the last. There, however, similarity ends. "Flora of Egypt" is written in English, printed on high-quality paper, generously illustrated with full-page drawings by outstanding botanical artists (most by Margaret Tebbs) and colour photographs of which the majority were taken by Loutfy Boulos himself. Besides, the flora of Egypt has little in common with that of Albania. It is poor in species, especially endemic ones, and includes high rates of ruderal and segetal weeds and of tropical elements. The largest monocot family, *Gramineae*, has been further increased by the inclusion of 44 cultivated species, when normally only wild, indigenous or naturalised taxa are admitted.

As for the third volume (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 72. 2004) the treatments for several sizeable groups have been contributed by other authors. In particular, Tom Cope wrote the text for *Gramineae*; Brian Mathew authored *Alliaceae* and *Iridaceae*, the Snogerups *Juncus*, and Philip Cribbs the single orchid species occurring in the area, *Epipactis veratrifolia*. Their help is certainly

one of the reasons why completion of the project took so little time, just over 7 years since volume one was published in February 1999!

Unfortunately, health problems prevented Boulos from always exerting the necessary editorial control, which had one unfortunate consequence. The *Cyperaceae* treatment (except for *Cyperus* and *Pycreus*) had been confided to the Finnish specialist Ilkka Kukkonen. Later on, David Simpson assumed family editorship and co-authorship for Kukkonen's genera. I had the opportunity to study the latter's original manuscript, dated December 2004, and must confess that I sympathise with his complaint about the way in which it has been treated – without his knowing, as he was not given to read proofs. From what I see, I must conclude that Simpson's co-authorship of *Bolboschoenus, Cladium, Schoenus* and *Scirpoides* is a fraud, as he has made but minor editorial changes to the original text; in *Fimbristylis* he changed one name, from correct *F. turkestanica* to misapplied *F. "sieberiana";* and in the other three genera his contribution consisted in the deletion of a number of taxa that apparently he had not seen from the area of the Flora (but Kukkonen had). As a result, the following nine taxa that occur in Egypt are missing in the published account: *Carex distachya, Eleocharis mitracarpa, E. palustris* subsp. *palustris, E. uniglumis, Schoenoplectus articulatus, S. erectus, S. lupulinus, S. proximus,* and *S. senegalensis.*

Toward the end, "Additions and corrections" are provided to the three previous volumes, which include three supplementary taxa: *Ficus sycomorus, Forsskaolea viridis,* and *Merremia ('Meremmia') dissecta.* Furthermore, following the general family key, a remarkable list of vernacular names (Arab and Berber) for the whole flora has been prepared, first arranged by Latin names and then by (transcribed) common names.

To end on a personal note: I have been privileged with Loutfy's friendship for very many years, even before OPTIMA brought us to closely collaborate, and have enjoyed his unfailing good humour and kindness. Now that he has seen the major achievement of his lifetime completed, I wish him many more happy and still active years.

W.G.

34. Georges TOHMÉ & Henriette TOHMÉ – Illustrated Flora of Lebanon. 2600 wild flowers. – CNRS, National Council for Scientific Research, Beirut, 2007 (ISBN 978-9953-0-1085-4). [6] + 609 pages, numerous colour photographs; hard cover.

An unusual work and impressive achievement! The Tohmés have set out to document photographically all species of their country's flora, and they have almost succeeded: only 118 of the calculated total of 2597 did they fail to find, and of some of these they provide at least pictures of dried plants. All species are accounted for, those missing being set in smaller type but highlighted by a frame. Of many of them (93) the authors suspect that they may no longer exist in Lebanon, and that the 13 of the lot which are Lebanese endemics have gone extinct altogether. By this aspect of their work, the authors have made a crucial contribution to highlighting the urgency and gravity of the problem. The amount of diversity loss among the flora of their country is certainly alarming. Conversely, through their explorations Mr and Mrs Tohmé have made numerous additions to the Lebanese flora. Their 49 new country records have been published separately, in three recent papers in the Lebanese Science Journal.

No keys are present and the descriptions are very brief. Also, the consistently alphabetical arrangement not only of genera and species but also of families, whereby ferns, gymnosperms and monocots are scattered among the dicots, is rather unusual. Yet the attempt at completeness together with the presence of descriptive data qualifies this book as a genuine Flora.

The authors are no professional photographers. Their pictures are not works of art but scientific documents. Not all are sufficiently neat and informative to be identified with certainty, and among those that are, identification is sometimes wrong. It is therefore good to know that the herbarium with the corresponding vouchers, over 3500 databased specimens, has been deposited with the National Council for Scientific Research in Lebanon and is, one assumes, available for consultation.

W.G.

35. Karl Heinz RECHINGER † (ed.) – Flora iranica. Flora des iranischen Hochlandes und der umrahmenden Gebirge. Persien, Afghanistan, Teile von West-Pakistan, Nord-Iraq, Azerbaidjan, Turkmenistan. Lieferung **176** (edited by Wilhelmina RECHINGER), *Rubiaceae*, by Friedrich EHRENDORFER, Eva SCHÖNBECK-TEMESY, Christian PUFF & Wilhelmina RECHINGER. – Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien, 2005 (ISBN 3-902421-08-8). 289 pages, 157 extra plates of photographs; paper.

36. Karl Heinz RECHINGER † (ed.) – Flora iranica. Flora des iranischen Hochlandes und der umrahmenden Gebirge. Persien, Afghanistan, Teile von West-Pakistan, Nord-Iraq, Azerbaidjan, Turkmenistan. Lieferung **177** (edited by Wilhelmina RECHINGER), *Papilionaceae* V., *Astragalus* III., by Eva ZARRE, Friedrich MAASSOUMI & Dieter PODLECH. – Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien, 2008 (ISBN 978-3-902421-31-9). 125 pages, 45 extra plates of photographs and drawings; paper.

After a short but unsatisfactory intermezzo in Salzburg (vol. 175; see OPTIMA Newslett. 36: (19). 2002), "Flora Iranica" has now found its hopefully definitive home base, for the few volumes still to come, at the Natural History Museum in Vienna, where it is being published under the care of OPTIMA Board member Ernst Vitek. A welcome if minor innovation documenting the change is the imprint with the volume number and content that now appears on the formerly blank spine. Needless to say, Wilhelmina Rechinger, as lively and enterprising as ever, firmly maintains the scientific editorship in her experienced hands.

The *Rubiaceae* treatment has had its own colourful history of ups and downs, which might well fill a chapter of its own should a publication history of "Flora Iranica" ever be written. To be sure, nothing of that ordeal transpires from the printed text, but I well remember Karl Heinz Rechinger, many years ago, sighing and worrying, nourishing and again losing the hope to receive at long last a manuscript ready for publication. It is with these worries in mind, I daresay, that the book has been dedicated to his memory.

Whereas authorship of the general family treatment is shared between the four authors, the bulk of the generic treatments is co-authored by Fritz Ehrendorfer and Eva Schönbeck-Temesy; the former alone has written *Cruciata* (4 species), whereas Christian Puff's share is limited to 3 little known, small genera totalling 6 species among them. *Galium* (60 species) is the major genus, followed by the equally complex *Asperula* (28), *Rubia* (18), and *Crucianella* (13). Several new taxa and new combinations are proposed but not separately indexed.

The *Astragalus* treatment has achieved its third round (of four originally planned): a relatively small portion with "only" 83 species of four sections. This is what Podlech himself once had split off as a separate genus *Astracantha*, now sunk into synonymy, and what he here addresses as *Astragalus* subg. *Tragacantha* but without giving that subgenus any kind of formal recognition or characterisation. The reader is left to wonder, or find out for himself, which species he has to look for in which volume. When the whole giant genus has been dealt with, a coherent pattern will hopefully become ap-

parent. For now, we must be content to know that the first part includes the annuals and non-spiny perennials with basifixed hairs, the second and third together the spiny species with that same hair type, which for the fourth apparently leaves the perennials with medifixed hairs. If the initial estimate of 1000 species in total is correct, that fourth part, with c. 450 species, will be largest by far.

As is customary for "Flora iranica", the plates at the end are good photographs of herbarium specimens. In the case of *Astragalus* they are less plentiful that usual, being instead complemented by analytical drawings, mostly analyses of flower parts, by an unnamed artist, perhaps one of the authors?

W.G.

37. Mostafa ASSADI & Ali Asghar MAASSOUMI (ed.) – Flora of Iran. No. **44:** *Aizoaceae*, by F. FADAIE (ISBN 964-473-183-2); No. **51:** *Plumbaginaceae*, by Mostafa ASSADI. – Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, [Tehran], 2003; 2005. 17 + [2] pages, 4, 61 drawings, 4, 99 maps; paper.

38. Mostafa ASSADI, Ali Asghar MAASSOUMI & Z. JAMZAD (ed.) – Flora of Iran. No. 45: *Caesalpiniaceae*, by F. GHAREMANINEJAD (ISBN 964-473-205-7); **No. 46, 47:** *Ixioliriaceae, Amaryllidaceae*, by N. MAZHARI (ISBN 964-473-208-1); **No. 48:** [*Oleaceae*], by R. AZADI (ISBN 964-473-214-6); **No. 49:** *Polygalaceae*, by N. JALILIAN (ISBN 964-473-222-7); **No. 50:** *Onagraceae*, by D. AZIZIAN (ISBN 964-473-225-1); **No. 52:** *Verbenaceae*, by Z**. JAMZAD** (ISBN 964-473-231-6); **No. 53:** *Molluginaceae*, by F**. FADAIE** (ISBN 964-473-232-4); **No. 55:** *Rhamnaceae*, by Kh. SOUFIYAN & M. DINARVAND (ISBN 978-964-473-256-0). **–** Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, [Tehran], 2004 [45-47], 2005 [48-50], 2006 [52-53], 2007 [55]. 26 + [2], 10 + 22 + [2], 36 + [3], 23 + [2], 59 + [3], 14 + [2], 13 + [2], 51 + [2] pages, 7, 1 + 6, 6, 6, 12 (+ 10 photographs), 2, 3, 14 drawings, 5, 1 + 8, 11, 7, 23, 2, 3, 22 maps; paper.

39. Mostafa ASSADI, M. KHATAMSAZ & Ali Asghar MAASSOUMI (ed.) – Flora of Iran. No. **54:** *Umbelliferae*, by V. MOZAFFARIAN (ISBN 978-964-473-252-2). – Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, [Tehran], 2007. 596 pages, 71 drawings, 329 maps; paper.

40. Mostafa ASSADI, Ali Asghar MAASSOUMI & V. MOZAFFARIAN (ed.) – Flora of Iran. No. **56:** *Podophyllaceae*, by H. MAROOFI (ISBN 978-964-473-263-8); No. **57:** *Orchidaceae*, by A. SHAHSAVARI (ISBN 978-964-473-267-6). – Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, [Tehran], 2007; 2008. 25 + [2], 85 + [2] pages, 4, 10 drawings (+ 22 colour photographs), 4, 42 maps; paper.

Since my last review (OPTIMA Newsletter 37: 73. 2004) the impressive speed with which "Flora of Iran" is being produced has been maintained. No less than 13 new fascicles of have meanwhile been published, covering 14 families. This means, in figures: 181 genera with 548 numbered species, or 559 mapped taxa of the wild flora (the total number of maps is 560: that of *Oenothera sinuata* has been printed twice).

The treatment of *Umbelliferae*, incredibly diverse in Iran, is by far largest of this batch: they encompass two thirds of the genera (121) and more than half of the species (322). *Ferula* (32 species), *Pimpinella* (22), *Bunium* (17), *Bupleurum* and *Prangos* (14 each) are the largest genera. They are outnumbered by far, however, by *Acantholimon (Plumbaginaceae)* with its complex patterns of variation. Orchids are less well represented than in the Mediterranean area proper, and present lesser difficulty here. Their colour photographs are a novel feature in the Flora, but their quality is disappointing due to deficient print and poor

photographic skills; some have been unevenly scaled horizontally and vertically and appear unnaturally slender, as in a distorting mirror.

The work is entirely written in Arabic script, presumably in Farsi. The only items that appear in Latin characters are scientific plant names, synonymies and the alternative title page of the front (or in Arabic terms, the rear). The distribution maps and illustrations (excellent original drawings) are nevertheless of immediate interest for the foreign user.

W.G.

41. Karel KUBÁT (ed.) – Klíč ke květeně České Republiky. – Academia, Praha, 2002 (ISBN 80-200-0836-5). 928 pages, 9 plates of analytical drawings and maps, 1401 text figures; hard cover.

The new Key to the flora of the Czech Republic condenses and updates the large body of information comprised in the six volumes of the country's monumental national Flora, "Květena České [socialistické] Republiky" (1988-2000). A handy volume suited for use in the field, which people with large and solid pockets might still consider a pocket Flora, it resorts to the space-saving device of integrating keys and descriptions in a single body of text, so that the final lead brings morphological features not mentioned before plus essential supplementary information: overall size, growth form, chromosome number, habitat, overall and national distribution, etc. Czech common names (scientific rather than vernacular) are consistently provided.

Under Kubát's general editorship a large number of botanists with specialist knowledge have contributed to writing this book. Analytical and schematic drawings, both in the main text and in a glossary of botanical terms, contribute to its usefulness, for identification purposes, to all who are familiar with the Czech language.

W.G.

Popular Books

42. Hanno SCHÄFER – Flora of the Azores. A field guide. – Margraf, Weikersheim, 2002 (ISBN 3-8236-1368-5). VI + 264 pages, numerous colour photographs, map; hard cover.

Among the large number of pictorial plant guides that have been forthcoming with the raise of biologically oriented tourism, this is one of the most commendable, both from a botanist's and amateur's point of view. Among its merits are good coverage of the subject, scientific accuracy and informativity, and high illustration standard.

The introductory part is well written and interesting, even if it fails to fully explain the book's scope, coverage and arrangement. The latter is by families, in systematic order, which to my taste is definitely an advantage. Plant photographs, almost all by the author himself, are plentiful, faithful in colour, invariably in focus, well printed, and not too reduced in size (2-4 per page, white margins being dispensed with). Furthermore, they show plants in a state and under an angle that permit to recognise them confidently. Taxa that are not illustrated are usually mentioned in a note under a related species or genus.

Among the positive botanical aspects are good if concise descriptions (with a correlated tabular glossary, giving English definitions plus German and Portuguese equivalents), and indication of presence on the archipelago's nine islands. There is also a consistent indication of status (whether alien or indigenous), habitat, frequency, and general distribution; or for aliens, area of origin.

The Azores are a group of relatively young, sea-born, totally volcanic islands, uninhabited before their discovery in the Middle Ages. Their indigenous flora must have been relatively poor and ill suited to withstand the competition of invasive aliens. The listed endemic taxa (several of them of infraspecific rank) are 64 in number, most of them rare and one presumably extinct – and

not all of them illustrated. As the visitor will for the most part encounter naturalised aliens, these have been given equal prominence as the endemic or indigenous plants – a policy that, I believe, is perfectly justified in view of the overall scope of the book.

W.G.

43. Peter SCHÖNFELDER & Ingrid SCHÖNFELDER – Die neue Kosmos-Mittelmeerflora. A field guide. – Franckh-Kosmos, Stuttgart, 2008 (ISBN 978-3-440-10742-3). 477 pages, maps, graphs, drawings, > 1600 colour photographs; laminated cover.

More than a quarter century ago there has been a similar book by the same publisher and authors, "Die Kosmos-Mittelmeerflora" (see OPTIMA Newslett. 17-19: 39. 1985). It is a precursor rather than a previous edition, as the present volume differs in several important aspects such as size, contents and layout. The new version constitutes a marked improvement over an already stately work, making full use of modern technology, both in the field of book production and photography, and also building on half a lifetime's increased experience of its authors.

What, then, has changed? First of all, the number of species shown has more than doubled, thanks to a 50 % increase of each page number and photographs per page –the latter, we are told, was possible without quality loss thanks to improved printing techniques. Second, the photographic material – previously 6 × 6 cm slides – has been supplemented with a large number of high-resolution digital images. Third, for each species a small map is provided showing its country-wise Mediterranean distribution (in terms of Med-Checklist areas, except for combining Sicily with Malta, Albania with former Yugoslavia, and adding the Canary Islands); these maps would have been ideally suited, by means of a colour dot, to provide information on the country of origin of each photograph – an information that, regrettably, is lacking. Fourth, a substantial new section showing over 130 species of cultivated plants has been added at the end. Finally (no necessarily an improvement), the familiar sequence of "Flora Europaea" has been abandoned for alphabetical arrangement of families within major groups.

The book, above all, wants to be user-friendly. In this endeavour it uses what appears to be a genuine innovation (at least id did not come across it elsewhere before): a pictorial family index. Inside the front and back cover and cover flap one finds photographs of a characteristic representative of each of the 109 families, numbered consecutively, simultaneously visible at one glance. The family index, leading from picture number to the name and page, is just overleaf, on the back of the flaps. An ingenious and promising invention which, I believe, the users will welcome.

The Mediterranean flora as a whole is estimated to comprise 24,000 species of vascular plants. Those illustrated here correspond to 5 % of the total. This is not much, even taking into account that several hundred supplementary species are briefly characterised in the text under their closest relative. Inevitably, a large proportion of the plants one finds in any one place cannot be matched in this book. In view of this restriction, a judicious choice of species was crucial. Thanks to their experience in the field, all around the Mediterranean and on all major islands, the authors have chosen well.

W.G.

44. Maria ANSALDI & Simonetta MACIONI – 10 itinerari botanici nella Provincia di Massa Carrara. – Ambrosiana Arti Grafiche, La Spezia, 2006. [6] + 115 pages, numerous colour photographs, maps in colour; flexible cover.

The Province of Massa Carrara is known for being geographically diverse and floristically rich. Hikers with botanical interests who want to explore it will greatly

benefit by this booklet when planning their trips. The proposed excursions cover a wide range of habitats, from the seashore through riversides and lakes to the slopes and summits of the Apuan Alps and Apennines.

Topographical maps with drawn-in itineraries provide good guidance (indications of scales and walking distances would have been useful, though). Many of the botanical highlights to be expected are shown in attractive pictures. At the end of each chapter, the most noteworthy species are presented individually, each with a short description and further relevant details.

W.G.

45. Filippina LANZA SANGIULIANO – Disegni botanici delle Madonie. – Orto Botanico, Palermo, 2005. 40 pages, 33 graphite drawings in facsimile; paper.

The author of the 33 charcoal drawings here reproduced – simultaneously shown in an exhibit at Palermo Botanic Garden in December 2005 – is the daughter of Domenico Lanza, lawyer, professor of botany, and the Garden's director for three years (1921-1923). She came to the pictorial arts in her mature age, and indeed, she did most of the artwork here presented while in her seventies. The 25 species she has portrayed are common and characteristic plants of the Madonie Mountains, both wild and cultivated. She availed herself of artistic licence in her work, looking at the essence not at botanical detail, and never mind if oleander leaves, in reality, are verticillate.

Jointly with several other, similar publications, the present exhibition guide bears witness to the remarkable and remarkably manifold cultural and scientific activities that the Palermo Botanic garden promotes and develops under the impulsion of its Director, Franco Raimondo.

W.G.

46. Hans Christian WEBER & Bernd KENDZIOR – Flora of the Maltese Islands. A field guide. – Margraf, Weikersheim, 2006 (ISBN 3-8236-1478-9). IV + 383 pages, 635 colour photographs; hard cover.

A wildflower book featuring a high proportion of the species of the area covered is always welcome. In the present case coverage is about two thirds (530 of about 800 indigenous species). This means that the authors have had to take care of the many "unpalatable", unobtrusive plants: grasses, sedges and the like, which they did with considerable photographic skill. Extreme close-ups are, in fact, their special field of excellence, and commendably, many of the species are represented twice at different scales. Some of the rare and little known endemic species are not easy to portray, an example being the submerged aquatic *Zannichellia melitensis* – in the photograph of which the authors may take justified pride.

All told, the quality of the pictures and print is good average, and the accompanying texts are well written and informative. The authors' concern for conservation of natural habitats and plant diversity is commendable. Their adopting a phylogenetic family sequence, underpinned with a cladogram and recognising orders and subclasses, is a bit overstrung for a book of this kind. On the negative side, the nomenclature is sometimes outdated, some names are incorrectly spelled, and a few obvious misidentifications do occur, e.g. in *Carex*. The table with English; German and Maltese equivalents of scientific plant names is a particularly valuable addition.

W.G.

47. Joe SULTANA & Victor FALZON (ed.) – Wildlife of the Maltese Islands. – Birdlife Malta and Nature Trust, Malta, 1996, reprinted 2002 (ISBN 99909-66-02-1). 336 pages, illustrations in colour and black-and-white; laminated cover.

"Flora u fawna ta' Malta", published in 1995, was translated into English in the following year. In view of its great success, the book has now been reprinted. It is an excellent example of popular scientific writing to promote the awareness of natural diversity, in its beauty and value, among the general public. For nature lovers visiting the Maltese Islands it can be warmly recommended.

Three parts of very unequal size deal, respectively, with the physical and biological environment, the flora, and the fauna. One of the merits of the book is that it gives consideration to all groups of macroscopic organisms. Naturally, animals far outweigh plants, to which the present review is necessarily restricted; but be assured that Maltese insects, seashells, fish and crabs have their own beauty and interest.

The botanical text is entirely by Edwin Lanfranco, the illustrations by Victor Falzon. The latter consist of watercolours grouped together in plates, 14 in all, plus occasional drawings in the text. The presented species are all illustrated: 22 algae, 24 fungi (three of them lichen-forming) and 267 vascular plants. Selecting which species to include and which to leave out most have been a difficult task, successfully mastered. One finds both the most common and representative species of the islands' flora, including naturalised aliens, and the rare endemics which are Malta's pride. The endemic *Palaeocyanus crassifolius* is the national flower. Once forming one of three endemic genera, of which only chenopodiaceous *Cremnophyton* remains, it has recently been merged with *Cheirolophus.*

W.G.

48. Edwin LANFRANCO & Guido LANFRANCO – Il-flora Maltija. *[Kullana Kulturali*, **47.**] – Indipendenza, Malta, 2003 (ISBN 99932-41-38-5). V + 166 pages, 42 halftone illustrations, 192 colour photographs on 32 extra plates; hard cover.

In many respects the concept of this book resembles that of the previous item, but restricted to botany. Here again, a selection of representative species was made, mostly the same, and all those which are presented in full are illustrated. Illustration, however, is of a different kind, consisting partly of halftones by Guido Lanfranco and partly, for seed-plants only, of colour photographs by Edwin.

Cryptogams are not neglected. Macroalgae are particularly well represented, with 27 mostly marine species; furthermore, there are 9 higher fungi, 5 lichens, 5 bryophytes and 3 pteridophytes. Spermatophytes naturally predominate, with 192 fully treated species, among them 12 of the 18 island endemics. Often, additional taxa are mentioned in the text.

Perhaps the plan already exists – but would this book not be a prime candidate for translation into English?

W.G.

49. Basilikê BLAMÊ, Stamatês ZOGKARÊS & Panagiôtês D. DÊMOPOULOS – Belanidodasos Xêromerou Aitoloakarnania. Oikotouristikos odêgos. [The oak woodland of Xeromero, Aetoloakarnania – western Greece]. – Panepistêmio Iôanninôn, Ioannina, 2003 (ISBN 960-233-142-9). 71 pages, many illustrations, mostly in colour (photographs, drawings, maps), 5 tables; paper.

Xeromeros, which means dry place, is a large area situated between the river Aheloos and the Ambracian Gulf. This booklet, which calls itself an ecotouristic guide, deals with its southern portion, roughly confined within the triangle formed by Astakos, Etolikó and the Ozeros Lake: A country of wooded hills, where Greece's largest forests of Valona oak (*Quercus ithaburensis* subsp. *macrolepis*, Greek velanidia) grow.

This is a brilliantly illustrated nature guide, centred on the Valona oak woods but by no means confined to them. Topics cov-

ered include human culture and history, landscape and biota, fauna and flora alike. At the end one finds lists of mammals, amphibians, reptilians, birds, as well as a preliminary, obviously incomplete inventory of flowering plants with 256 species, partly unidentified.

The text is written competently and lovingly, and the illustrations, for the most part, are just gorgeous. Landscapes alternate with portraits of individual animals and plants, among the latter some rare or local taxa such as *Ophrys helenae*, *O. reinholdii* subsp. *reinholdii* (as *Ophrys* sp., p. 42), and *Silene ungeri* (as *Silene* sp., p. 37). Consultation of a botanical expert might have added precision in the latter cases. For readers who are unfamiliar with Greek, there is an extensive English summary on the cover flaps.

W.G.

50. Athêna OIKONOMOU-AMILLÊ (ed.) – O biokosmos tou Umêttou. Drastêriotêtes tês ekthesês 'Attiko Topio & Periballon'. – Ethniko & Kapodistriako Panepistêmio Athenôn, Botaniko Mouseio, Athêna, 2007 (ISBN 978-960-6608-79-7). 279 pages, numerous colour photographs; flexible cover.

This booklet was written for Greek students, as a corollary to the exhibition on Attica's landscape and environment of the Botanical Museum of Athens University (ATHU) well known for housing the Orphanides Herbarium. It consists of four distinct parts, each by a different author: ecosystems, plants, animals, and fungi. The botanical chapters were written by Iôannês Mpazos (Bazós) for plants and Iôannês Dêmêtriadês (Dimitriádis) for fungi.

Mount Hymettus, one of Athens' home mountains, is famous in classical history and modern botany alike. Many species were first collected here, by 19th century botanists such as Spruner, Heldreich, and even Boissier, and the epithet *hymettius* has been given to at least five different plant species, including *Helianthemum hymettium* and *Lomelosia hymettia*, here presented, but also *Allium hymettium* and *Viola hymettia*, which did not meet the criteria for inclusion.

Plants belonging to either of two categories were selected for presentation, mostly on one page combining colour photographs with descriptive and explanatory text: first 55 Greek endemics, then species protected either by Greek law or under the CITES convention. The latter include all orchids, so that 16 species of *Ophrys* and 13 of *Orchis* are shown along with 14 others of various genera. The photographs are by several different persons, some downloaded from the Internet, a few taken from herbarium specimens or showing a related species rather than the one described, and not all are well focused.

For fungi, the 26 portraits (mostly colour photographs) and descriptions of individual species are preceded by a general introduction to the higher fungi. Understandably, only fruiting bodies of macromycetes are shown. This chapter is particularly valuable, as published images of Greek fungi are scant.

W.G.

51. John FIELDING & Nicholas TURLAND – Flowers of Crete. – Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, 2005, reprinted with corrections 2008 (ISBN 978-1-84246-079-5). XX + 650 pages, numerous colour photographs, maps; hard cover with dust jacket.

"A celebration of the flora of Crete, seen through the eyes of a specialist plant photographer ... and a botanist": I can find no better words to characterise this impressive, large and heavy volume than those used by the editor, Brian Mathew, in his preface. As I happen to share the authors' love for that wonderful Greek island, Crete, I can fully understand their motives for producing this book, can sense the amount of knowledge and passion that they instilled in

it, and measure the pains and efforts – but also the joy – of their work in the field.

I did not bother to count, but according to Mathew almost three quarters of the species of Crete's native flora are accounted for, and more than half are shown in one or more of the photographs. These are impressive rates, and while the book is still way off being a Flora in the proper sense, it is certainly the fullest existing photographic documentation of Crete's botanical diversity. That it is also a work of science and not of mere delight is underscored by the fact that all photographs (mostly Fielding's, but a few by Turland) bear date and exact location. Moreover, herbarium specimens were prepared whenever identification was critical, and are being deposited as vouchers at the Natural History Museum in London. I cannot too strongly commend such practice, which benefits the book as a whole.

Crete's physical environment and geological history are sketched only briefly in the general chapters, but the vegetation is well described in all its variety and uniqueness. The main body of the book is devoted to the illustrated account of the plants, family by family (alphabetically arranged) and genus by genus, with mention of species. This is not a decriptive botanical text, nor is it formally structured, but a pleasantly written and informative talk by one who knows the plans and expects you to know them as well. It is better suited to reminisce on a winter night the botanical acquaintances you made in a better season than to help identify your harvest (its sheer weight prevents its misuse as a field guide). From the reader's point of view, cross-references between text and images would have been useful, especially as the captions often include relevant complementary information. The index may help, but then, to find a page by number is tedious: too often the numbers are missing, yielding their place to expanded pictures.

Among additional features an appendix of cultivated plants is of note, with no text but copious captions to explain the photographs. Nick Turland has prepared a new list of Cretan endemic species (159) and subspecies (+ 40), which when compared to previous such lists shows how fast our notions are changing, with new species described by the handful in fashionable genera like *Limonium* and *Ophrys*, and conversely, many good old endemics being either sunk in synonymy or discovered outside of Crete. Change, for sure, will go on; for one, *Androcymbium rechingeri* is definitely not endemic as listed here, but is a NE African species extending to Crete.

W.G.

52. Gerhard PILS – Flowers of Turkey. A photo Guide. – Privately published, [Buchscheiden, Austria], 2006. (40) pages + 408 plates with c. 4200 colour photographs, 2 graphs, 2 maps; hard cover.

To assemble in a single volume pictures of nearly half the species of the flora of Turkey, the botanically most diverse Mediterranean country, is an outstanding achievement. Gerhard Pils, teacher at the Austrian college in Istanbul during five years (1999-2004), has made it possible, and the plans he had were even more ambitious, granting time. Forced to quit his job in mid-2004 and to leave Turkey, he has no kind feelings left for either Turkish or Austrian authorities. This is understandable, but whether it was wise to express it so drastically in his preface is another question. It will certainly do the acceptance of his work in Anatolia no good.

With 4153 species of vascular plants featured (the author's own count), this is essentially a picture book. Text is cut down to a bare minimum, yet indicating growth form, overall size, flowering period, habitat, altitudinal range and rough Turkish distribution. What little synonymy is given is relegated to the index, and authorship of names is omitted (both can be looked up in "Flora of Turkey", just as identification keys and descriptive matter). Our judgement of the book must therefore depend on the quality of the

photographs which – perhaps surprisingly for a non-professional – is excellent even by modern high standards. The same applies to print. Although with 9 to 12 species shown per page (the main picture often with an inset showing additional detail) the photographs are not large, about 6.6 × 3-4 cm, they all are neat, well contrasted and with the "look" that permits experts to recognise and match the plants.

The last-named quality also reveals one shortcoming: not all identifications are correct. The author may not have had the time and opportunity to ask specialists to check his identifications (which in some cases, acknowledged in the preface, he did), and specialists when asked usually request herbarium vouchers, which he could not prepare without breaking the Turkish law. Even so, it takes no special knowledge, nor dry specimens, to recognise, e.g., his *"Medicago truncatula"* as *M. praecox* and *"Lotus peregrinus"* as *L. angustissimus.* Such lapses, however, are rather exceptional (some additional ones are posted on Pils's homepage, quoted below). An indexing mishap makes that starting with *Padus avium* (top of page 290 but indexed 289) one must add one unit to all cited pages.

These are all trivia. The book as a whole is unique in its kind, most valuable for all interested in the E Mediterranean flora. The problem for customers, and likely also for Gerhard Pils himself, is the difficulty to get hold of it. If asking your book-dealer does not help, try and contact the publisher directly (www.geocities.com/gerhardpils).

W.G.

53. Galip AKAYDIN – Doğal bitkilerimiz. – Hacettepe Üniversitesi, [Ankara], 2003 (ISBN 975-491-148-7). [6] + 65 pages, 120 colour photographs; laminated cover.

The booklet presents a selection of 120 indigenous plants of Turkey, with artless colour photographs and Turkish texts describing their habit and indicating their habitat, altitudinal range and flowering period. For some of them I venture to offer improved identifications: *"Brassica elongata"* is *Eruca vesicaria* subsp. *sativa*, *"Matthiola longipetala"* is probably *M. sinuata*, *"Gagea peduncularis"* might rather be *G. bohemica.* For *"Viburnum orientale"*, certainly not a member of that family, I can offer no guess except that it looks vaguely like a *Jasione*.

W.G.

54. Eleonora GABRIELIAN & Ori FRAGMAN-SAPIR – Flowers of the Transcaucasus and adjacent areas. – Gantner, Ruggell FL, 2008 (ISBN 978-3-906166-34-6). 416 pages, map and numerous photographs in colour; hard cover with dust jacket.

Perhaps the best way of advertising the beauty and interest of the countries of Transcaucasia, notably Armenia, is through their natural riches, gorgeous nature, varied and beautiful wildlife and plant world. And the best way to know the latter (bar visiting) is now in our hands in form of Nora Gabrielian and Ori Fragman's new flower book. It presents us with first-class colour photographs of landscapes, vegetation and, most importantly, 623 species of the wild flora, arranged in absolute alphabetical order by families and species. (This arrangement presents some inconvenience when plants are wrongly placed, as *Pteridium* in *Pteridaceae* rather than *Dennstaedtiaceae* – but then, we have the index to help.) First the vegetation types then the individual species are competently if briefly charcterised, and for the latter, flowering period, habitat and distribution are mentioned.

This would be, not only a splendid picture book but a genuine scientific work, except for some serious shortcomings. My least worry are some spelling *(ausheri, Dicthamnus)* and gender errors in scientific names (*Asyneuma amplexicaulis, Hyoscyamus reticulata* [wrongly reported for Crete],

etc.). The placing of *Crupina vulgaris* in *Cousinia* (only in the caption) is an amusing detail. The absence of locality information for the pictures is a more serious deficit. When so vast a territory is concerned, encompassing the three independent republics Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaidjan plus adjacent parts of Russia, like to know where the portrayed plants were growing. Worse, to my mind, is the lack of authorship credit for individual photographs. Apart from the authors of the book no less than 16 people are stated to have contributed pictures, but except for the two photographs on the dust jacket one cannot guess who did what. This infringes intellectual property rights, and I wonder how my old friend Sven Koeltz, an experienced publisher, could let it pass.

Sorry if I got carried away. The book is so valuable that it is maddening to see how an easy opportunity has been missed to make it a masterpiece. Even so it will be given a place of honour on my bookshelf, and doubtless on the shelves of many other botanists and plant lovers.

W.G.

55. Ernst VITEK, Alexander C. MRKVICKA, Wolfgang ADLER, Ernst HORAK, W. FLECK & B. HASLEHNER – Wiens Pflanzenwelt. – Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien, 2004 (ISBN 3-902421-04-5). 367 pages + erratum slip, numerous colour photographs, 3 maps; paper with transparent plastic sheath.

56. Ernst VITEK, Alexander C. MRKVICKA, Ernst HORAK, Irene DROZDOWSKI, Wolfgang ADLER & B. WIMMER – Die Pflanzenwelt der österreichischen Alpen. – Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien, 2007 (ISBN 978-3-902421-21-0). 351 pages, numerous colour photographs; paper with transparent plastic sheath.

These two botanical field guides I shall present jointly. Neither is particularly Mediterranean, but both are good examples that can be applied in a Mediterranean context. Two handy and not too heavy pocket books, they can withstand some moisture thanks to their plastic cover sheath, are flexible enough to be squeezed into any knapsack, and suited for quick and easy consultation during a short break or on a bus ride.

Neither aspires to completeness. Not the one on the Vienna area with 638 out of an astonishing total of 2200 wild vascular plant species, and much less the other with a corresponding ratio of 604 (not counting *Fontinalis*, the single moss) to > 4500. A judicious choice of species, as was made here, is therefore essential. The books' proper use, in a scientific sense, is as a complement to a complete flora such as, for Austria, Fischer & al.'s "Exkursionsflora" (2nd edition, 2005).

Introductory matter is short and to the point, centred on vegetation. In the main body, seed plants are arranged not systematically but by flower colour, visualised by a coloured strip heading the text pages, always placed on the left and facing the pictures. It requires some training to find one's way, but less than for using a "botanical" Flora. The task is not made easier by a colour fault, many pictures leaning to red, especially in the blues (it seem all but impossible for a printer to achieve a pure gentian blue). Apart from this minor default, however, the photographs are as close to perfection as one might wish.

The explanatory texts, preceded first by the German then the Latin name of the plant, use a standard sequence of basic data (life form, size, flower colour, flowering period) followed by a selection of characteristic traits plus indication of frequency and habitat. Distribution in Austria, by states, is visualized by small maps. Sequential reference numbers link texts and pictures (through a mishap, number 599 in the second book has been attributed twice, and for the few following species the numbers of text and corresponding illustration differ by one unit).

W.G.

Botanical Calendars and Postcards

57. Anonymous – Saperi e sapori del Parco delle Madonie. – Arianna, Geraci Siculo, & Parco delle Madonie, Petralia Sottana, [2004 for] 2005. 17 sheets, illustrated in colour; ring binding.

"Knowledge and tastes of the Madonie Nature Park" is a collaborative project aiming to collect and record local traditions in the villages surrounding and supporting the Park. The present table calendar (in postcard format, double-faced with identical sides) bears images of six plants used as vegetables, reproduced from 19th century colour plates of unknown source: chicory, fennel, beet, Scotch thistle *(Onopordum illyricum)*, leek and borage. Monthly, plant presentations (all texts by botanists of Palermo University) alternate with cooking recipes of traditional dishes, by local cooks and innkeepers. All revolves around the fashionable term and concept "ecogastronomy" – but you might be hard put to come up with an edible result when trying to apply the rather sketchy recipes by using what you find on your local market.

W.G.

58. Boula Iôan. LAMPROPOULOU – Anthê tou dêmou Filiatrôn kai tês euruterês periohês tês Trifulias. – Anko Press, s.l., [2006 for] 2007. 16 recto printed sheets, colour photographs; ring binding.

Filiatrá is a village in Messenia, north of Pilos on the coast of SW Peloponnesus. Last year it took the initiative to publish a first calendar of its own and to devote it to wildflowers. The translated title reads: "Flowers of the municipality of Filiatrá and of the wider area of Trifilía". Professor Voula Lambropoulou signs as text author and photographer. As her name is unknown in botany I looked it up on the Web and found, much to my surprise, that she is a specialist of gender study, professor of philosophy at Athens University.

The photographs are of excellent quality and exquisite beauty, but not all represent wildflowers, several are of garden ornamentals. The botanical contents of the texts are of marginal interest, whereas there are, in some instances, instructive data pertaining to mythology and classical history. *Veronica glauca* features as *"Myosotis sylvatica"*, a slip to be condoned in view of the author's professional background.

W.G.

Floristic Inventories and Checklists

59. Christian STIERSTORFER & Markus VON GAISBERG – Annotated checklist and distribution of the vascular plants of El Hierro, Canary Islands, Spain. [*Englera* (ISSN 0170-4818), **27.**] – Botanischer Garten & Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Berlin, 2006 (ISBN 978-3-921800-59-1). 221 pages, photographic frontispiece, maps; paper.

The two authors have explored the botany of El Hierro, the westernmost Canary Island, for several years, starting in 1997. The study of the vegetation provided the subject of their doctoral theses, dealing with the lower areas (Gaisberg; see below) and the forest belt (Stierstorfer), both published in 2005 in the series "Dissertationes Botanicae". The floristic and chorological results of their studies are set out in the present book.

Two full inventories of the flora of El Hierro exist, both fairly recent, but nevertheless there is good justification for having published this new one. Apart from a number of new taxa records, the authors contribute original information on the naturalisation status of many species, and point at numerous others that were recorded in error (or, as they carefully write, the presence of which they were unable to confirm). Often they add critical or explanatory notes, and cite refer-

ences to a wide spectrum of literature. Also, and this is an entirely new feature, they provide highly resolved grid distribution maps, with a one kilometre square mesh size, for about 550 taxa (including a few cultivated ones). Had they added some numerical data by way of a discussion, their text would not be as frightfully dry as it looks now.

W.G.

60. Mohamed FENNANE & Mohamed IBN TATTOU – Flore vasculaire du Maroc. Inventaire et chorologie. Volume **1,** *Pteridophyta, Gymnospermae, Angiospermae* (p.p.). [*Trav. Inst. Sci., Sér. Bot.* (ISSN 1114-1174), **37.**] – Institut Scientifique, Université Mohamed V, Agdal, Rabat, 2005 (ISBN 9954-8347-2-9). 483 pages, map; laminated cover.

This new inventory of the Moroccan flora is the badly needed successor of Jahandiez & Maire's "Catalogue de la flore du Maroc", also providing an update to the same authors' earlier inventory, limited to the rare, threatened and endemic taxa and published in 1998 (see OPTIMA Newslett. 34: (20). 1999). It is planned in two volumes, the second, yet to come, to include all monocots and the single dicot family *Compositae*.

The treatment is synthetic and clearly structured. Arrangement of taxa, within pteridophytes, gymnosperms and dicots, is alphabetical. The main items for each taxon (species and subspecies, only exceptionally varieties) are synonymy (with full citations), known Moroccan distribution (by 11 main geographically defined unit areas and 39 subunits), and overall distribution. Endemics are flagged, as are additions to the 1998 publication. Recent records are referenced to their published source, and for those unpublished, the herbarium base is indicated.

This is a highly condensed, well structured work that conforms to modern academic standards. The single major uncertainty it condones is the territorial limit between Morocco and Algeria, obviously still in dispute, as the frontier is not indicated on the map and several of the geographical units transgress the internationally agreed borderline. We wait impatiently for the second, concluding volume.

W.G.

61. Benito VALDÉS, V. GIRÓN, E. SÁNCHEZ GULLÓN & I. CARMONA – Catálogo florístico del espacio natural de Doñana (SO de España). Plantas vasculares. [Separately printed from *Lagascalia* (ISSN 0210-7708), 27]. – Sevilla, 2007. Pages [2] + 73-362, map; flexible cover.

This work has been published with a nice special cover but with the original pagination of the journal, so technically it is a reprint but for practical purposes, a book. It presents the floristic inventory of the Natural Space of Doñana, covering a total area of about 230,000 ha and including at its core the famous National Park, declared UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1980, that today by itself encompasses well over 50,000 ha. In view of the area's limited size its vascular flora is surprisingly rich, amounting to 1386 taxa of species and subspecies rank.

The sequence of taxa, for once, is not alphabetical but follows Valdés & al.'s well known "Flora de Andalucía occidental" of 1987 (see OPTIMA Newslett. 20-24: (23). 1988), which also in other respects serves as the base of reference. Synonymy is limited to names used in local source works, and indications of distribution and habitat are rather Spartan (by just three geographical subunits). Great pains have been taken to cite, for each taxon, those post-1987 references in which relevant localities are mentioned. In this respect, and also in the extremely strict editorial care, resulting in the virtual absence of inconsistencies and scarcity of printing errors, the work stands out among the likes of it.

A special mention must be made of the endeavour to adopt the most recent classifi-

cation and nomenclature. To take the example of *Compositae,* it is pleasing to see that the authors have faithfully followed the Euro+Med treatment available on-line – but a bit frustrating to find that no credit whatever is given to that source.

W.G.

62. José Vicente FERRÁNDEZ PALACIO – Catálogo florístico de la comarca del Cinca Medio (Provincia de Huesca). [*Tolous* (ISSN 1130-4596), **13.**]. – Centro de Estudios de Monzón y Cinca Medio, Monzón (Huesca), 2004 (ISBN 84-95167-14-X). Pages [3]-469, figures, 2 graphs, map, 33 colour photographs on 7 extra plates; flexible cover.

Ever heard of the Cinca Medio? Nor did I before I saw this book. It is a district of Huesca Province, situated in the E part of Aragón, where the Ebro depression starts grading into the pre-Pyrenees, extending on either side of the middle course of the river Cinca from which it takes its name. The most important of its nine constituent municipalities is Monzón, where José Vicente Ferrández teaches at the local school for adults – and botanises. Judging from the paucity of literature records and others' herbarium specimens, he is about the only person to have taken a serious interest in the flora of the area.

With 1049 recorded species of higher plants – 11 of them first found in 2004 and included in Addenda – the flora of Cinca Medio is not exactly poor, particularly when one considers the absence of mountains (the district reaches 826 m at its highest point). By way of this book, it may all of a sudden be considered among the better known local floras of the Iberian Peninsula. The catalogue is unusually detailed. In includes localities, based on the scant literature data but mostly the author's field notes and specimens, the latter kept in his personal herbarium, and in many cases notes, based on first-hand knowledge, on habitat, features, variability, uses, local vernacular designations, etc.

There are numerous drawings to illustrate the book, all but four by the author, as well as his colour photographs of plants and their habitats. They document his additional skills as a botanical artist and nature photographer.

W.G.

63. Pere FRAGA I ARGUIMBAU, Cristòfol MASCARÓ SINTES, David CARRERAS MARTÍ, Òscar GARCIA FEBRERO, Xec PALLICER ALLÈS, Martí PONS GOMILA, Magda SEOANE BARBER & Miquel TRUYOL OLIVES – Catàleg de la flora vascular de Menorca. [*Col·lecció Recerca,* 9.] – Institut Menorquí d'Estudis, Menorca, 2004 (ISBN 84-95718-29-4). 367 pages, 11 + 3 figures (maps and graphs), 42 tables; paper.

Minorca is the second among the Balearic Islands, both in area size and number of botanical taxa. In terms of relative floristic richness, however, it comes first – which may be due in part, but not totally, to the investigating zeal of the present author team. During the last 15 or so years, these eight Minorcan enthusiasts, led by Pere Fraga, probably have added more species to the known flora of the island than did all other botanists taken together in one century. No less than 75 of the listed taxa (species and subspecies) had not been recorded from Minorca before.

The core of this list, meaning the enumeration proper, is unexciting: highly condensed, semi-tabular data, among which Minorcan vernacular names, often resulting from the authors' own field experience, deserve special mention. The book acquires life and originality thanks to the introductory chapters and appendices. The former include an account of the history of the island's botanical exploration, a comparative numerical analysis of botanical diversity of W Mediterranean islands, an assessment of endemism,

with a list of island endemics, statistical digests of biogeographical elements of the native and alien flora, as well as a synopsis of species protected by law. Three of the appendices concern the alien flora, indicating for each species the status, abundance, year of first appearance, way of introduction, country of origin, etc., and a full documentation of findings for those that are first 3 for species previously reported from Minorca but without concrete locality. Also appended are lists of species to be excluded, or of which the presence is unconfirmed. A bibliography of 26 pages testifies to the thoroughness with which this book was written.

I do like island inventories (I have published a few myself). The present one, with its many attractive features, I shall adopt as one of my favourites. It provides a benchmark for similar works yet to come.

W.G.

64. Fabio CONTI, Giovanna ABBATE, Alessandro ALESSANDRINI & Carlo BLASI (ed.) – An annotated checklist of the Italian vascular flora. – Palombi, Roma, 2005 (ISBN 88-7621-458-5). 420 pages, 1 loose sheet of errata & addenda, tables; hard cover.

Writing a critical checklist for the whole flora of Italy, including the islands, is a major challenge. Integrating in it distribution data in tabular form, which mention for every taxon the occurrence and status in each of Italy's 20 administrative regions, is a breathtaking enterprise. The fact alone that it has been brought to a happy conclusion must dispose the critic to leniency toward shortcomings of detail. Let me try and be lenient.

To assess the task by looking at the outcome: 6711 species plus several taxa at additional ranks (aggregate, subspecies) had to be dealt with, 7634 "units" in all (the number of different taxa cannot be inferred, as some duplication is involved). If we count with an average presence in 10 regions (probably an overestimate), this signifies over 70000 unit records. The literature to be scanned was enormous. To cope with their task the editorial team, four plus two assistants, could dispose of the cooperation 32 regional advisers, 15 taxonomic advisers and a large number of other contributors. [Also, 41 "authors" are mentioned; this group is coextensive with the editorial team plus the regional and some taxonomic advisers.] Such a large network of expertise was doubtless necessary to ensure the good quality of the result – but to think of it as a help to the editors would be cynical. In my experience, it results in a major additional demand on their time and energy, while helping them avoid, in many cases, to make a fool of themselves.

As I already inferred, the result is impressive. The core of the book, just 141 pages, is a concentrate of valuable information in easy-to-use format. It may be (indeed, has proved to be) full of inaccuracies of detail, and will therefore elicit contradiction and stimulate critical research, as is indeed desirable; but primarily it has the merit to exist and be available for use.

The remaining bulk is corollary information, necessary for back-checking and explaining the information given in the main part. The index, which does not include the accepted names (they are already alphabetical) but refers synonyms to them, is more than half as long as the core list. There are 23 pages with almost 1000 explanatory notes, grouped together as endnotes. In deference to the needs of local administrations, separate lists of exclusive, endemic, legally protected and alien species are provided for each of the 20 regions. And then, the inevitable additions and corrections begin: first on the two final pages of the book itself, then on a loose sheet, the following year (2006) in the local journal "Natura vicentina", and again (2007) in the Informatore botanico italiano" – already well over 100 printed pages, and no end is in sight.

Many of the errors could presumably have been avoided by allowing more time

for the final editing and proofreading. But then, very likely the greater part of the improvement was stimulated by the publication of the book. So for my part I would like to absolve the editors from the charge of precipitation, and rather encourage them to prepare a new, revised edition pretty soon.

So far goes the promised leniency. There is one aspect of the book, however, that I must criticise: nomenclature. In the introduction, a considerable number of new names, including newly described species and even a new genus, are proposed. (In fact, and rather unnecessarily, they all are proposed twice.) Some of them are definitely needed, others are a matter of opinion and will have to stand the test of time; but a few are badly flawed. I hope that no one in his good senses is going to adopt the awful *"Peucedanum carvifolium-chabraei"*, an illegitimate creation based on a non-existent purported basionym; Sixalix atropurpurea subsp. *grandiflora* is based on a name without definite rank and, while validly published, is unnecessary; *Crepis bivonana*, apart from being wrongly spelled, cannot be based on its alleged basionym, which is illegitimate, although it can be used as a new name dating from 2005; *Filago tyrrhenica* is not new as it had been validly published already in 1963; and there may be more of the sort.

W.G.

65. Thomas WILHALM, Harald NIKLFELD & Walter GUTERMANN – Katalog der Gefäßpflanzen Südtirols. [*Veröff. Naturmus. Südtirol*, **3.**] – Folio, Wien & Bolzano, 2006 (ISBN 978-3-85256-325-1). 215 pages, tables, 2 maps, 3 black-and-white photographs; hard cover.

If any checklist deserves the attribute critical, the present one does. It deals with the flora of what is presently the Bolzano Province but is still widely known by its traditional designation South Tyrol, used in the title. The last previous floristic inventory of South Tyrol was included in Dalla Torre & Sarnthein's "Flora von Tirol", completed in 1913, almost a century ago. Its update and revision, here presented, was thus overdue.

Exactly 3000 named taxa (species and subspecies) are listed. This figure includes 190 taxa excluded for various reasons, 251 that are no longer present (100 native but extinct, 151 erstwhile casuals), 410 alien and 2169 native taxa. As family names and circumscriptions are currently quite unstable, the authors have – reasonably I believe – opted for a single alphabetic order for all genera and species, with appropriate cross-references when different generic concepts are in use. Readers would, however, fare better if the generic names that appear as running titles in the margin did correspond to the taxon that appears on the first line, rather than to the first (left) or last (right) generic headline on the page.

The checklist results from cooperation between the South Tyrol Nature Museum in Bolzano and the Department of Biogeography, Institute of Botany, of Vienna University. In incorporates data from the floristic mapping project for the area, kept in a database at the said Museum. By consequence the list is very much up to date, also with respect to status assessment of alien species. Nomenclatural accuracy is vouched for by the participation of Walter Gutermann as member of the author team.

W.G.

66. Girolamo GIARDINA, Francesco Maria RAIMONDO & Vivienne SPADARO – A catalogue of plants growing in Sicily. [*Bocconea* (ISSN 1120-4060), **20.**] – Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum, Palermo, 2007 (ISBN 978-88-7915-022-4). 582 pages; paper.

At Girolamo Giardina's premature death, in 2006, the bulky manuscript of this inventory of the Sicilian flora was still a torso. The thankless task of completing and editing the text, so as to make it suited for publication, was left to his co-authors, Franco Raimondo and Vivienne Spadaro.

The book lists 3201 taxa found in the wild state in Sicily and on its surrounding islets, not counting those doubtfully present, or extinct, or only cultivated. In case of doubt the authors opt for splitting rather than lumping, and they do not neglect named varieties, exceptionally even formae, their basic philosophy being that no potentially useful information should be lost. Even so, their approach can be called reasonably synthetic when compared to that of Lojacono, the author of the most recent Flora of Sicily, who recognised no less than 4227 Sicilian taxa. As that too often neglected five-volume Flora is now completely out of date, it is little wonder that almost 50 new names and combinations were now needed. They include three newly described infraspecific taxa, in *Erica, Fraxinus,* and *Papaver*.

This Catalogue has been written with the purpose of serving those who explore and safeguard the botanical diversity of Sicily. Part of that service consists in pointing at unsolved problems, whetting the observer's scepticism, eliciting the user's contradiction and critical response. In this, I believe, it will succeed.

W.G.

67. Luigi MOSSA, Riccardo GUARINO & M. Caterina FOGU – La componente terofitica della flora della Sardegna. Forme di crescita, ecologia, corologia e sinsistematica. [*Rendiconti Seminario Fac. Sci. Univ. Cagliari* (ISSN 0370-727X), **73,** Suppl. **2.**] – Seminario della Facoltà di Scienze, Università degli Studi, Cagliari, 2003 (ISBN 964-473-195-6). [4] + 209 pages, map, 4 graphs (2 in colour), 2 tables; paper.

The authors provide a commented inventory of "annual" taxa (985, corresponding to 943 different species) found or reported to be present in Sardinia. The list is based on a compilation from Italian national Floras, recent floristic and phytosociological literature, and the authors' own field work. It includes indications, partly original and partly second-hand, on features such as growth habit, average size, pollination and dispersal type, flower colour, flowering period, and estimated abundance. Of the listed taxa, 89 had not been given as present in Pignatti's Flora of 1982, and conversely, 81 are here considered as doubtfully present on the island.

The inventory is carefully digested and includes much original information (alas not identified as such). One may however ask: who apart from the authors themselves will benefit from its use? A list that is limited to the annual taxa of an area might serve the purpose of making comparisons with similar lists for other areas, or with lists of taxa with a different life-form for the same area – if any existed, which they do not. But then, the authors obviously do not care how and by whom their work might be used – otherwise they would not have failed to provide at least a generic index, or would have arranged their bibliography in a single alphabetical sequence. As it is, their three checklists (one for therophytes proper, one for "hydrotherophytes" and one for biennials that may show annual habit), each arranged alphabetically by families, is impractical to consult. The authors also fail to discuss adequately the tenuous borderline between annual and perennial plants, a limit which in many genera, as for instance *Orobanche* (here incorrectly treated as if they were all annual), has not yet been adequately drawn.

W.G.

68. Giôrgios SFÊKAS – Katalogos futôn tou orous Pentelê Attikês. – Anthoforos, Kentro Prostasias tês Ellênikês Hlôridas, Athêna, 2008. [1] + 13 pages; paper.

Mount Pentelicon rises on the northern outskirts of Athens. It used to play the role of the Greek capital's green lung, badly needed by that smog-ridden city, but in recent years it was impaired in that function

by heavy forest fires. Besides, its slopes have been plagued by marble caves since classical antiquity, and its southern foothills have long fallen victim to the metropolis' expanding urbanisation.

The flora of Mount Pentelicon has been explored by many botanists in the past, and several plants, described from its heights, commemorate the mountain's name in their epithet. Most of these names have by now ended up as synonyms, but *Silene pentelica* remains, along with *Centaurea attica* subsp. *pentelica*.

Contrary to the flora of Mount Hymettus, that of Pentelicon had never been separately listed. Sfikas has now thankfully filled that gap with his modestly produced, simple list, based on published sources with the essential complement of his own collections.

W.G.

69. Armen L. TAHTADŽJAN (ed.) – Konspekt flory Kavkaza, tom **1.** – Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta, St. Peterburg, 2003 (ISBN 5-288-03293-9). 202 pages, 12 maps; hard cover.

The Caucasus is a floristic cornerstone, linking and at the same time separating the Mediterranean, Irano-Turanian, Central Asian and European floristic domains, drawing from and impinging on them all. The knowledge of the flora of the Caucasus, its genesis and relationships, is crucial, in particular, for the understanding of the plant world of the Mediterranean-Oriental region. Grossheim's pioneer work, "Flora Kavkaza", was so far the only comprehensive Flora of the whole Caucasian region, and sadly, its second edition has remained a torso. On the other hand, modern critical country Floras for Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Georgia and the Russian northern Caucasus, taken together, provide complete but inhomogeneous coverage. What is needed, then, is harmonisation, homogenisation and critical updating of the extant information.

This is precisely what the Conspectus of the Caucasian flora, Armen Takhtajan's newest if not last great enterprise, has set out to achieve. Adopting as its base Grossheim's (meanwhile refined) system of natural floristic regions that cut across national boundaries, it must necessarily depart from local traditions and strive for a synthesis. The task is awesome, complicated by many factors related with the natural and cultural multiformity of the area: think of the many languages using several alphabets in which the basic information was published, of the disseminated herbarium holdings, of the difficulty of communication in general, and you will see what I mean. There is only one place on the world where all threads run together: the Komarov Institute in St. Petersburg.

This first volume is rather thin, and even thinner is the portion devoted to the checklist proper: just 45 pages, on which 111 species (the Pteridophytes and Gymnosperms) are treated. Make a quick count: 2.5 species per page on average; and then make a guess: 3000 pages yet to come? The treatment is ambitiously detailed, it includes all that you might expect to see in a Flora except keys and descriptions. For all species that are not common and widespread sources are cited in full, detailed distributions are given, and often lengthy comments are made on questions of occurrence, delimitation of taxa, synonymy and typification, whatever.

The larger part of the book is devoted to general and introductory matters. There is a sizeable chapter on the history of botanical exploration, which includes such useful features as maps of Tournefort's travelling routes, Güldenstedt's and Marschall von Bieberstein's collecting localities. (However, I miss a reference to H. W. Lack's important work on Karl Koch's expeditions.) Also of considerable interest is an exhaustive list of Russian, Ukrainian and Caucasian herbaria with relevant holdings, of which only a minority are registered in the "Index herbariorum". Then there are invaluable bibliographical lists, not only with

the basic reference works but all relevant floristic papers published between 1985 and 2002. Not to forget a comparative display of the floristic subdivisions used in the "Conspectus" with the quite different ones adopted in the national Floras.

Good luck, then! For the first volume Takhtajan has benefited from the activity of a largish team of authors, but are they really enough? It strikes me that none comes from a Caucasian country. I would hope that in the future Caucasian botanists will be involved – and let themselves get involved.

W.G.

Excursions

70. Ina DINTER – Griechenland. Peloponnes. Botanische Studienreise 18. Mai – 1. Juni 2004. – Privately assembled/duplicated, Ostfildern, 2004. 57 + XX sheets + CD-ROM, maps, figures, black-and-white photographs; paper, plastic front cover sheet.

71. Ina DINTER – Ibiza. Weltkulturerbe. Botanische Studienreise 5.-14. Mai 2005. – Privately assembled/duplicated, Ostfildern, 2005. 35 sheets + CD-ROM, maps, figures, black-and-white photographs; paper, plastic front cover sheet.

72. Ina DINTER – Languedoc. Botanische Studienreise 29. Mai – 7. Juni 2005. – Privately assembled/duplicated, Ostfildern, 2005. 45 sheets + CD-ROM, figures, maps, photographs (partly in colour); paper, plastic front cover sheet.

73. Ina DINTER – Andalucía. Botanische Studienreise 2.-12. April 2006. – Privately assembled/duplicated, Ostfildern, 2005. 49 sheets + CD-ROM, figures, maps and photographs in colour; paper, plastic front cover sheet.

74. Ina DINTER – Insel Samos. Griechenland. Botanische Studienreise 1.-15. Mai 2006. – Privately assembled/duplicated, Ostfildern, 2006. 51 sheets + CD-ROM, figures, maps and photographs in colour; paper, plastic front cover sheet.

75. Ina DINTER – Das geheime Paradies Griechenlands. Halkidiki. Botanische Studienreise 1.-12. Mai 2007. – Privately assembled/duplicated, Ostfildern, [2007]. 55 sheets + CD-ROM, figures, maps and photographs in colour; paper, plastic front cover sheet.

Starting 2003 with the first Peloponnesus tour (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37 80-81. 2004), Ina Dinter's excursion guides have adopted a new style, making full use of modern computer technology. The printed versions prepared in advance remain as they were before, but the "elaborations" incorporating the excursions' own results have been transposed to CD-ROMs, which permits the inclusion of numerous highly resolved colour photographs, mostly of plants but also of landscapes and cultural highlights, together with the new plant lists. Information, thereby, is more complete and better documented than was possible before – and besides, the pictures are amazing both by their beauty and the detail they show.

The preparatory booklets are computer printouts, usually illustrated in colour. Sometimes they appear again on the CD-ROM as printable files in pdf format. In the case of the Ibiza guide, of which at least my copy is of reduced size and printed black-and-white, it is thus possible to obtain a full-size copy in colour if one is equipped with a colour printer. The plant lists in the print versions have been put together by Mrs. Dinter during a preliminary trip (she uses to prepare her guided tours very thoroughly), or sometimes a previous group excursion if, as exceptionally happens, she offers the same tour twice in sequence (e.g., for the Peloponnesus, in 2003 and 2004). They differ from the individual lists on the CD-ROMs, which reflect the groups' results. All species with their localities are shown in a combined tabulation (for Samos, for in-

stance, with all data of the years 1993, 1994, 2005 and 2006).

The value of Mrs. Dinter's lists as scientific data sources is enhanced by the presence, in her personal herbarium, of voucher specimens of many rare and critical taxa. By the end of 2007, she had collected about 9000 numbered specimens all over the Mediterranean area.

W.G.

Chorology

76. Arto KURTTO, Raino LAMPINEN & Leo JUNIKKA – Atlas florae europaeae. Distribution of vascular plants in Europe, **13,** *Rosaceae (Spiraea* to *Fragaria,* excl. *Rubus).* – Committee for Mapping the Flora of Europe & Societas Botanica Fennica Vanamo, Helsinki, 2004 (ISBN 951-9108-14-9). 320 pages (+ 11 pages on loose sheets), maps, table; paper.

77. Arto KURTTO, Sigurd E. FRÖHNER & Raino LAMPINEN – Atlas florae europaeae. Distribution of vascular plants in Europe, **14,** *Rosaceae (Alchemilla* and *Aphanes).* – Committee for Mapping the Flora of Europe & Societas Botanica Fennica Vanamo, Helsinki, 2007 (ISBN 951-9108-15-5). 200 pages, drawings, maps, graphs, tables; paper.

Volume 12 of the "Atlas florae europaeae" (see OPTIMA Newslett. 35: (17-18). 2000), the last to be published in the second millennium, marked the end of the work's first phase, coinciding in coverage with the first volume of "Flora Europaea". Much has changed, last but not least on the personal level, in the five-year interval between volumes 12 and 13. Of the two pillars of the "Atlas", Jaakko Jalas sadly died at the end of 1999 and Juha Suominen retired. Other important changes concern the mapping grid, adapted to achieve a common European standard for biological mapping projects (while doing away with erstwhile sensible exceptions); the technology used, which now permits the automatic generation, directly out of a database, of distribution maps and all sort of useful by-products; and territory definitions, no longer congruent with those defined for "Flora Europaea" but altered to match Euro+Med subdivisions. The question may be asked: are we thus entering a new era of relative stability, or rather a future of permanent change? I can live with either, provided the project continues, but instability is the more likely answer. Volume 14 already implements to further territorial changes: segregation of Malta from Sicily (joining Med-Checklist, at long last!) and of Luxemburg from Belgium – the next (separation of Serbia and Montenegro) being announced for vol. 15. Also, the position of project secretary, after two changes in rapid succession, is now in the able hands of Alexander Sennikov.

With volumes 13 and 14 published, the "Atlas" is halfway through *Rosaceae*, arguably Europe's second most complex flowering plant family (after *Compositae*). The spiraeoid and most rosoid genera (including *Rosa* and *Potentilla*) form vol. 13, *Alchemilla* and *Aphanes*, vol. 14; the two next volumes are to be devoted to the last rosoid genus, *Rubus*, and the maloid plus prunoid genera, respectively. Increasing time lag and independence of judgement have been gradually widening the gap between the treatments of the "Atlas" and of "Flora Europaea" that it was initially meant to mirror and complement. Deviations in vol. 13 are most obvious at generic level, where *Comarum*, *Dasiphora*, *Drymocallis* and *Sibbaldianthe* were removed from but *Duchesnea* included in *Potentilla*. In vol. 14, the difference at species level is dramatic: of 385 *Alchemilla* species, 204 are additional to the "Flora Europaea" treatment. It is a customary feature of the "Atlas" to document its deviations from the "Flora" in the introductory part, but in the future it may prove more space-economic to list the cases of congruence.

W.G.

78. Oriol de BOLÒS I CAPDEVILA, Xavier FONT I CASTELL & Josep VIGO I BONADA (ed.) – Atlas corològic de la flora vascular dels Països Catalans. Volum **13** [*ORCA: Atlas corològic,* **13**]. – Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Secció de Ciències Biològiques, Barcelona, 2004 (ISBN 84-7283-774-2, volume; 84-7283-625-8, set). [586] pages, maps 3039-3314; paper.

79. Xavier FONT I CASTELL & Josep VIGO I BONADA (ed.) – Atlas corològic de la flora vascular dels Països Catalans. Volum 14 [*ORCA: Atlas corològic,* **14**]. – Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Secció de Ciències Biològiques, Barcelona, 2007 (ISBN 978-84-7283-902-1, volume; 978-84-7283-625-9, set). [610] pages, maps 3315-3602; paper.

Two more volumes of this ambitious chorological Atlas have been published since my last review (OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 81-82. 2004), with 564 new grid maps, each with coded indication of sources on the back. The sequential numbering of the maps has now passed the 3600 mark. Impressive indeed.

Sticking consistently to the taxonomic and nomenclatural frame set by the "Flora manual dels Països Catalans", and following its sequence, vol. 13 begins with the last species left over from *Solanaceae,* then treats *Scrophulariaceae* (194 maps), *Orobanchaceae* (33), *Lentibulariaceae* (8), *Gesneriaceae* and *Acanthaceae* (1 each), *Globulariaceae* (11) and *Plantaginaceae* (27). For vol. 14, the treated families are *Rubiaceae* (71), *Caprifoliaceae* (20), *Valerianaceae* (28), *Dipsacaceae* (32), *Cucurbitaceae* (2), *Campanulaceae* (49) and the beginning of *Compositae* with *Eupatorieae* (1), *Astereae* (34), *Gnaphalieae* (40) and part of *Inuleae* (11).

W.G.

80. Dimităr DIMITROV (ed.) – Konspekt na visšata flora na Bălgarija. Horologija i florni elementi. Vtoro dopălneno i preraboteno izdanie. **Conspectus of the Bulgarian vascular flora.** Distribution maps and floristic elements. Second revised and enlarged edition. – Bălgaro-Švejcarska Programa za Opazvane na Bioraznoobrazieto, Sofija, 2002 (ISBN 954-9959-12-0). 426 pages, 2 tables, 3850 distribution maps; paper.

This handy volume, produced under the auspices of the Bulgarian-Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Programme, is neither more nor less than a concise distribution atlas for the whole vascular flora of Bulgaria. The maps are small, and distribution is not indicated by dots but by presence in one of the 29 phytogeographical subdivisions recognised in the Bulgarian national Flora. Simple as they are, I find these maps quite informative. They are accompanied by a bare minimum of other data: scientific name, altitudinal range, phytogeographical element, and a special flag for those species that are protected by law. The arrangement is alphabetical by genera and species (no subspecies are recognised), irrespective of family or higher group. One should note that, with stated exceptions, the accepted nomenclature follows Andreev & al.'s "Opredelitel na visšite rastenija Bălgarija" of 1992.

What little text is present is fully bilingual (Bulgarian and English). The main title is a bit misleading, but the subtitle helps. As to the "first edition" that the title wording implies, I have been unable to find it, or any reference to it, either in the book itself or elsewhere.

W.G.

Karyology

81. Karol MARHOLD, Pavol MÁRTONFI, Pavol MERED'A jun. & Patrik MRÁZ (ed.) – Chromosome number survey of the ferns and flowering plants of

Slovakia. – VEDA, Bratislava, 2007 (ISBN 978-80-224-0980-3). 650 pages, 25 figures (mostly maps, some in colour) + 1 CD-ROM; hard cover.

Ever and again one is surprised at the proficiency of the younger generation of botanists in handling new technologies for their purposes. There are worlds separating the present book from its forerunner, Jozef Májovský & al.'s "Karyotaxonomický prehl'ad flóry Slovenska" of 1987, and yet they lie only 20 years apart. A well structured database was the prerequisite for managing the large amount and diversity of information generated by the new project. The CD-ROM with that database, which accompanies the book, is in fact in many respects more useful than the printed text itself. I have tried it out and it works well, the installation runs smoothly and consultation is quick and easy, but you need plenty of space on your hard disk if you opt for a download. The same interactive, searchable database, or an updated version of it, is available on the Internet.

A powerful and well organised database system is a marvellous tool, but it only serves as a frame. What makes this survey so valuable is that it has put that frame to good use. The amount of data screening and verification that went into it is astounding. All published primary sources and an impressive amount of unpublished ones (manuscript theses, in particular) where consulted in original. Locality information was not only recorded from these texts but, whenever possible, complemented from the labels of voucher specimens, which were then revised by specialists to confirm their correct identification. In addition, grid coordinates were added to the localities, so that simple or combined maps can be generated, examples of which are provided in the book. The faculty to generate one's own map is one of the features of the CD-ROM that is lacking in the printed volume, as are a number of data categories, the most interesting being pictures of voucher specimens kept in the Bratislava herbarium (SLO). No reproductions of published idiograms or metaphase plate photographs are included (perhaps for reasons of copyright restrictions?), but their presence is indicated.

The survey is restricted to vascular plants and to counts made on Slovak material. Within these limits it is as complete and accurate as is humanly possible. Perhaps its main merit, if not the most spectacular, is that it flags or eliminates many of the errors and inaccuracies that plague the literature of the past.

W.G.

82. Ėstella A. NAZAROVA & A. G. GUKASJAN – Čisla hromosom cvetkovyh rastenij flory Armenii. – Institut Botaniki, Nacional'naja Akademija Nauk RA, Erevan, 2004. 169 pages, 15 plates of micrographs, portrait, 2 maps; paper.

This handy survey of published chromosome counts based on Armenian plant material appeared under the editorship of Eleonora Gabrielian. It is dedicated to the memory of professor A. G. Araratian, whose portrait and succinct biography precede the main text. Of the biography, as well as the foreword and introduction, an English translation is provided.

The somatic chromosome numbers are listed under the name used in the original publication. When counts for the same species appear under different names, synonymy is added to serve as cross-reference. For each count, locality and voucher information is given in addition to the source reference. A considerable number of metaphase plate photographs that appear in the source publications are reproduced at the end of the book. I noted at least one case of contradictory information: the chromosome number of *Silene sisianica* is given as $2n = 48$ in the main text (3 counts), but the metaphase plate, consistent with the caption, shows 42 chromosomes.

W.G.

Studies of Flora and Vegetation

83. Udo BOHN, Gisela GOLLUB, Christoph HETTWER, Zdenka NEUHÄUSLOVÁ, Heinz SCHLÜTER & Herbert WEBER – Karte der natürlichen Vegetation Europas, Maßstab 1 : 2 500 000. Erläuterungstext. – Bundesamt für Naturschutz, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 2003 (ISBN 3-7843-3837-2). 655 + XVI pages + 13 folded maps in pouch (11 in colour), + CD-ROM (by Udo BOHN & Robert NEUHÄUSL), 148 colour photographs, 23 figures, 21 tables, 7 maps, portrait; paper.

84. Udo BOHN, Gisela GOLLUB, Christoph HETTWER, Zdenka NEUHÄUSLOVÁ, Thomas RAUS, Heinz SCHLÜTER & Herbert WEBER – Karte der natürlichen Vegetation Europas / Map of the natural vegetation of Europe, Maßstab /scale 1 : 2 500 000. **Interaktive / Interactive CD-ROM.** – Bundesamt für Naturschutz, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 2004 (ISBN 3-7843-3848-8). 1 CD-ROM + 20 pages booklet in plastic case.

Last time, when presenting the map of the natural vegetation of Europe and its Legend booklet (OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 82. 2004), I pointed out that without the corresponding, incidentally mentioned manual the provided information was incomplete. Here, now, is that manual.

That manual, or "Explanatory text", is a sizeable volume written in German. In its introductory chapters it describes the genesis and history of the mapping project, with its theoretical bases, and summarises Late Quaternary vegetation changes. In its main portion it provides detailed descriptions of the 19 main vegetation formations and c. 700 mapping units with their constituent associations. These chapters are well illustrated with colour photographs. Maps of the individual formations have mostly been printed on loose folded sheets (note that map 20, of riverine wetlands, has been unduly trimmed at its southern end, so as to exclude S Peloponnesus and Crete). The accepted generic names used for purposes of phytosociological nomenclature appear, with their principal synonyms, in a list compiled by Thomas Raus. Explanations of the special terms used in the book and bibliographical references to maps and publications are appended.

A substantial amount of corollary information is not given in the printed book but in the accompanying CD-ROM. There one finds species inventories, data sheets relating to the mapping units, with commentary, as well as a glossary.

The separate CD-ROM referred to above is confusingly similar in aspect to the one just mentioned but is altogether different in content. It brings again, in full, the printed information of Explanatory text and Legend, with improvements and corrections – both the German original and an English translation. It also includes the 9 vegetation maps themselves (but not the survey map). Limited interactive searching options are implemented, and a simple feedback facility is provided, encouraging the submission of comments, suggestions and corrections.

W.G.

85. Marcelino José del ARCO AGUILAR (ed.) – Mapa de Vegetación de Canarias. – Grafcan, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 2006 (ISBN 978-64-611-3811-1). 550 pages, colour illustrations (56 photographs, maps, graphs, tables) in 1 volume with laminated cover + 7 folded maps in colour + 1 CD-ROM, all in cardboard case.

Unbelievably, this major work on vegetation mapping (which profited of pre-existing maps for Tenerife and parts of Gran Canaria) was completed in less than 3 years, between December 2000 when the research contract was signed and June 2003 when the complete data were handed in. It took another three years to get the results printed, a

time lag that was used to fill gaps in the coverage by mapping four offshore islets, one at the northern tip of Fuerteventura and three in a similar position near Lanzarote. Project director Marcelino del Arco and his team of 12 can be proud of their achievement.

The seven map sheets, one for each of the main Canary Islands, are printed on both sides, with explanatory text covering the verso. The recto bears a large map of the actual vegetation at its centre (scale varies according to island size, between 1 : 55 000 for La Gomera and 1 : 170 000 for Fuerteventura), flanked by smaller maps (one of them showing the potential natural vegetation), vegetation profiles, and the legend of colour codes. The mapped vegetation units are associations (for woody formations), alliances or orders (herbaceous formations) defined by the sigmatistic method of Braun-Blanquet. Aerial photographs in colour were used to establish their distribution.

The book is for a large part devoted to the characterisation of vegetation types, first for the archipelago as a whole then in the context of the individual islands. Among the appendices, a list of species characterising vegetation units, a glossary, and an extensive bibliography are of note.

As to the CD-ROM, it again includes, in separate pdf files, the printed book and map sheets, and in addition it offers the possibility to zoom into the vegetation maps and see their every detail, which is more than the printed version since the original mapping was done at a 1 : 20 000 scale.

W.G.

86. Markus VON GAISBERG – Die Vegetation der Fußstufe von El Hierro) Kanarische Inseln). [*Dissertationes Botanicae* (ISSN 0070-6728), **395.**] – Cramer, Berlin & Stuttgart, 2005 (ISBN 3-443-64308-6). 364 pages, 97 black-and-white figures (photographs, maps, graphs), 22 tables + 1 folded table in pouch; hard cover.

Markus von Gaisberg, one of the authors of the distribution atlas of the El Hierro flora presented above (item 59), has chosen the lower belt of that island as subject for his PhD thesis. That thesis has grown into the present, stately book, well written and nicely presented. El Hierro, the smallest and presumably youngest of the Canary Islands, was also arguably the least explored botanically. Looking at the steep flanks of this volcano tip emerging abruptly from a more than 3000 m deep sea floor, one can easily imagine how arduous it is to explore them. This is the terrain that Gaisberg and his colleague Stierstorfer have thoroughly investigated for several years. Their field data, electronically stored, have already helped writing three books, and more may yet come. One positive aspect of their work is that it was not done in splendid isolation. Rather, they sought and received the support of Canarian botanists and institutions, principally Wolfredo Wildpret and his team of the University of La Laguna on Tenerife.

W.G.

87. Josep GESTI PERICH, Lluís VILAR I SAIS & Susan WATT – Plantes vasculars del quadrat UTM 31T EG07 Castelló d'Empúries. [*ORCA: Catàlegs floristics locals*, **16.**] – Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Secció de Ciències Biològiques, Barcelona, 2005 (ISBN 84-7283-825-0). 95 pages, maps, graph; paper.

The rhythm of publication of this series of floristic inventories of individual 10 × 10 km squares of the chorological mapping grid for Catalonia has apparently slowed down. Last time (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 83. 2004) there were three such fascicles to be presented, published in 2002 and 2003. Since then but a single one has been printed.

Castelló d'Empúries is situated in the extreme northeast of Spanish Catalonia, close to the Mediterranean Sea. The area of its grid square is comprised of lowlands barely exceeding 50 m of altitude and can be

subdivided into three main units: the seashore, the agricultural lands of the large alluvial plain, and the Pliocene hillocks in the back, with remains of semi-natural Mediterranean vegetation. In view of this unexciting environment, floristic diversity, with 1006 recorded taxa (not counting 104 that are doubtfully present or questionably wild), is quite high, reflecting the positive contribution of traditional human management to the flora.

W.G.

88. Jordi CARRERAS & Josep VIGO – Mapa de vegetació de Catalunya 1 : 50 000. Molló 218 (37-10). Ripoll 256 (37-11). – Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2005 (ISBN 84-7283-809-9). 83 pages, graphs, tables, map, colour legend, with folded colour map by Jordi CARRERAS, Albert FERRÉ, Josep GESTI, Xavier MONJE, Lluís VILAR, Josep VIGO & Xavier VIÑAS; laminated cover, twin plastic pouch.

89. Josep M. NIÑOT & Josep VIGO – Mapa de vegetació de Catalunya 1 : 50 000. El Pont de Suert 213 (32-10). Sort 214 (33-10). – Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Barcelona, 2006 (ISBN 84-7283-835-8). 93 pages, graphs, map, tables, colour legend, with folded colour map (published 2003) by Empar CARRILLO, Albert FERRÉ, Xavier FONT, Josep M. NIÑOT, Rafael V. QUADRADA, Ignasi SORIANO & Josep VIGO; laminated cover, twin plastic pouch.

Little can be added to what I have previously written on this admirable enterprise of vegetation mapping, shortly to cover completely the Spanish side of the Catalan Pyrenees (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 84. 2004). Whereas mapping methods have varied with time, from manual design based on aerial colour photographs to automated processing of combined colour and infrared pictures, the output maintains welcome uniformity. Plans are already taking shape to extend mapping to other areas of Catalonia when it is completed for the Pyrenees.

The two present map sheets are widely separated geographically, the first concerning the Catalonia's western border, where it confines with Aragón, the second an area close to the centre, just east of Andorra. Yet they present substantial similarities, such as an all but identical maximum height (they peak at 2883 m and 2881 m, respectively) and a similar gross geological pattern. For both areas, the northern portion falls within the domain of the siliceous central chain of the Pyrenees, the centre and south belongs to the basically carbonatic Pre- and Sub-Pyrenees; and in both, the vegetation cover is heavily influenced by this duality of substratum.

W.G.

90. Anna SCOPPOLA & Carlo BLASI – Stato delle conoscenze sulla flora vascolare d'Italia. Anna SCOPPOLA – Carta dello stato delle conoscenze floristiche d'Italia, edizione 2005. **Anna SCOPPOLA & Sara MAGRINI – The Italian vascular flora:** references and sources. – **Anna SCOPPOLA & Giovanni SPAMPINATO – Atlante delle specie a rischio di estinzione.** – Palombi, Roma, 2005 (ISBN 88-7621-513-1). 253 pages, 95 figures (mostly in colour), 10 tables, 29 plates (maps in colour); paper bound fascicle, with 1 loose, folded colour map and 1 box with 2 CD-ROM disks as annexes.

This impressive, coherent and well structured collection of data on Italy's vascular flora is the result of a huge national effort, demonstrating how seriously Italy is taking the country's self-imposed obligations as partner to the Río Convention and participant in the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. Consisting of four discrete elements, the present package is in turn member of a triplet of almost simultaneous

publications of which the two other components are presented elsewhere in these pages (items 64 and 108).

The printed book is devoted essentially to describing the state of and progress in floristic knowledge in each of Italy's 20 administrative "regioni". The state of investigation, expressed in five categories ranging from "virtually unknown" to "well known", is mapped for each region and again represented in context on a single, folded map at the scale of 1 : 1,500,000.

The first of two CD-ROM disks that are part of the work shows distribution maps for the 1011 vascular plant taxa that appear in the latest (1997) Italian red list. (This limitation was followed to the letter, so that *Centaurea pumilio*, first recorded in 1998 and illustrated on the book's very first colour photograph, is not treated.) A new national cartographic grid has been devised for that purpose, extending the grid of zone 33 of the UTM projection to the portion of Italy (about one half) lying outside that zone. The presence and status within each 10 × 10 km grid square is shown by means of a colour code. Cases of special status (e.g., doubtful, alien, recorded in error, disappeared) are commented in the accompanying text.

The second disk has two literature databases. The first includes an impressive amount (c. 12000 items) of papers with floristically relevant information, published between 1950 and 2005. The second is a kind of complement to Conti & al.'s Italian plant checklist, giving nomenclatural source references for unfamiliar names there used (this source will be more valuable when expanded, as has been promised, to cover all names and synonyms). Searches are remarkably quick and comfortable, the only drawback being that no searches by scientific plant name are allowed.

An incredible amount of effort, time and expertise went into the production of this compendium. In the annexes, 89 text authors are listed, as well as 58 public and 33 private herbaria that have been consulted. Mention of those who contributed data fills no less than 12 pages. Italy is fortunate to have so many knowledgeable botanists willing to help. Their help will be needed in the future as well. The present publication foreshadows new projects that can build upon it, some already well advanced such as the inventory of alien ("exotic") plants, some planned for the decades ahead such as the *Flora critica d'Italia*, and some still in the stage of a feasibility assessment such as a national chorological atlas. Good luck to all!

W.G.

91. Riccardo GUARINO & Sergio SGORBATI – Guida botanica al Parco Alto Garda Bresciano. – Museo del Parco Alto Garda Bresciano, [Gargnano], 2004. 394 pages, 930 figures (mostly colour photographs); laminated cover.

The chief intent in writing this book has been to induce the layman to observe, know and cherish the plant world in general, and that of the Alto Garda Bresciano Park in particular. The language it uses is simple but scientifically accurate without being tedious, the subjects range from a general introduction to the plant world and botanical science to a knowledgeable description of the Park's various types of vegetation. The needs of the botanically trained are not neglected. For them, a complete checklist of the Park's vascular flora is provided, using the – occasionally updated – nomenclature of Pignatti's Flora. The final picture gallery, with colour photographs of generally adequate quality showing about 830 different species, is an asset for all categories of readers.

The Park covers an area of over 380 km^2, comprising nine municipalities with many villages and settlements. In extends from the western shores of Lake Garda up to the crests of the surrounding mountain chains, encompassing the better part of the Giudicarian Alps of Brescia Province. (It does not, mind you, include the botanically famous Monte Baldo, which is situated on

the Lake's opposite, eastern side.) According to the checklist, its vascular flora comprises 1585 wild taxa, not counting 279 – listed separately – that were reported in the literature but of which the presence is doubtful, either because the records are unreliable or because they may have disappeared. A selection of species that might well be found again is shown in pictures serving as wanted posters.

The authors have, it seems to me, done a good job. Sometimes they are very much on the popular, journalistic side of the fence, as when they compare the risks of insect pollination to the hypothetical situation of men entrusting parcels with their sperm to a dog meant to carry them to their beloved ones for insemination. Well, those who do not appreciate this kind of symbolism need not read the popular chapters. A more serious shortcoming is the absence of any information on the source and authorship of the individual photographs. We may suppose that most are due to the authors themselves (fifty, but we are not told which, are credited to someone else); but, were they really all taken in the Park? Certainly not the last dozen, which show plants that have disappeared – but how about the rest? A practical inconvenience is the absence of an index. We will have to cope.

W.G.

92. Felicita SCAPINI & Mariella NARDI (ed.) – Il Parco Regionale della Maremma e il suo territorio. – Pacini, Pisa, 2007 (ISBN 978-88-7781-914-7). 256 pages, frontispiece, map and 178 figures (mostly colour photographs) and 14 tables; paper with dust jacket.

The Maremma Natural Park will be well remembered by participants to the excursion to W. Tuscany following the II OPTIMA Meeting in Florence. That excursion visited the Park, then just two years old, on 28 May 1977 under the expert guidance of Pier Virgilio Arrigoni. Thirty years later Arrigoni, still the leading botanical expert for the Park, has authore the chapter on vegetation in the present book.

This volume is very different from the popular guide books for visitors of protected areas of which so many are now produced. With 28 chapters loosely grouped together under four main headings, written by 29 authors from five different countries (Catalonia, Malta, Morocco and Tunisia, in addition to Italy), it is a kind of multi-faceted, patchy scientific monograph of the area.

The area in question lies in the southern tip of Tuscany, extending along the coast north of Grosseto and the Argentaro promontory. Like the latter, the hills forming the central portion of the Park, known as Monti dell'Uccellina, were in times past an island in the Tyrrhenian Sea, but are now completely fused to the mainland by wide extents of alluvial plains. The reasons for declaring the area a protected park were not so much the abundance of rare, threatened and endemic species but rather the unspoilt landscape and the interest that the marshland in the estuary of the Ombrone River presents for birdwatchers. Among botanical peculiarities, the subendemic *Centaurea aplolepa* subsp. *cosana* may however be mentioned.

The Park area can be roughly subdivided into three units: the marshland and river estuary, at the northern end; the littoral strip, mainly of sand dunes bordered inwardly by originally planted now invasive – and of course strongly protected – pine woods *(Pinus pinea* and *P. pinaster);* and the hills with their cover of evergreen macchia and numerous karstic caves. The subjects of the book are predominantly zoological, geographical and historical, with some emphasis of vegetation features but neglecting the (cryptogamic or phanerogamic) flora.

W.G.

93. Fabio CAPPELLI & Michele PADULA (ed.) – La Riserva di Luoghi Naturali Orrido di Botri. Fondamenti naturali-

stici, storici e gestionali. – Corpo Forestale dello Stato, Ufficio territoriale per la biodiversità di Lucca, 2006. 250 pages, photographs, maps, graphs and tables, mostly in colour, folded colour map sheet in pouch; laminated cover.

Horrid indeed – or better: terrific! The Orrido di Botri nature reserve in the upper catchment basin of the Fegana River (before it assumes that name and is still named Rio Pelago), in the Apennines of Lucca Province in N Tuscany, has a size of less than 300 ha, but is crossed by one of the wildest, deepest, narrowest gorge of peninsular Italy, comparable in its savage beauty to its better known counterparts in the Alps. The site is so impervious that you need special permit to enter it, which is only possible in the summer months, for well trained mountaineers wearing a hardhat – and of course, for a fee. Yet a century ago it was classified as pasture land, being all but deforested, and much of its natural wildlife had been killed off.

Since 1934, the area has been placed under the care of the state forestry service, which has taken care of its reforestation and protection. Photographs taken before 1934, compared to those of today, show astounding changes. The formerly bare slopes are now wooded with hop hornbeam *(Ostrya carpinifolia)* below and beech in their upper part, apart from the sheer cliffs. Wildlife and wildfowl are steadily increasing, with several recent additions such as the wolf, groundhog, and deer following the now fully established wild boar to keep company to the single surviving couple of golden eagles; moufflon is expected next.

The zoological chapters of the book, from which this information is taken, are followed by three botanical ones, among which that on the vascular flora, by Pier Virgilio Arrigoni, Giulio Ferretti and Michele Padula, is the largest and most complete. About 500 species are accounted for, with indication of habitat, distribution and other (even descriptive) data, and many are illustrated by good colour photographs. They testify, not only to the relative species richness of so tiny an area, but also to the originality of its flora, as many of the constituent species are rare, several are Italian endemics or otherwise of phytogeographical interest. The other, shorter botanical chapters, also nicely illustrated, refer to fungi (by Italo Franceschini) and lichens (by Renato Benesperi).

W.G.

94. Francesco Maria RAIMONDO (ed.) – Result of the third "Iter Mediterraneum" in Sicily, May-June 1990. [*Bocconea* (ISSN 1120-4060), **17.**] – Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum, Palermo, 2004 (ISBN 88-7915-019-7). 330 pages + one sheet of errata, 41 black-and-white figures, 2 colour plates, 3 tables; laminated cover.

Six "senior" and five "junior" participants, not counting Franco Raimondo the organiser and his local support team, took part in the Third Iter Mediterraneum, in Sicily, 29 May to 19 June 1990. During those three busy weeks they collected the impressive number of 1535 different taxa of vascular plants, and in addition 231 of bryophytes, 76 of macrofungi and 66 of lichens. Not only were many of the collected species, especially among the bryophytes, new for the Island's flora, there were also no less than six still undescribed and unnamed taxa of higher plants among them. Five are new species of *Centaurea* (2), *Dianthus, Hieracium* and *Pyrus,* each described in a short paper of its own at the end of the volume; the fifth, *Cynara cardunculus* var. *zingaroensis,* is described but not validly named in the body of the enumeration.

In his introduction, Raimondo somewhat apologetically explains the reasons why it took 14 years to publish the results of the Sicilian Iter. Regrettable as the delay may be, what counts in my opinion is that he has finally succeeded. This is a fine book, important as a source of floristic data and in-

structive by way of the introductory general chapters on Pleistocene history, geology, soils, climate and vegetation, which summarise the contents of the seminar lectures by which the participants were initiated to Sicilian nature. The present "Bocconea" volume was published just in time for distribution at the XI OPTIMA Meeting in Belgrade, September 2004. The final rush explains some spelling errors, corrected by means of an errata sheet (note, however, that the names *Delphinium staphisagria, Paspalum paspaloides* and *Hainardia* are correct as printed).

W.G.

95. Girolamo GIARDINA – Conoscere le piante dei Nebrodi. – AG Edizioni, Gravina di Catania, 2008 (ISBN 978-88-89942-30-7). XXXV + 177 pages, drawings, 347 colour photographs; laminated cover.

The question is legitimate: what and where, in fact, are the Nebrodi Mountains? Of old, botanists used to designate as Nebrodi the high limestone massif known today as Madonie. Strobl's "Flora der Nebroden" (1878-1887) concerns only the Madonie, and the epithet *nebrodensis* that appears in many familiar names designates plants from there, most of which are absent from the present-day Nebrodi range. That range, up to Lojacono's time, was known as "Valdemone", a designation that has nothing to do with demons but, as Franco Raimondo reminds us in his preface, derives by corruption from Latin "vallis nemorum", the valley of woods. (The question of which is more correct, *Cirsium vallis-demonii* or *Juncus vallis-demonis*, is therefore moot: neither epithet is correctable but neither is appropriate, either modern *valdemonensis* or classical *vallis-nemorum* would have been preferable.)

The Nebrodi of the present book are the modern ones: a range in the eastern half of N Sicily, between the Madonie and the Peloritani mountains, the core of which is currently protected in the "Parco dei Nebrodi". These mountains are not very high (the highest peaks at 1847 m) and in their upper part, above 1000-1200 m, they are covered by forest, with *Quercus cerris* then *Fagus sylvatica* dominating. The schistose base rock (flysch) does not result in harsh, ragged landscapes but rather in rounded elevations separated by wide, flat-bottomed valleys. An alpine element is conspicuously lacking.

Giardina's book, beautifully illustrated by the author's own photographs, consists essentially in the presentation of 320 species selected as characteristic of the area's vascular flora. For each photograph there is a standard explanatory text that includes a short description followed by indications of habitat and distribution (global, Italian and Sicilian, the latter incorporating Giardina's own, original observations). The introductory chapters include a description of main vegetation types. At the end, Massimo Geraci and Attilio Caldarera suggest some botanical itineraries and present selected naturalistic and cultural highlights of the region.

This is, alas, a posthumous work. Girolamo Giardina, aged 64, sadly passed away in December 2006. In a short biography, Fabrizio Turrisi describes him as the multifaceted scientist he has been, with a degree in physics followed by a specialisation in astrophysics then a doctorate on a subject from vegetation science. He combined a profound knowledge of the Sicilian flora with loving concern for its safeguard, but he was also a poet of rank. Had he lived to show his book through the print, he might have added one or the other chapter to it, yet in its present form it is fully self-contained: a good, lovingly and competently written introduction to the flora of a too little known, unjustly neglected yet beautiful part of Sicily.

W.G.

96. Dragan M. ŠKORIĆ & Olga VASIĆ (ed.) – Vegetacija Srbije II. Šumske zajednice 2. The vegetation of Serbia

II. Forest communities 2. – Srpska Akademija Nauka i Umetnosti, Beograd, 2006 (ISBN 86-7025-428-X). [13] + IV + 369 pages, black-and-white photographs, tables; cloth.

Nine years after the publication of its first half (see OPTIMA Newslett. 35: review No. 35), the new basic conspectus of Serbia's forest vegetation has now been completed. Six authors have contributed the 15 chapters of the present tome, each chapter covering the communities dominated by a particular woody species. Where and how these communities fit into the hierarchy of formal phytosociological classification is made apparent in a concluding overview, which helps to dispel the somewhat chaotic impression the first tome had conveyed. The coherent and logical choice of chapter titles is also helpful in this respect.

As in the first tome, there are English summaries at the end of each chapter. There is an impressively rich bibliography of 32 pages, followed by indexes of plant and syntaxon names. The latter have now been made to conform to the international rules for syntaxon nomenclature (retroactively so for the first tome), allowing for some difficulties with Latin genitives *("aquilegiifoliumii", "palustridis").*

In a country that was almost completely wooded in prehistorical times, and is still covered with woodland for almost one third of its surface area, a comprehensive treatise on its forest vegetation is of particular importance. Yet, the question remains of how and when the vegetation of Serbia's remaining two thirds will be treated in a similar way. It would be interesting to learn of the plans and prospects of completing this basic compendium, the first, introductory volume of which has come to light almost a quarter of a century ago.

W.G.

97. John AKEROYD – The historic countryside of the Saxon villages of southern Transylvania. – Fundația ADEPT, Mureş 2006 (ISBN 978-973-0-04533-8). Pages 3-85, colour photographs, drawings, map; paper.

The so-called Saxons in Central Romania have been living in that area since the 12th century, when they were invited to settle there by the Hungarian kings. They still keep intact much of their original way of life, the landscape with their villages being a kind of living museum of what large parts of the European continent must have looked like some centuries ago. In the frame of Natura 2000, Europe's main nature conservation programme, ways are being sought of maintaining much of this invaluable heritage by developing it in a sustainable way. The ADEPT foundation takes stock of the present state and investigates mains and means to maintain its valuable features while promoting local craftsmanship, small business, and "green" tourism.

This is not a botanical booklet but has been written and illustrated by a botanist, which shows on its every page. It illustrates historical aspects and the present way of life, but also the landscape, vegetation, flora and fauna. It is, I should say, excellent publicity for potential "agro-tourists": read it before you plan your next alternative holidays.

W.G.

98. Norbert KILIAN & Mohamed Ali HUBAISHAN (ed.) – Biodiversity of Socotra. Forests, woddlands and bryophytes. [*Englera* (ISSN 0170-4818), **28.**] – Botanischer Garten & Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Berlin, 2006 (ISBN 3-921800-61-4). 175 pages, frontispiece, black-and-white illustrations (photographs, drawings, maps, graphs), tables, 16 extra plates with 57 colour photographs; paper.

This volume presents results of research undertaken, in the frame of a Yemeni-German cooperation agreement, within the BI-

OTA Yemen project funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research through the BIOLOG programme. In spring 2002 and 2003, expeditions of Berlin and Yemeni botanists to the island of Socotra took place, to study the flora and vegetation of vascular plants and bryophytes.

Five papers by varying authors or author teams are included. Three are studies of vegetation, two are floristic. Of the latter, one is a complete bryophyte Flora for the island, with descriptions and identification keys for the 80 presently known species; the second relates collections of noteworthy taxa, including 13 that had not previously been recorded from Socotra. A species of *Volutaria* and a subspecies of *Euphorbia socotrana* are described as new to science, as are several previously unnamed plant communities.

A number of colour photographs by unidentified expedition members, showing aspects of the vegetation or featuring individual plants, contribute to illustrate the book.

W.G.

99. Jean LÉONARD – [A contribution to study of the flora and vegetation of the deserts of Iran. Vol. **10,** first part. Translated [into Farsi] by M. Ghorbanli.**]** [*Technical Publication,* **338.**] – Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, Tehran, "2003" [2004] (ISBN 964-473-195-6). XIX + 411 pages, 81 black-and-white photographs, 5 maps, 4 graphs, tables; paper.

The third item of Léonard's series of botanical studies of the Iranian deserts to be translated into Farsi (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 87. 2004, for the two previous ones) was originally published in 1991 as its penultimate item (reviewed in OPTIMA Newslett. 30: (40). 1996). It is devoted to the physiognomic description of the observed vegetation types, written in the style of a travel diary.

W.G.

Trees and Shrubs

100. Andreas ROLOFF & Andreas BÄRTELS – Flora der Gehölze. Bestimmung, Eigenschaften und Verwendung, ed. 2. – Ulmer, Stuttgart, 2006 (ISBN 978-3-8001-4832-5). 844 pages + 2 colour maps + 1 loose sheet, c, 2350 figures; hard cover.

What is implicitly considered as the first edition of this book appeared in 1996 under the same authorship but with a shorter title, "Gehölze". The page number and selection of included species has increased significantly, and critical feedback from users has been taken into account, but the general plan remains. The book includes identification keys and fairly detailed descriptions for over 2000 species of woody plants found growing wild or cultivated out of doors in Central Europe. The exact coverage is not defined, but sampling shows that small erect shrubs *(Helianthemum* spp., *Thymus vulgaris)* are treated but not those with prostrate (*Thymus serpyllum* aggr.) or pulvinate growth *(Acantholimon)*. As to hardiness, we find that laurel, holm oak, camellias, the fig tree, and several bamboo species are included, but not myrtle nor the olive tree, let alone palms and cycads. Apparently exotic habit was a reason for exclusion along with lack of frost-hardiness.

A salient feature of the book is its almost complete reliance on vegetative characters, both in the keys and illustrations. There are drawings for each and every species, invariably showing a leaf, often features of the indumentum, sometimes cross sections of twigs, petioles etc., but no flowers or fruits (which are, however, described). A new addition is a key for deciduous genera in their leafless winter state, by Bernd Schulz.

Practice will tell, but the first impression is of a work that is valuable for the identification of woody species in their sterile state, but less so when flowers and fruits are available. In a Mediterranean context, for

which it has not been conceived, it may still be used with appropriate care and bearing in mind its intrinsic limitations.

W.G.

101. Rosario SCHICCHI & Francesco Maria RAIMONDO – Alberi monumentali delle Madonie. – Università degli Studi di Palermo, Dipartimento di Scienze Botaniche, Palermo, 2007 (ISBN 978-88-903108-0-5). 143 pages, numerous colour photographs, paper with dust jacket.

When humans age they eventually shrink and wither, lose their wits and vigour, and by no means might one call them monuments. How different are trees! Their growth rate may decrease but they keep growing until the very end, more impressive every year, and ever more venerable. The old, crooked, scarred giants are indeed monumental landmarks, as this book shows.

The authors have inventoried the large old tree individuals growing on the Madonie, within and around the boundaries of the Park. They did so a first time in 1999, in the frame of the EU Medwood-Islands Programme, when they came up with a list of 35 trees (published in Naturalista Sicil., ser. 4, 23: 229-314. 1999). A second, recent survey, conducted on behalf of the Madonie Park Administration, added 25 items to the list. The present book, therefore, documents 60 individual trees, or in some cases groups of trees, each with telling colour photographs and full details on exact location, habitat, measurements, general shape, health state, threats, advised action, etc. No less than 14 different genera are included: fir, maple (3 species), arbutus, chestnut, hawthorn, beech, ash, holly, apple, olive, poplar, almond, pear and oak (the latter with 4 to 9 different species, according to species concept).

Threats faced by these trees (discounting the most deadly, axe and fire) are various and include the ailments of age, parasites, excoriations and wounds. The older trees have usually outgrown the ravages of grazing, as they cannot any longer be climbed by voracious goats, but many show the characteristic razor-sharp trimming, exactly a goat-height above the ground, that characterises tree crowns in heavily grazed areas. The flat-bottomed crown form is, in a way, part of their natural charm. Much of their beauty, however, resides in their twisted, cleft trunks that testify to the vicissitudes of their long life. This book will hopefully open the hearts and minds of many to the beauty and value of this important component of Sicily's natural heritage.

W.G.

Applied Botany

102. Michael HEINRICH, Walter E. MÜLLER & Claudio GALLI (ed.) – Local Mediterranean food plants and nutraceuticals. [*Forum of Nutrition* (ISSN 1660-0347), **59.**] – Karger, Basel, 2006 (ISBN 978-3-8055-8124-0). xii + 185 pages, 24 figures, 23 tables; hard cover.

An entirely new, fashion-prone domain of science is emerging: "nutraceuticology". As this may be a novel term just created by me (no Google hits encountered), allow me a little linguistic digression. The term nutraceutical is what linguists call a portmanteau. It results from blending the words nutrition (from Latin) and pharmaceutical (from Greek). Why inventors of new words so often lack linguistic sensibility and produce graft chimeras has long been a source of wonder for me. If a new term was needed, "trophoceutical" would have been the more adequate choice.

A straightforward translation of "nutraceuticals" as health food would be incorrect. Rather, the term means "bioactive substances artificially added to food". And fortunately, nutraceuticals are not really what this book is about. So let me start talking, at long last, about the book itself.

Scarcely known within the Mediterranean itself, the so-called "Mediterranean diet"

– ultimately based on the model of traditional food intake in rural Crete – has long been popular in global dietology. With olive oil, red wine and a low animal protein ratio at its core, this diet is supposed to diminish the risk of, in particular, cancer and coronary disease. Here we are told why it is useful to look in more detail into the actual diet of traditional Mediterranean communities before one starts to generalise. That diet is just as multiform as are Mediterranean cultures and biota. Sticking (as the book does) to the botanical aspects, one finds that no less than 2300 different plant species are consumed by Mediterranean people, and that about half of them (not necessarily endemic) are only used locally, within one particular region of the Mediterranean area. These are the "local food plants" mentioned in the title.

The book consists of 8 chapters with varying authorship. In its first half it draws attention to Mediterranean food variety and to the importance of exploring traditional local plant foods (and cooking recipes) as long as they are still used, or better, to promote survival of their use on a sustainable basis. The assessment of beneficial properties of such foods and identification of the bioactive compounds are aspects dealt with in the second half. Whether and when we will end up with engineering new health food by adding "nutraceuticals" designed on the basis of such analyses, the future will tell. Personally, I am far more attracted by the idea of trying out the original stuff, if possible in its genuine environment and prepared by what Italians know as "la cucina della mamma", than by the prospect of making our tinned or deep-frozen industrial products more healthy.

W.G.

103. Diego RIVERA, Alonso VERDE, José FAJARDO, C. INOCENCIO, Concepción OBÓN & Michael HEINRICH (ed.) – Guía etnobotánica de los alimentos locales recolectados en la provincia de Albacete. [*Instituto de Estudios Albacetenses "Don Juan Manuel", Ser. 1, Estudios*, 167.] – Instituto de Estudios Albacetenses "Don Juan Manuel", Albacete, 2006 (ISBN 84-95394-92-8). 470 pages, numerous colour photographs, some figures, 2 tables; laminated cover.

From theory to practice. The concepts and statistical data outlined in the previous item (No. 102) have been elaborated in depth in a series of regional inventories, in the frame of the EU-funded project "Local Food [&] Nutraceuticals". The regions selected for study, in all of which local traditions subsist fairly intact, are situated in Greece (Crete and Epirus), Italy (Lucania and S Calabria), and Spain (Albacete Province, Sierra de Alcaraz and Serranía de Cuenca). The results obtained in the Spanish project area are reported in the present book. For its larger part, it consists of an inventory of local food plants, followed by 188 traditional cooking recipes (the latter bilingual, in Spanish and English). For Spain, 173 local food plants were identified, of which 100 are presented in detail, with colour photographs detailed descriptions of the plants and their uses. These plant portraits are grouped by the parts being used, then alphabetically by vernacular designations; for instance, the first category (shoots used as vegetables) begins with acederas *(Rumex acetosa*, here misnamed *R. acetosella)* and ends with zarzamora (*Rubus ulmifolius*, of which also the fruits are eaten).

Of the plants sampled in Spain, 66 were used for pharmacological assays, some of which are mentioned in brief (bilingual) chapters at the end. Among the properties evaluated are anti-inflammatory, vasoprotective, antioxidant, neuroprotective and antidiabetic. However, concrete results of these assays are not presented in any detail.

W.G.

104. Marc MOLL MARQUES – Les plantes a Menorca. Noms i usos. [*Col·lecció Recerca*, **10.**] – Institut Menorquí d'Es-

tudis, Menorca, 2005 (ISBN 84-95718-28-6). 341 pages, drawings; paper.

This is an inventory of popular names and uses of plants on the Balearic Island of Minorca, resulting from its author's own, extensive studies. It covers wild and cultivated plants alike, and indeed the exotics are a clear majority. The emphasis is linguistic. This is reflected by the alphabetic arrangement of entries by (preferred) vernacular designations and by the mention of a great number of local variants or alternatives. Standard Catalan names, often significantly different from the local ones, are also given, and even some Spanish "barbarisms" [sic!]. On the other hand, scant attention has been paid to scientific names, several of which are incorrect or obsolete. As, in the absence of voucher specimens, plant determination cannot be verified, their stated identity should be taken *cum grano salis*, same as the reported pharmaceutical properties. The author's merit is to have assembled and saved from possible oblivion a wealth of popular plant lore.

W.G.

105. Ėstella A. NAZAROVA (ed.) – Pšenica i ee dikie sorodiči v Armenii. **Wheat and its wild relatives in Armenia** – Institut Botaniki Nacional'noj Akademii Nauk RA, Erevan, s.d. [c. 2003]. [16] pages, illustrations (photographs and map) in colour; stapled.

This is a well produced if unpretentious trilingual (Armenian, Russian and English) information leaflet, with texts written by P. A. Ghandilan and photographs taken by V. A. Manakyan. It deals with Armenia's most prominent natural asset. That country considers itself the cradle of wheat, where three of the four known ancestral *Triticum* species *(T. boeoticum, T. urartu* and *T. araraticum)* coexist with other progenitors of bread wheat, now placed in the genera *Aegilops* and *Amblyopyrum*, and with wild primitive bread wheat itself. Conservation of this aboriginal stock, of great importance for research and breeding purposes, is of essence.

W.G.

Conservation Topics

106. Bertrand de MONTMOLLIN & Wendy STRAHM (ed.) **– The top 50 Mediterranean island plants.** Wild plants at the brink of extinction, and what is needed to save them. – IUCN/SSC Mediterranean Islands Plant Specialist Group, Gland & Cambridge, 2005 (ISBN 2-8317-0832-X). x + 109 pages, colour photographs, maps; paper.

The IUCN/SSC Mediterranean Islands Plant Specialist Group has pioneered in producing the first (and hitherto only) booklet of the planned "Top 50" Plants Campaign. It consists of detailed, illustrated fact sheets for 50 threatened, endemic species of a dozen Mediterranean islands or island groups, selected by criteria of high risk, special interest as well as geographical and taxonomic representativity. The choice was well operated, the facts presented are scientifically sound, detailed and up-to-date. All in all, this is a commendable book, well suited to spread a message of urgency among its readers. One must never forget, though, that it illustrates but a fraction of Mediterranean island plants that are presently at risk.

By number of species treated, Sicily (9, including the single fungus: *Pleurotus nebrodensis*) comes on top, followed by the Balearic Islands (8) and Cyprus (7). Crete, with merely 4 species, is clearly underrepresented. Of special note are the endemic genera: *Cremnophyton* (Malta), *Horstrissea* (Crete), *Naufraga* (Majorca), and *Petagnaea* (Sicily). Generic endemism on Mediterranean islands is not limited to those four: others, such as Corsardinian *Castroviejoa* and Cretan *Petromarula*, have not been selected. *Femeniasia*, here accepted, was formerly misplaced in *Centaurea* but has

recently been merged in *Carthamus*. Among the many other interesting examples in the book, let me mention two plants that, having got extinct in the wild, survived in cultivation and seed banks: *Diplotaxis siettiana* (Alboran), which has been reintroduced to its homeland with apparent success, and *Lysimachia balearica* (Majorca) for which reintroduction efforts have not so far succeeded.

The book is also available in French, Spanish, and Greek translations.

W.G.

107. Giovanni PIVA (ed.) – I parchi nel terzo millennio. Ragioni e necessità delle aree protette. – Perdisa, Bologna, 2005 (ISBN 88-8372-235-3). IX + 233 pages, photographs, mostly in colour, tables; hard cover.

The V IUCN World Parks Congress, which took place in September 2003 Durban, will hopefully initiate a new era in the conservation of natural space. One of its spinoffs is the present book, triggered by the Durban Accord which appears in Italian translation at the end. It is devoted to the past, present and future of Italy's network of protected areas, placed in a global context. Today, we are told, 669 territories placed under legal protection exist in the country, corresponding to 3350 km^2 – an impressive figure as such, but less so when compared with the world total of 90000 protected areas with 17.5 Million km^2 of the 2003 UN List.

The book is subdivided into three parts. The first provides the historical background of Italy's Park system, beginning with the two first National Parks (Abruzzo and Gran Paradiso) founded in 1922 on the model of the Yellowstone National Park in the United States. In its seven chapters, five of which are posthumous contributions, this part stands for the founding fathers' perspective, aptly summarised by Luigi Piccioni's review and outlook. After the unproductive centralistic park administration instituted by the fascistic regime in 1933, the idea of parks made slow progress until 1970, went through an explosive expansion thereafter, but today is in urgent need of stabilisation and reinforcement if the park network is to survive intact.

The second part sets off with an impressive series of national park sceneries from all continents, enticing pictures showing nature at its best. The ten chapters that follow describe the multiple facets of protected natural spaces: first the primary aspects such as scope (by Franco Pedrotti, whom we see as the driving force behind this book), basic principles, flora (by Franco Raimondo) and fauna; then practical considerations and constraints: management, economy, sustainable development, human activities, and education.

A much smaller, third part of this fascinating book is devoted to the special case of marine areas under protection.

W.G.

108. Carlo BLASI, Luigi BOITANI, Sandro LA POSTA, Fausto MANES & Marco MARCHETTI (ed.) – Biodiversity in Italy. Contribution to the national biodiversity strategy. – Palombi, Roma, 2007 (ISBN 978-88-6060-041-7). 460 pages, colour illustrations, tables; paper.

The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity are committed to the goals of the Strategic Plan adopted in 2002, with a 2010 target. Several other global, European and national commitments exist with a 2010 deadline, by which biodiversity loss is to be halted or at least significantly reduced. Catchwords include the EU's action programme Environment 2010, IUCN's Countdown 2010 initiative, and the CBD's Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. CBD Parties are asked to develop their own national Biodiversity Strategy Plans, and to assess their actions, again in 2010.

Thanks to the forceful activities of the last few years, of which the published output is being reviewed in this column (see also items 64 and 90, above), Italy stands well prepared to meet these deadlines. Whereas

the two former items concern stocktaking as well as the assembling and synoptic presentation of data, the present book aims at synthesis, evaluation and outlook. Being written in English, it addresses itself both to a national and international constituency.

The contents are too manifold to permit their presentation in detail, beyond the mention of the main subject areas. After an introduction embedding the Italian endeavour in a European and global context, with an informative overview of the existing framework of organisms, conferences and programmes, there is a causal analysis of biodiversity patterns, from genome through species to landscape level, and an assessment of biodiversity loss. The next chapters are botanical (flora and vegetation) and zoological (fauna). Forests and agricultural areas are treated separately. Conservation is considered in both its in-situ and ex-situ aspects. A presentation of methods and programmes of biodiversity monitoring, both on a national and European level, concludes the book.

The list of almost one hundred authors responsible for the various included texts gives an idea of the huge effort Italian biologist have made and continue to make in order to safeguard the natural wealth of their country. The fact that they were given this – perhaps unique – opportunity is laudable; even more praiseworthy is their committed energy in seizing it.

W.G.

109. Rosario SCHICCHI & Francesco Maria RAIMONDO (ed.) – Rendiconto sul progetto LIFE Natura "Conservazione in situ ed ex situ di *Abies nebrodensis* (Lojac.) Mattei". – Luxograph, Palermo, 2006. 128 pages, 123 photographs, mostly in colour, 35 figures (facsimiles, maps, graphs), 16 tables; paper.

Abies nebrodensis, the Sicilian representative of the old Mediterranean fir stock surviving in widely disjunct relic areas, has been severely decimated by man during the 19th century (and before), so that in the first half of the 20th century it was all but extinct in the wild. The single surviving natural stand, protected since 1954, initially consisted of immature individuals only. The present book presents the results of a four-year campaign (2001-2005) to secure its survival and spread. It is interesting not only by the detail in which it describes the assembled data and the measures taken, but also by some original traits which are apt to inspire similar projects undertaken elsewhere.

Today the single surviving natural population consists of 30 trees, of which 24 have already attained sexual maturity, and a steadily increasing number of spontaneous seedlings. Presently the worst problem, and the most delicate to solve, is the risk of genetic pollution of the native taxon by planted fir species. Such foreign trees (principally *Abies alba* and *A. cephalonica,* also some *A. nordmanniana, A. pinsapo* and a few exotic species) were introduced by the forestry service for afforestation purposes and are also present in numerous private gardens and public parks of the neighbourhoods. Crossability was to be expected, and was indeed experimentally proved during the project. As *Abies* is wind pollinated, the combined pollen production of the numerous planted trees was due to outweigh that of *A. nebrodensis*. It was therefore planned to remove all non-indigenous trees from the area, which unsurprisingly was not a popular measure among the local population. A simple and convincing solution was found, to use the foreign trees as supports for grafting rather than felling them.

The feasibility of this technique had been proved long ago by Palermo botanist Domenico Lanza. During the project, his role as a pioneer advocate of saving *A. nebrodensis* became apparent. Two of the largest and oldest cultivated trees of *A. nebrodensis,* to be seen at Lanza's villa in Gibilmanna near Palermo, are the result of grafts he made almost a century ago. Some of Lanza's

unpublished documentary photographs of residual native fir trees, donated by his family, testify to his early conservation endeavours.

W.G.

110. Boško ČUŠIN (ed.) – Natura 2000 v Sloveniji. Rastline. – Založba, Ljubljana, 2004 (ISBN 961-6500-66-x). 172 pages, illustrations (photographs, maps, graph) in colour, 1 table; laminated cover.

This attractive booklet summarises the advice of botanists for the establishment of proposed Sites of Community Interest (pSCI) in Slovenia, in the framework of the Natura 2000 Network. It presents case studies for 26 plant species listed in Annex II of the EU Habitat Directive, and for 24 of them proposes that one or more of their known Slovenian populations be protected in an SCI. For the remaining two, *Bromus grossus* and *Euphrasia marchesettii*, no Slovenian localities are known, and their past existence in the country is doubtful.

The case studies, written by a team of 13 Slovenian botanists, are detailed, of five pages on average, including plant and habitat photographs as well as grid maps of known distribution. Whereas the text is basically in Slovene, there are English summaries at the end of each species account.

W.G.

111. Toni NIKOLIĆ & Jasenka TOPIĆ – Crvena knjiga vaskularne flore Hrvatske. Kategorije EX, RE, CR, EN i VU. – Ministarstvo kulture, Državni zavod za zaštitu prirode, Republika Hrvatska, Zagreb, 2005. [2] + 693 pages, 309 + 24 colour photographs and graphs, 239 + 5 maps in colour, tables; hard cover.

This sizeable and heavy new Red Data Book on the Croatian flora presents, in monographic detail, the treatment of 234 species and subspecies of which the survival on the territory of Croatia is at risk, corresponding to less than 5 % of the country's vascular flora. It furthermore enumerates 186 taxa that are "nearly threatened" and another 340 that are potentially under threat but for which the data for risk assessment are deficient. Of the fully treated taxa only a single one (*Dianthus multinervis*, formerly endemic to Jabuka islet in the Adriatic Sea) is totally extinct (EX), whereas 10 are believed extinct in Croatia (RE) but subsist elsewhere. Of those surviving, 90 are assigned to the highest risk category (CR), 62 are considered as endangered (EN), and 71 as vulnerable (VU).

The central and largest portion of the book is devoted to the detailed presentation of each threatened taxon, including synonymy and full description, ecology and distribution (with locality data), threat assessment and bibliography. Each is illustrated by a (mostly excellent) colour photograph of a live plant, or in the case of extinct taxa, an historical herbarium specimen; and for each the known distribution in Croatia has been mapped. This portion is entirely written in Croatian, but the information most relevant for conservation purposes is also presented in English, in concise tabular format.

The work has over 20 authors, who were assisted by many people, but throughout it bears the imprint of the editors' care. Nikolić and Topić themselves wrote the introductory chapters and authored many individual treatments. The monolithic appearance of the book is to their credit.

The general chapters also appear in English translation. Apart from brief, informative texts on Croatia's flora, phytogeography and vegetation, they outline the criteria and conventions used in the book and give ample room to threat assessment and threat analysis. It is of note that the IUCN's ambitious new risk assessment criteria (version 3.1) have been consistently applied.

The volume as a whole is a choice example of how sound and thorough, taxonomy-based knowledge can assist efforts to preserve biological diversity. The data it includes are exactly the kind of information

that a rational conservation policy requires in order to be efficient. It is well justified, therefore, that OPTIMA's Prize Commission selected it as the best 2005 publication in the field of Mediterranean plant taxonomy, resulting in the award of the OPTIMA Medal in Silver to its editors at the recent XII OPTIMA Meeting in Pisa. W.G.

112. Tanyo M. MICHEV & Maya P. STOYNEVA (ed.) – Inventory of Bulgarian wetlands and their biodiversity. Part **1:** Non-lotic wetlands. – Elsi-M, Sofia, 2007 (ISBN 978-954-9441-09-3). 364 pages, tables; 1 hard cover volume + CD-ROM.

This book, with the accompanying CD-ROM minidisk which is a kind of electronic supplement to it, is neither more nor less than what the title promises: an inventory. Its subjects are the wetlands associated with stagnant (lentic) water, whereas those of running (lotic) water are to be dealt with in a second volume. The amount of data that exists on Bulgarian wetlands is amazing. A consistent numbering is here proposed which, for the "stagnant" wetlands alone, runs from 1 to almost 10,000. Even taking into account that for about 44 % no data except location and size are known, and that over 2000 no longer exist, the amount of available information is still enormous. By consequence, the present book is very dry and factual.

The printed text includes 23 papers by different authors, mostly in English but two with Bulgarian versions and one (on terminology) in Bulgarian. Aspects covered are as diverse as typology, mapping, modelling, geology, conservation, and associated organisms. The latter are dealt with in several zoological and 7 botanical chapters (palynology, algae and cyanobacteria, micromycetes, macromycetes, lichens, mosses, and vegetation), but no species level information is given in the text, and for botanical groups, none in the electronic supplement either.

The avowed purpose of the book is to enhance conservation of wetlands and their habitats by providing the necessary factual bases, compiled from a huge number of scattered publications. Indeed, the reference list alone fills 72 printed pages! It is to be hoped that conservation managers and decision-makers will make good use of this opportunity. The collection of fact sheets on the individual wetlands, which form five distinct text files in pdf format on the CD-ROM, is not however, as the authors suggest, a database in the modern sense of the term, and no particular searching facilities are provided to facilitate its access.

W.G.

113. Panagiôtês DÊMOPOULOS, Erwin BERGMEIER, Kônstantinos THEODÔROPOULOS, Petra FISCHER & Maria TSIAFOULÊ (ed.) – Odêgos parakolouthêsês tupôn oikotopôn & futikôn eidôn stis periohes Diktuou Natura 2000 me foreis diaheirisês stên Ellada. – Panepistêmio Iôanninôn, Tmêma Diaheirisês Periballontos Hôrotaxias kai Fusikôn Porôn, Agrinio, 2004 (ISBN 960-233-168-2). 169 pages, 41 black-and-white and colour illustrations (photographs, drawings, graphs, maps), tables; paper.

The title of this manual, in translation, is "The monitoring guide for habitat types and plant species in the Natura 2000 sites with Management Institutions in Greece". The Greek text is summarised in English on the front and back cover flaps of the booklet. The Natura 2000 Network, set up under the auspices of the European Union, has been a real success story in Greece, where at present no less than 239 areas, covering the impressive total of over 35,000 km^2, have been registered as either Sites of Community Interest (SCI), or Special Protected Areas (SPA), or both. By 2003, 27 Management Institutions had been entrusted with responsibility for 78 of these sites.

Much of the contents of the Guide are of a technical nature, dealing with the way in which the Network has been set up in Greece, explaining the definition and assessment of threats of various categories, and providing guidelines for the monitoring of habitats and plant species. At the end there is a chapter of immediate botanical interest, with specific monitoring guidelines for 17 plant species of particular relevance: one moss, two ferns and 14 seed plants, 13 of them Greek (and no less than 6 Cretan) endemics, to name: *Bupleurum capillare, B. kakiskalae, Centaurea heldreichii, C. niederi, Cephalanthera cucullata, Globularia stygia, Hypericum aciferum, Nepeta sphaciotica, Origanum dictamnus, Paeonia parnassica, Silene holzmannii, Veronica oetaea,* and *Zelkova abelicea.*

W.G.

114. Neriman ÖZHATAY – Türkiye'nin BTC boru hattı boyunca önemli bitki alanları. Important plant areas along BTC pipeline in Turkey. – BTC Boru Hattı Şirketi, Ankara, 2006 (ISBN 975-404-777-4). 303 pages, coloured illustrations, tables; paper.

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline enters Turkey in the country's northeastern corner, crosses Turkey more or less diagonally and reaches the Mediterranean coast at the harbour of Ceyhan. Most of it, 1076 of its total length of 1760 km, lies on Turkish ground. Aware of the impact of its works on the environment, the BTC Pipeline Company has agreed to set up and fund an Environmental Investment Programme, of which the present book is one of the results. An excellent investment indeed!

By reviewing 22 floristically rich areas in the regions crossed by the pipeline, Neriman Özhatay has produced an impressive and impressively beautiful book. With the aid of a team of 16 co-authors with special regional knowledge, she describes and illustrates the flora and vegetation of each of the selected areas, with particular emphasis on the rare, threatened and endemic species, assesses human impact and threats of various kinds, and proposes conservation status, as appropriate, for the 19 studied territories that are not as yet protected by law. The 22 areas of study are thereby added to the 122 pre-existing Important Plant Areas (IPA) of Turkey declared in 2003 (see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 90-91. 2004).

Much of the book is bilingual, in particular the main body of text in which the regions and areas are described, as well as the tables and fact sheets (but not the introduction). The plant photographs need no translation, they are just gorgeous, technically perfect and made with professional skill. They illustrate better than any words could do the value of Turkey's botanical patrimony and the importance of affording any possible kind of protection to it.

W.G.

115. Daniel BALÁŽ, Karol MARHOLD & Peter URBAN (ed.) – Červený zoznam rastlín živočíchov Slovenska. [*Ochr. Prir. (Bratislava),* **20,** *Supl.*] – Štátna Ochrana Prírody Slovenskej Republiky, Centrum Ochrany Prírody a Krajiny, Banská Bystrica, 2001 (ISBN 80-89035-05-1). 160 pages, tables; paper.

The "Red list of plants and animals of Slovakia" essentially consists of a series of 28 lists of names and associated threat categories, each list covering a major taxon. Apparently, all organisms except non-photosynthetic prokaryotes are covered. Of the included lists, 23 pertain to zoology and 5 to botany (fungi, cyanobacteria and algae, lichens, bryophytes, and vascular plants). All are updates based on previous editions of Slovak red lists or red data books.

The botanical lists enumerate the impressive total of 2931 taxa, of which 192 (73 vascular plants, 26 bryophytes, 5 fungi and no less than 88 lichens) are presumed extinct on the Slovak territory, one *(Aldrovanda*

vesiculosa) is extinct in the wild, and 1949 fall into a high risk category (492 critically endangered, 553 endangered, 904 vulnerable). Such high figures are worrying indeed. Information of the proportion of endemics among the extinct and heavily threatened taxa, which would have been interesting, is unfortunately lacking.

W.G.

Gardens and Gardening

116. Wolfredo WILDPRET DE LA TORRE, Antonio GARCÍA GALLO, Israel PÉREZ VARGAS & Juan Sergio SOCORRO HERNÁNDEZ – Flora ornamental del casco histórico de La Laguna, patrimonio de la humanidad. – Ayuntamiento, San Cristóbal de La Laguna, [2005] (ISBN 84-88919-92-1). 407 pages, colour photographs, plans; hard cover with dust jacket.

The ancient city core of the Canary Islands' university town, San Cristóbal de La Laguna, has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO – a deserved distinction of which the islanders are justly proud. Its old colonial architecture is unique by itself but is particularly enticing by the harmonious integration of decorative plants in its precincts. La Laguna is not what one might call a green city, space is too narrow for vast extents of greenery; yet on every square, in many of the ancient patios one finds trees, vines and flower beds. They are the subject of the present volume.

Nineteen green spaces of La Laguna were inventoried to write this particular kind of Flora. All are shown and described in the book's first part. The second, larger portion presents the 129 species that were encountered. As its title implies, it is not a complete floristic inventory but limits itself to decorative plants. No weeds were admitted, nor have seasonal plantations been taken into account (which may explain the absence of *Cyclamen persicum,* featuring on the photographs on pp. 95 and 293). With the exception of *Selaginella kraussiana,* all species are at least tall herbs, mostly shrubs, trees or vines. There are four native plants among them that are tolerated rather than planted, growing wild on roofs and old walls: *Aeonium urbicum, Davallia canariensis, Polypodium macaronesicum,* and *Sonchus acaulis.* Other members of Tenerife's old endemic stock, however, are cultivated ornamentals: *Apollonias barbujana, Convolvulus floridus, Dracaena draco, Kleinia neriifolia, Laurus novocanariensis,* and *Phoenix canariensis*. The remainder come from all around the world.

This is a fluidly written, utterly readable and superbly illustrated book that does honour to the city in which and for which it was written. No doubt will it fulfil its declared purpose, to show to local people the beauty and value of what they possess.

W.G.

117. Gianni BEDINI – L'Orto Botanico di Pisa. Piante, storia, pesonaggi, ruoli. **The Botanic Garden of Pisa.** Plants, history, people, roles. [*Studi Pisani Cultura e Società,* **16.**] – Pacini on behalf of Pisa University Press, Pisa, 2007. 155 pages, 81 figures (mostly colour photographs); paper.

There is an old rivalry between the botanic gardens in Pisa and Padova, regarding age. The Pisa garden, founded by Luca Ghini in 1543, wins by one year and is therefore the world's oldest institution of its kind – but it was transferred to its present site in 1591, leaving Padova as the oldest still existing actual garden. When the Pisa Garden hosted the last OPTIMA Meeting in 2007, participants were pleased to have the present, recently published guide booklet put at their disposal. It is bilingual, with the Italian text at the front and the English version at the end, separated by the illustrations.

Besides describing the various areas of the garden's three hectares, Gianni Bedini

gives a lively account of its transformations through history, mentioning in passing examples of unbelievable secondary radial growth of its old palm trees. The all but unknown historical museum, inaugurated in 1991 but open to visitors only on special request, is presented at length and illustrated by several of its items, such as botanists' portraits of the 16th and 17th century and wax models of the famous Florentine school, and also by is its beautifully restored façade in grotesque style. The garden's oldest part, known as botany school, has long lost its original symbolistic layout, but the central water basins of its six basic squares are believed to be the four century old originals.

The last picture shows an unusual view of the Garden covered with snow. Is it perhaps meant to be symbolic? Recently announced dramatic budget cuts for Italy's universities might well result in a new Ice Age for structures which, like botanic gardens, are kind of marginal in academic life. Yet the unique value of the Pisa Garden, and of others throughout Italy alike, will hopefully help secure their survival.

W.G.

118. Sabine SCHULZE (ed.) – Gärten: Ordnung – Inspiration – Glück. – Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2006 [catalogue edition]. 392 pages, photographs and facsimiles, mostly in colour; paper.

The exhibition on "Gardens: order, inspiration, happiness" was opened in the Städel Museum in Frankfurt on the Main in November 2006 and moved on to Munich in April 2007. It illustrated gardens and gardening through the ages, mainly through paintings but also photographs, silhouettes, and even herbarium sheets. Starting with the "little paradise garden" by an unknown Rhenish painter of the early 15th century and ending in the 20th century with works of Paul Klee and Joseph Beuys, it conveyed a fascinating picture of the changing yet essentially stable human perception of man-made "enclosed spaces of domesticated nature". The sumptuous catalogue documenting the exhibition is a worthy way to keep its memory alive.

Some of the book's contents are of direct relevance to botanical science, to begin with Walter Lack's thoughtful general chapter on the essence of gardens and gardening. Among the botanical highlights here illustrated are some of Humboldt's Latin American specimens, including types, kept in the Willdenow Herbarium (B-W; how *Bignonia chica* came to be renamed *B. chicagoensis* is a complete mystery); other herbarium sheets, linked to the names of Clifford, Goethe, and Klee; Hans Weiditz' original ink with watercolour illustrations from which the woodcuts in Brunfels' "Herbarum vivae eicones" of 1530 were made – arguably the first scientific minded, naturalistic plant representations ever; and a few of Conrad Gessner's admirable, annotated original plates meant to illustrate his "Historia plantarum", made around 1560 but not published before our time.

W.G.

Bibliography and Biography

119. Gunnar BROBERG – Carl Linnaeus. – Swedish Institute, Stockholm, 2006 (ISBN 978-91-520-0912-3). 44 pages, illustrations in colour; paper.

Broberg, one of the best experts of the life and writings of the great Linnaeus, published his first biographic essay in 1978 on the occasion of the 200th jubilee of Linnaeus's death. What is declared the original edition of the present text appeared (in English and Swedish) in 1992. This new edition, designed to commemorate the 3rd centenary of Linnaeus's birth, was apparently first published in 2005 (reprinted 2006) in Spanish, then in 2006 (with some reissues dated 2007) in English, Swedish, French, German, Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, and probably in other languages.

Writings on Linnaeus, taken together, fill several library shelves, yet this one has

something unique. It is concise, deliberately incomplete, written for easy readability and with love for the anecdotic detail. More than a biography, it is a eulogy and apology for Sweden's national hero. Having read this booklet you may still not claim to "know" Linnaeus; but if you knew of Linnaeus beforehand, it will help you to understand him better. Many of the illustrations, showing little known documents and portraits, will assist in this process.

W.G.

120. Paloma BLANCO FERNÁNDEZ DE CALEYA, Dolores RODRÍGUEZ VEIGA ISERN & Pilar RODRÍGUEZ VEIGA ISERN – El estudiante de la hierbas. Diario del botánico Juan Isern Batlló y Carrera (1821-1866), miembro de la Expedición Científica del Pacífico (1862-1866). [*Ruizia*, **18.**] – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 2006 (ISBN 84-00-08414-4). 731 pages, 44 photographs and facsimiles in colour or halftone; laminated cover and dust jacket.

This is not a book relevant in any way for Mediterranean botany, but as its hero is a genuine Mediterranean, I may be forgiven for presenting it here. In his younger days, Juán Isern collected extensively in Spain, especially his homely Pyrenees, was companion to Bubani and Webb, correspondent of Willkomm and Graells, and had Cutanda as his mentor. Several Spanish collections of his exist, the earliest at the University of Gerona, the later ones in the Museums of Madrid, Barcelona and Florence. These are not, however, the focus of the present account.

Isern left Spain in August 1862, the botanical member of a group of scientists that was to accompany a squadron of the Spanish fleet on mission to S America and the Pacific. In that capacity he crossed the continent twice, first in the south from Buenos Aires to Valparaiso, then in the reverse direction from Guayaquil via Quito and the Amazon River to Gran Pará, and in-between he also explored Bolivia and Peru, from the coast via La Paz to Lima. He returned to Spain in December 1866, terminally ill, and died just a month after his arrival in Madrid from a liver disease contracted on the last stage of his trip. His botanical harvest, consisting of over 8000 different species, remained unattended for many years, until José Cuatrecasas took charge of it in the 1930s. By now, the labelling and mounting of the material has been completed, but identification is still in progress.

Paloma Blanco of the Madrid Museum, has dedicated many years to the reordering of Isern's South American collections and travel notes. Here now is the fruit of her work, co-authored by two of Isern's descendants. Apart from explanatory material, it consist of two principal parts: Isern's travel diary, preceded by incomplete autobiographic notes and complemented by letters he wrote to colleagues and superiors at home; and the full inventory of his harvest, identified as far as possible, with label information in which his field notes have been integrated.

W.G.

121. Piero CUCCUINI & Chiara NEPI – Le collezioni delle palme di Odoardo Beccari – Sezione botanica, Museo di Storia Naturale, Firenze, 2004. 34 pages, 18 figures (photographs, facsimiles, maps), mostly in colour; paper.

An exhibition at the Museum of Natural History in Florence, early in 2004, was devoted to the life and work of Beccari (1843-1920) and in particular to his main field of study, the palms. The same exhibition, substantially rearranged, was later (December 2005 to April 2006) shown in the Palermo Botanic Garden, for which purpose a 4-page bilingual (Italian and English) loose insert was added to the present brochure.

There were two distinct periods in Beccari's active life as a botanist. The first consists of 16 years (1865-1880) of all but

continuous travels and explorations in Malaysia, extended to New Guinea and E Africa, from which he brought back huge amounts of botanical, zoological and ethnological materials on which he subsequently worked at Florence. The second, encompassing his last 20 years, saw him working exclusively on palms – which to be sure had been a pet of his already before. Corresponding to these phases of his life, Beccari built two distinct herbaria, the first of his Malaysian collections, the second restricted to palms (see item 132, below).

The present, well illustrated exhibition guide includes chapters on the palm family, on Beccari's life, and on his herbarium and palm fruit collection. It ends with a useful selected bibliography of his relevant publications.

W.G.

122. Francesco M. RAIMONDO & Gianniantonio DOMINA (ed.) – Il diario del viaggio in Sicilia di Karel B. Presl, tratto dal manoscritto di K. B. Presl, Briefe in die Heimat, geschrieben auf einer Reise durch Sizilien und Italien (Lettere in patria su un viaggio in Sicilia e Italia). [*Seminario di Storia della Scienza, Quaderni,* **10.**] – Facoltà di Scienze Matematiche, Fisiche e Naturali, Università di Palermo, 2007. 363 pages; paper.

Prague-born botanist Karel Boriwog Presl was aged 23 when he embarked on his journey to Sicily in 1817. As a result, he published dozens of new species, which made him a pioneer of Sicilian botany. Of his "Flora sicula" only the first volume was published (in 1826, reprinted 2003 – see OPTIMA Newslett. 37: 101. 2004), and locality indications for new species described therein are often scant. The manuscript of the second volume is extant in the archives of the National Museum in Prague.

In the same archives another manuscript of Presl has been found. It is dated 1821 and is a detailed relation of his Sicilian journey, in the form of transcribed letters to his senior brother Jan Svatopluk. This manuscript was obviously intended for publication. It is written in German and divided into two halves, each with a separate pagination (1-82 and 14-171). The first part kind of sets the scene, consisting of letters written in March from aboard, when the ship was kept in quarantine in Messina and later again, after a few day spent waiting in that city, from a second quarantine in the harbour of Milazzo. These letters are based on what information on Sicily Presl could gather from the books he had taken with him. The second part (April to July) is of more immediate interest for botany, as it relates Presl's travels around Palermo and hence to Cefalù, Castelbuono and the first heights of the Madonie Mountains, and subsequently to Trapani and the Egadian Islands. It also refers to his acquaintance with Gussone, by seven years his senior, and Bivona, both of whom joined him on some of his early excursions. Of professor Tineo (the son) he is rather critical, as he found the flower beds of the Botanic Garden badly neglected. The account ends abruptly and is obviously incomplete, as neither the announced main excursion to the Madonie nor a later one to Catania and Mount Aetna (where he was to discover *Berberis aetnensis*) are mentioned.

In the present volume both the original German text (transcribed by Jitla Krešálková) and its Italian translation (by Katrin Wall) are included, with explanatory footnotes in either language. An index to scientific plant names makes it easy to find the collecting localities for many of Presl's specimens (now kept at PR and PRC). A bibliography of Presl's botanical writings includes a reference to his doctoral thesis on "*Gramineae* siculae", said to have been published in 1818 – apparently an earlier (partial?) version of "*Cyperaceae* and *Gramineae* siculae"of 1820. This thesis, unaccounted for in botanical literature, might well be the earliest place of publication of names such as *Koeleria splendens* C. Presl.

W.G.

123. Budislav TATIĆ – Od čobančeta do profesora univerziteta. – Menadžer, Beograd, 2004 (ISBN 86-315-0251-0). 331 pages, 33 black-and-white photographs; laminated cover.

There are not many botanists' autobiographies I am aware of. Linnaeus is known to have written four during his lifetime, so Budislav Tatić is definitely in prominent company! The account of his life is placed under the title "From shepherd boy to university professor", showing that he is well aware of his achievements and takes justified pride in them. Being unfamiliar with the Serbian language I cannot alas write much on the book's contents; for sure, the photographic documents reproduced at the end, especially those taken at meetings, show some known sceneries and familiar faces.

W.G.

124. Blaže RISTOVSKI (ed.) – Spomenica posvetena na Kiril Micevski redoven člen na Makedonskata Akademija na Naukite i Umetnostite. – Makedonska Akademija na Naukite i Umetnostite, Skopje, 2002. 47 pages, portrait; paper.

Kiril Micevski, the leading expert of the flora of his home country and author of its national Flora, "Flora na Republika Makedonija" (see item 31, above), died on 6 February 2002, in his 76th year. This modest fascicle includes the texts of the allocutions held at his funeral and during a commemorative session of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, of which he was a distinguished member. Among them is the address of Vlado Matevski, who succeeds him in taking charge of the Flora.

W.G.

125. Petros MPROUSALÊS – 90 Hronia sunefies kai liakades. – Ellênikê Etairia Prostasias tês Fusês, Athêna, 2005 (ISBN 960-6030-547-3). 136 pages, black-and-white illustrations; laminated cover.

Pierre Broussalis looking back onto "Ninety years of clouds and sunshine": a promising booklet to read for those familiar with Modern Greek. Just for memory: Broussalis, born 1913 near Izmir into a Greek family with some French background (which explains his having been christened Pierre), had to flee his native Anatolia as a little schoolboy, to live through moved years till after World War II. He is not a trained botanist but a self-made man in all of his activities, among which his "hobbies" are prominent: mountaineering, photography and the study of nature, wildflowers in particular. He grew into one of the most active Greek pioneers of nature conservation, a leader of the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature of which he is now honorary president. Some of his articles, of uncited source but probably from either "To Bouno" (of the Greek Alpine Club) or "Ê Fusis" (of the just mentioned Society), are reprinted at the end.

W.G.

History and Arts

126. Marco BERETTA & Alessandro TOSI (ed.) – Linnaeus in Italy. The spread of a revolution in science. – Watson Publishing Int., Sagamore Beach, 2007 (ISBN 0-88135-393-0). XXIII + 340 pages, 15 figures, 5 tables; hard cover with dust jacket.

Linnaeus, who was no great traveller, never visited Italy. However, through correspondence and specimen exchange, he was well acquainted with that country's flora, and his library abounds in works by Italian naturalists. Conversely, Linnaeus's ideas on the classification and naming of organisms exerted a profound influence on the scientific world of the 18th Century, not least in Italy where the natural sciences were then as flourishing and diverse as anywhere in Europe.

The book comprises twenty contributions by as many different authors, origi-

nally presented at a symposium held at the Botanic Garden of Pisa on 9-10 June 2006. These papers are as manifold as the subject they illustrate. Some deal with Italian specimens and books held by Linnaeus, and many others with the reception of Linnaeus's thoughts in Italy, the opposition they initially met and controversy they raised. To appreciate the complexity of this process, one must bear in mind that in Linnaeus's time Italy was nothing more than a geographical term (as Metternich was to put it, a century later), consisting of a dozen major and several minute separate political units, states or foreign possessions. No less diverse were the botanical traditions, smitten by idiosyncratic domineering naturalists.

The volume was presented during the XII OPTIMA Meeting in Pisa, on 12 September 2007, by Anders Bjurner, Swedish ambassador in Italy, who sponsored the event. Being written chiefly by the historically minded, it is a mine of information little known in botanical circles – and sometimes unexpected in such a place. I was, for instance, surprised and delighted to learn that a small set of Rafinesque's Italian plants (all thought to have been lost in shipwreck) has recently turned up among J. E. Smith's collections at the Linnean Society of London. A full index of personal names is, therefore, a highly welcome feature; scientific names of organisms (anyway often misspelled) were less generously treated.

W.G.

127. Dietrich VON ENGELHARDT & Francesco Maria RAIMONDO (ed.) – Goethe e la pianta. Natura, scienza e arte. [*Seminario di Storia della Scienza, Quaderni,* **9.**] – Facoltà di Scienze, Università, Palermo, 2006. 165 pages, illustrations (photographs, facsimiles) in colour and black-and-white; paper.

An illustrious if diverse group of European scientists came together in Palermo on 17 and 18 April 2004, to illuminate under a variety of angles a subject of common interest: the botany of Germany's national poet Goethe and its roots in Italy, Sicily in particular. In 15 contributions from disciplines as diverse as philosophy, history, linguistics, and of course botany, here presented in print, they revived the interaction of a German genius with a congenial environment.

Goethe travelled Italy for almost two years (1786-1788). In Palermo, he visited repeatedly what is now the Park of Villa Giulia, contiguous to the Botanic Garden then still in the planning stage. It is this very environment, "the most marvellous place on earth", that on 17 April 1787 (the date of the meeting was not, we are told, chosen fortuitously) inspired him to conceive his model of the primordial plant, or "Urpflanze", on which the 20th century German morphological school of Troll was to be built. From a botanical perspective, Sandro Pignatti's contribution on the genesis of Goethe's notion of plant metamorphosis and the primeval plant is central to the theme of the Meeting. The concept of the Urpflanze is not, however, the only subject treated. Among the botanical contributions, let me mention that of Franco Raimondo on contemporary Sicilian botany and botanists; of Pietro Mazzola, with Katja Mineo, on Sicilian plants mentioned in Goethe's travel account and their botanical identity; of Walter Lack took some pencil drawings made by Goethe as a pretext for interpreting Ferdinand Bauer's slightly earlier Sicilian flower sketches; and of Fabio Garbari who, starting from Goethe's initial visit to the Botanic Garden in Padova (and his close miss, in time, to see that in Palermo), surveys Italy's Botanic Gardens, from Pisa (founded in 1543) to the present day.

In short: a slim book with impressively diverse and inspiring contents. My compliment to the editors.

W.G.

128. H. Walter LACK – Florilegium imperiale. Botanische Schätze für Kaiser

Franz I. von Österreich. – Prestel, München, 2006 (ISBN 978-3-7913-3591-9). 303 pages, 16 colour photographs, 150 facsimiles in colour (including frontispieces), 4 in black-and-white; cloth in paper sheath.

Emperor Francis I of Austria was known as "Blumenkaiser" (emperor of flowers) because of his known passion for botany – a passion that was kind of hereditary in the imperial family but particularly obvious in his case. Not only did he spend a fortune in building, filling and entertaining various gardens and greenhouses, he also employed a botanical artist full time to document his plant collections by means of painting – the best one could do to ensure permanence to the fragile and ephemerous beauty of flowers, at a time when photography was yet to be invented. Mathias Schmutzer, of whom little is known to date apart from his flower paintings, held that office for at least three decades (1794-1824), until his death.

Even Schmutzer's paintings were all but unknown till now. Dormant in the archives of the Austrian National Library, they had never been shown in public except for a few that were exhibited during the International Botanical Congress held in Vienna in 1905. For sure, Nissen had seen them and mentions them in his work on botanical illustration; yet they remained largely ignored. There are 1314 of them, stored in 16 large cases: large paintings in water-colour combined with ink and body colour, with botanical identifications by the younger Jacquin and Host. The present book shows 120 of them at its core, beautifully reproduced in somewhat reduced size (by about one third).

The scientific value of these paintings is scant in the field of botany except for history. They are the first and only documentation of the contents of the imperial gardens and greenhouses in the early 19th century. Moreover, due to a lucky circumstance, they bear unique testimony to the way in which artists of that time practised their craft. What Lack has discovered, and discloses here, is the existence of a full set (1433 sheets) of preliminary workshop versions of these paintings. They must have come to Berlin soon after Schmutzer's death and were bound in 6 large volumes, of which 5 are still extant in the State Library there, whereas the first of the set ended up in Kraków as Polish war booty. The sheets, of which a small sample is reproduced here, are partly or fully coloured and are variously annotated, often with exact date and provenance. To the expert sleuth, they also show traces of the techniques used in copying the outlines from the draft to the original.

This one more of the sumptuous books that have been produced under the authorship or editorship of Walter Lack. As all the others (see e.g. item 140, below) it shows luxurious outfit in terms of paper, printing and binding. Schmutzer's paintings are a feast to the eye – except if botanically trained. Contrary to Redouté and the Bauer brothers, Schmutzer did not benefit from the supervision and guidance of trained botanists, and it shows. The best test, as usual, is insertion of leaves and flowers on the axis, and in this Schmutzer fails. Look at the oleander in plate 6, where some of the leaf triplets of a whorl are shown as a single ternate leaf, and you will see what I mean.

As to the text, few words may suffice. Lack is a brilliant writer, erudite and pleasant to read, sparkling with little known facts and anecdotes – but on top of that, never is he better inspired than when, as here, he writes about his beloved home city Vienna.

W.G.

129. Luciana SITRAN REA (ed.) – L'orto rappresentato. Scienza, didattica e immagine a Padova tra Sette e Ottocento. – Biblos, Cittadella (Padova), 2002. 367 pages, 2 photographs, 160 facsimiles, mostly full-page and in colour; hard cover with dust jacket.

Among the treasures of the library of the Botanic Garden in Padua is a book in large folio size with 345 plates of original paintings, all but 4 anonymous. They were commissioned by Antonio Giuseppe Bonato, professor of botany and prefect of the Padua Garden (1794-1836), and were bound together under the title "Piante del R. Orto di Padova" by Visiani his successor. The first set of 117 plates were made for teaching purposes and served Bonato to illustrate his lectures. The fortunate fact that they were durable and durably preserved (as is certainly less likely to happen with modern power-point presentations) provides us with historically valuable insights into the methods and contents of university teaching in the early 19th century. Interestingly, no less that 24 of the tables served to demonstrate and compare the systems of classification of Tournefort, Linnaeus, and the then brand-new natural one of Jussieu.

The remaining 228 paintings feature plants then growing in the Padua garden. They are of high artistic quality, botanically faithful, obviously the work of a skilled and talented artist. Thanks to the experience of Lucia Tongiorgi Tommasi, who wrote the central chapter of this book, he could now be reliably identified. His name was Balthasar Cattrani (or Baldassarre Catrani), and although little of him is known he was a very productive and highly valued painter in his time. The existence of well over 2000 sheets of his is documented, most of which have now been dispersed through the antiquarian trade. He must have worked regularly at the Padua Garden, but also for a time in the services of Empress Josephine in Malmaison, as at the sale of her son Eugène de Beauharnais' library, in 1935, no less than 1600 of his works, bound in 24 volumes, were auctioned.

Preceded by introductory, general chapters, among which the architectural history of the Padua Garden, by Margherita Azzi Vicentini, is of note, this sumptuous volume brings faithful facsimiles, in about half the original size, of 57 of the paintings ascribed to Cattrani, plus for comparison 10 Cattrani plates from the holdings of libraries in the United States of America. For each plate, there is a full page of explanatory and descriptive botanical text by Luigino Curti and Fernanda Menegalle.

The second part of the book is devoted to 18th-19th century university teaching, a subject introduced competently and with a wealth of interesting details by Elsa Maria Cappelletti and Arturo Paganelli. This part is illustrated with facsimiles of 60 of the 117 didactic plates of the Padua Codex, including the complete set of those illustrating the Tournefort system.

W.G.

130. Laura SETTESOLDI, Marcello TARDELLI & Mauro RAFFAELLI – Esploratori italiani nell'Africa orientale fra il 1870 ed il 1930. Missioni scientifiche con raccolte botaniche, rilievi geografici ed etnografici. – Centro Studi Erbario Tropicale, Università degli Studi di Firenze [Pubblicazione No. **104**], Firenze, 2005. [2] + 142 pages, illustrations (photographs, facsimiles, maps) mostly in colour; hard cover.

The Royal Colonial Herbarium was founded in Rome in 1904 by Pirotta then transferred to Florence in 1914, to become spatially linked with the Central Italian Herbarium (FI). For obvious reasons it lost one after the other its two epithets, to become the "Erbario Tropicale", since 2004 a "Centro Studi" of Florence University. It is particularly rich in plants of Tropical East Africa, Somalia and Ethiopia (including Eritrea) in the first place. Its most valuable historical stock, including many type specimens, is due to the exploration of these countries by Italian naturalists between 1870 and 1930. To them the present volume is devoted.

A biographical note is devoted to each of 16 protagonists of 11 botanical expeditions of that period. There are well known botanists

among them, such as Odoardo Beccari, Achille Terracciano, Adriano Fiori and Emilio Chiovenda. Mapped itineraries have been prepared for each expedition, and many interesting archival documents, including photographs, are reproduced, complemented with modern colour photographs by the second author.

W.G.

Herbaria and Libraries

131. Luis VILLAR (ed.) – Flora medicinal del Alto Gallego (Pirineo Aragonés). Herbario de D. Vicente Latorre (1823-1888) farmacéutico de Larrés (Huesca), conservado en Jerez (Cádiz). – Amigos de Serrablo, Huesca, 2006 (ISBN 978-84-611-5132-5). 259 + [12] pages, 50 black-and-white figures, 30 colour photographs; laminated cover.

When in 1999 Luis Villar was shown the autographic inventory of Vicente Latorre's herbarium, faithfully kept by his grandniece, Latorre's name was all but forgotten, and nothing was known of the plants he had collected. He had been a pharmacist, born in Larrés where he later practised, keen connoisseur of the flora of the valleys and mountains of his surroundings, the Pyrenees of Upper Aragon. He is known to have sent plant collections to Texidor and other correspondents of his, in Madrid and Barcelona, but the fate of these materials is unknown.

Stimulated by the quality of the said inventory, Villar was able to ferret out the whereabouts of the corresponding herbarium, in as unlikely a place as the college "Padre Luis Coloma" in Jerez de la Frontera, a provincial town in southern Spain. It had been donated by Latorre to the institution then directed by his brother, and where his sons were being educated. It was well attended to there as the "collection from the north", the name of its originator having long been lost.

The manuscript consists of the transcripts of the label texts, copied by Latorre before he donated his herbarium, with his subsequent annotations, e.g. additional localities. Latorre being a pharmacist, this is primarily but by no means exclusively a pharmaceutical herbarium, i.e., the medicinal properties of the plants, when known, were carefully noted. It was conceived for the purpose of demonstration, which means that each species is represented once, with mention of its known occurrences or local distribution, properties, abundance, etc. The manuscript is here published in full, in transcript, with Villar's frequent annotations. Introductory chapters, by various authors, include in much more detail the story just told, and other background information.

The book is embellished by Julio Gavín's drawings of local architecture and countryside, Marcel Saule's plant portraits, and Javier Ara's photographs of the scenery of Latorre's homeland and some of the plants he was familiar with.

W.G.

132. Piero CUCCUINI & Chiara NEPI – The Palms of Odoardo Beccari. [*Quad. Bot. Amb. Appl.* (ISSN [1121-3752]), **17(1).**] – Orto Botanico, Università degli Studi di Palermo, 2006. 251 pages, 23 figures (photographs and facsimiles), partly in colour, handwriting samples from 133 specimens; paper.

The palm material of two "closed" collections, kept separate in the Florence Herbarium (FI), is treated in this inventory built on downloads from the corresponding label information database. The first is Odoardo Beccari's Malesian Herbarium (Erbario della Malesia), in which there are 405 palm accessions, mostly collected by Beccari himself. This collection, acquired in 1879. is stored in the same room as the Webb Herbarium (FI-W) and is complemented by 28 separately kept carpological specimens. The second consists of palms alone, and is known as

"Herbarium Palmarum". It was bequeathed to FI by Beccari's student Martelli and arrived at the Florence Herbarium in 1937, three years after Martelli's death. It comprises 6804 herbarium specimens, 214 carpological samples, 1205 drawings, and 1368 photographical plates, received by Beccari and his pupil Martelli from all over the world. A couple of later additions by Florence botanists are also present. [Conversely, some specimens, belonging rightfully to Beccari's collection but filed by mistake in the general FI herbarium, are apparently not covered here.]

The information is presented in two specimen lists, one for each herbarium, and in additional lists of collectors and genera they collected, countries where they collected, type specimens, etc. A useful feature, for practical purposes, are numerous label facsimiles at the end. The special-cover edition of the work is available from the authors against prior refund of postage cost.

W.G.

133. Giorgio PADOVANI & Piero CUCCUINI – The Florentine herbaria – Scholars and materials II. Update (1993-2005), addenda et corrigenda (1945-1992), to the origins of the H.C.I. (1842-1877). [*Pubblicazioni della Sezione Botanica "F. Parlatore"*, **152.**] – Sezione Botanica "F. Parlatore", Museo di Storia Naturale, Università di Firenze, 2006. 103 pages, 3 graphs, 111 handwriting samples; paper.

This inventory of botanists who consulted material of the Florence Herbaria, either as visitors or by requesting loans or specimen photographs, is an update of Cuccuini's earlier publication on the same subject, "Gli erbari fiorentini (FI e FT) nell'ultimo mezzo secolo (1945-1992). Studiosi e materiali", published in 1995 (see OPTIMA Newslett. 36: (55-56). 2002). It adds the data for the years 1993 to 2005 (inclusive), and in separate listings it corrects and complements those for the previous 50 years. As before, the information is arranged, first by botanists, then by taxa studied, and finally by countries and institutions.

One would expect this information to be automatically produced from a database, but apparently this is not so; otherwise, it would be hard to explain the discrepancy between the same data in different lists. Making the test for Berlin, I find H. Scholz correctly spelled (twice) then misspelled Scholtz (third list), a fate shared by M. Heilmeyer whose initial becomes B., whereas the misspelling of the name as Hedmeyer is consistent. F. Areces Berazaín, a Cuban guest in Berlin, will be hard put to recognise her own name as it is (consistently) misspelt here. Mind you: this is not a criticism of the authors; much more likely, the fault will be with the visitors' handwriting or carelessness of clerical staff processing loan requests. The examples show, however, that much critical screening is necessary before a reliable list of this kind can be produced.

At the end, as a most pleasant surprise, we find not only the early visitors of the Herbarium Centrale Italiano listed, drawn from the "golden book" of Filippo Parlatore; but also their autographic entries in that book in facsimile, an all but complete sample of handwritings of Europe's leading botanists of the time.

W.G.

134. Laura SETTESOLDI, Marcello TARDELLI & Mauro RAFFAELLI – The types of the Tropical Herbarium of Florence. Volume II: Dicotyledons *(Piperaceae* to *Euphorbiaceae).* – Centro Studi Erbario Tropicale, Università degli Studi di Firenze [Pubblicazione No. **98**], Firenze, 2004. 104 pages; laminated cover.

The first instalment of the type register of the Tropical Herbarium in Florence (now part of Florence University, as a "Centro Studi") was published in 2001 and comprised the monocots (see OPTIMA Newslett.

37: 96-97. 2004). The present, second instalment encompasses the first third of the dicots, arranged in the sequence of Dalla Torre & Harms' "Genera" (by no means a "decimal classification system", as the preface claims, but a linear numerical arrangement of families and genera, following Engler). The logics of subdividing the dicots in this way then arranging the families alphabetically may be questioned. Also, the final "Index" is not really an index but rather a synopsis, as it repeats the sequence of entries in the body of the text. For the list to be really useful, not to say usable, one will have to await its completion, hopefully with a cumulative index at the end. A rapid progress of the inventory is therefore desirable. However, four years after the present fascicle was published (in the frame of the centenary jubilation of the Erbario Tropicale), none is apparent.

W.G.

135. Michelle J. PRICE – Catalogue of the Hedwig-Schwägrichen Herbarium (G). Part **1.** Type material and a review of typifications for the Hedwig moss names. [*Boissiera* (ISSN 0373-2975), 61.] – Conservatoire et Jardin botaniques de Genève, Chambésy, 2005. 388 pages, 352 colour photographs; laminated cover.

Since the Brussels Congress in 1910 declared Hedwig's posthumous "Species muscorum" of 1810 the starting-point work for the nomenclature of mosses (except *Sphagnum*), the Hedwig-Schwägrichen Herbarium in Geneva acquired an importance, for *Musci,* that is easily comparable to that of the Linnean Herbarium in London for vascular plants. This treasury, as is normal for such old collections, presents its problems, and they are not few – to begin with the deciphering of the label texts, in which the present author does not excel. (Even for Germans, today, old Gothic handwriting is tricky!)

This volume, though, does not solve nor even discuss typification problems. Its purpose is stocktaking of what exists in terms of material, with reference to the lectotype designations that were already published. In the form of fact sheets, it gives for each of Hedwig's species standard information on names (original and current), protologue data, and specimens extant in the Geneva collection, with shy attempts at label text transcription. All relevant sheets are illustrated by colour photographs, but digital images with a much better resolution can be seen on the Website of the Conservatoire botanique in Geneva (www.ville-ge.ch/musinfo/bd/cjb/hedwig/). A definite shortcoming of these pictures, including those on the Web, is that capsule contents are not shown. Thus, the type illustration of the first species presented, *Andreaea alpina*, shows no plant at all.

The type specimens of Hedwig's pupil and scientific heir, Schwägrichen, included in the same herbarium, will be dealt with in a similar way by Michelle Price – she promises.

W.G.

Names and Nomenclature

136. Francis MAUHIN – Les noms français des plantes vasculaires de Belgique et des régions voisines. [by implication, a special issue of *Le Petit Sourcier* (ISSN 0773-9419).] – Cercles des Naturalistes de Belgique, Section Les Sources, Vierves-sur-Viroin, [2006]. 96 pages; stapled, with plastic cover sheet.

Plant names in modern language have their importance, which is bound to increase with the decline of Latin. Their main shortcoming is the lack of a one-to-one relation between them and the plant taxa to which they refer: some, homonyms so to say, designate different kinds of plants, and conversely, many plant kinds are known under a variety of common-language designations. These difficulties notwithstanding, and in spite of the lack of official codification,

names in modern language are used by many, perhaps increasingly so, and lists such as the present French-Latin and Latin-French "dictionary" for Belgian plants correspond to a real need.

Jacques Lambinon in his introduction makes the important distinction, too often ignored, between "popular" and "learned" common language names. The former are primarily the domain of linguistics and ethnographic studies, the latter are often those used in school floras. Surprisingly, there are countries in which there is no tradition for the second category, such as Greece, Turkey and perhaps Spain; whereas the "learned" names have their stronghold in countries such as France, Britain, and most prominently in the German language domain. It would be interesting to examine, in an historical perspective, why this is so. It would also be worthwhile to explore the origin of this, so to say, parallel nomenclature. The earliest source of German "learned" plant names of which I am aware is Carl Ludwig Willdenow's "Species plantarum" (1797-1810), where they are consistently given. They appear to be German translations of the Latin name, and their purpose may well have been, not so much to be used for communication but to explain to the reader the meaning of the Latin names.

However this may be, I am convinced that the "learned" common language names of plants have an important function, and I would encourage authors of Floras of countries lacking them to establish their tradition.

W.G.

137. Moustapha NEHME – Dictionnaire étymologique de la flore du Liban. Noms scientifiques et leur étymologie. Noms français, anglais et arabes. Noms arabes translittérés. – Librairie du Liban, Beyrouth, 2000. 368 + 48 pages; hard cover with dust jacket.

138. Moustapha NEHMÉ – Etymogical dictionary of Syrian flora. Scientific names and their etymology. Arabic, English and French names. – Librairie du Liban, Beirut, 2008 (ISBN 978-9953-86-410-5). 456 pages; hard cover with dust jacket.

Both volumes are of similar layout and widely overlapping content, to the extent to which the floras of the two countries, Lebanon and Syria, coincide. Syria, with its much larger surface area, has a somewhat richer flora: 3109 species, as compared to 2607 for Lebanon. The numbered entries are 3949 and 3390, respectively. The numerical difference between species and entries corresponds to the number of genera (each genus having its own entry), which means that no infraspecific taxa are mentioned.

As the title implies, the books have a dual function. The first is etymological. For each generic name and specific epithet the derivation is given. The etymological information is carefully researched, detailed, and I found it to be very useful. Besides, its applicability is by no means geographically as restricted as one might rashly conclude from the book titles: the area of many genera is large, and as to epithets, the same have often been used in other genera all around the world (as there is an alphabetical index to epithets at the end, the information can be easily found, irrespective of genus). When perusing the book, I immediately found lots of information of which I was unaware, e.g., that *Allium* derives from a Celtic word, *Carthamus* from Aramaic, *Datura* from Sanskrit, *Marrubium* from Hebrew, and *Taraxacum* from Persian.

The books' second purpose is to serve as a polyglot (Latin-French-English-Arabic) dictionary of pant names. As is usual for well designed polyglot dictionaries, translation is possible from any of these languages into any other, e.g., from French to English or vice versa, by using the language indexes at the end, which refer to the entry number. Of course, it is the Arabic names that are most valuable. I know of no other comparably complete, botanically reliable source of such

terms. In the book for Lebanon, Arabic names are given twice, in Arabic script and transliterated into Latin script; in the Syrian book (perhaps because in that country the Latin alphabet is scarcely used) the second is omitted. At species level, the Arabic designations are as a rule not "popular", vernacular names, but are of the "learned" type, i.e., they are translations of the Latin binomial into Arabic. They are therefore fairly precise as to their meaning and provide a valuable standard for communication without resorting to the perhaps unfamiliar Latin scientific names.

W.G.

Festschrifts

139. D. ERSHAD (ed.) – Memorial issue dedicated to the 100th birthday of late Univ.-Prof. Dr. Karl Heinz Rechinger. [*Rostaniha* (ISSN 1608-4306), **7,** *Suppl.* **2.**] – Iranian Research Institute of Plant Protection, Tehran, 2006. [4] + II + 402 + [4] pages, black-and-white illustrations, maps and tables; paper.

The inventor, editor and principal author of the monumental "Flora Iranica", Karl Heinz Rechinger, died in 1998, aged 92. The botanists of Iran, a country where his memory is venerated more than anywhere else (certainly more than in his home country), had the brilliant and most appropriate idea to honour him with a posthumous Festschrift on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth. He had received more than one such homage during his lifetime, each of which he thoroughly enjoyed, and he would certainly have enjoyed reading the present one.

37 botanists, in their large majority Iranian, have contributed 24 papers to this volume. All articles have an Iranian subject, and in their majority they are systematic and floristic, but contributions from the fields of micromorphology and anatomy, karyology, molecular taxonomy, phytogeography, vegetation science, nomenclature and applied botany are also present. There are 5 papers on liliiflorous families (4 on *Allium* alone) and 14 on dicot groups: *Boraginaceae* (2), *Compositae* (3), *Cruciferae* (1), *Labiatae* (1), *Leguminosae* (3), *Moraceae* (1), *Rosaceae* (1), and *Rubiaceae* (2). Descriptions of 11 new species and one subspecies are included, among them *Asperula oppositifolia* subsp. *rechingeri*, *Astragalus heinzii*, and *Cousinia caroli-henrici*, all dedicated to Rechinger. Of special note are Iranshahr's inventory of new taxa with names typified by Rechinger's specimens from the Iranian highlands (no less than 566, 266 of them from Iran); and Akhani's statistical analysis of the 176 issues of "Flora Iranica" published by 2006, with 9977 species treated on 10065 printed pages and illustrated on 6077 plates (204 of them in colour). One further volume has been published in the meantime (item 36, above), and three or four are still in the pipeline, but updating Akhani's figures at the end will be easy, now that the main inventory has been done.

W.G.

Reprints

140. H. Walter LACK – Jardin de la Malmaison. Ein Garten für Kaiserin Josephine. – Prestel, München, 2004 (ISBN 3-7913-3050-0). 327 pages, 20 colour photographs, 142 facsimiles in colour, 1 in black-and-white; cloth in cardboard box.

A further highlight in the famed series of Walter Lack's sumptuous volumes (see also item 128, above), this time concerning Napoleonic France – although with a symbolic Austrian touch, as we shall see. It is more than a mere reprint, and at the same time, less. Less, because the descriptive texts accompanying the 64 plates – coloured stipple engravings based on paintings by the great Redouté, beautifully reproduced in one

third less than original size – are lacking; definitely a sore spot from the point of view of the scientific user, but of scant relevance in the eyes of the art-loving buyers who are likely the majority. More, because of the corollary chapters by Lack and others, which provide a lively and historically faithful background of the time when Malmaison flourished, of the preceding period and the years to follow, until the inglorious present. Read the ups and downs of the imperial couple, Napoleon and "his" Josephine, in their stormy relationship, written in Lack's accurate yet almost poetic style, and you will be enticed. Look at the series of Auguste Garnerey's 12 watercolours documenting Malmaison, light flowery paintings made after Josephine's death but ahead of the irreversible dismemberment of the estate in 1824, and you will live again the charm of these unique surroundings. The volume as a whole, the reproductions at its core and surrounding narrations, are an integral work of art.

And, you might ask, what now with Austria? The volume from which the plates were reproduced, a permanent loan of the Deutsche Bank to the Berlin-Dahlem Botanical Museum, is known as the "two emperors book"; most likely a personal gift of Napoleon to the Austrian "flower emperor", Francis I, perhaps offered in Schönbrunn when the peace treaty with Austria was signed and Napoleon was in the apogee of his power.

W.G.

141. Vincenzo TINEO – Plantarum rariorum Siciliae minus cognitarum fasciculus **1,** fasciculus **2,** fasciculus **3.** Panormi 1846. In appendice **Plantarum rariorum minus cognitarum pugillus primus.** Panormi 1817. – [Introduction + facsimile reprints + index], Università degli Studi di Palermo, Dipartimento di Scienze Botaniche, Palermo, 2005. 88 pages [48 + 23 with alternative original pagination]; paper.

This reprint of the main publications of Vincenzo Tineo was published on the occasion of the 2nd Centenary Jubilee of Palermo University and 210th anniversary of the Botanic Garden of Palermo. Vincenzo's father Giuseppe had been the Garden's founding director in 1795, and he himself succeeded him in 1813, aged 22, having ousted his competitor Bivona (a narrative of these happenings, based on Bivona's not unbiased perspective, can be read in Presl's Sicilian travel account: see item 122). The preface to the reprint was written by Tineo's present successor, Franco Raimondo.

The last item of the reprint was the first to be published, in 1817. It consists of the description of 20 new species, in a small and tiny pamphlet, here somewhat enlarged. It is preceded by a triplet which, confusingly, has exactly the same title, with a common cover dated 1846, and with continuous pagination. There is still some doubt on the correct citation and actual dates of publication. The first part of the triplet is an avowed reprint from a medical journal of the time, named "Ingrassia", which no botanist ever has apparently seen. Raimondo's preface states that all three parts were originally published in "Ingrassia", in 1846 and 1847. If this is so, then the usually cited date is wrong at least for fasc. 3, and Tineo's new species should all be cited from the journal, presumably with a different original pagination. Anyway, the reprint has an additional (third?) pagination of its own, which is the one that is used in the (new) index at the end.

W.G.

142. Carl LINNAEUS – Musa cliffortiana. Clifford's banana plant. Reprint and translation of the original edition (Leiden 1736). [*Regnum Veg.* (ISSN [0080-0694]), **148**]. – Gantner, Ruggell, 2007 (ISBN 978-3-906166-63-6). 264 pages, figures and facsimiles (partly in colour); cloth with dust jacket.

To celebrate the 300th anniversary of Linnaeus's birth, the International Association for Plant Taxonomy, in its prestigious "Regnum Vegetabile" series, published a facsimile reprint and first translation into English of Linnaeus's first and most extensive monographic treatment. Never again would he devote so much time, energy and space to the treatment of a single species: the banana plant. That treatment exemplifies how his own principles, set out in his "Methodus", can and should be applied in practice. The "Methodus", published at about the same time as the "Musa" but intended as a supplement to the "Systema Naturae" of the previous year, consists of a single page of "cooking recipe" for the authors of systematic works. It, too, is reprinted and translated in the present volume.

Among the many riches Linnaeus found in Clifford's greenhouses when he took charge of them in September 1735 was a banana plant. It had never flowered, and indeed only three cases of banana flowers produced in European greenhouses had become known so far. Under Linnaeus's care flowers were soon produced, which started to open on 24 January of the following year. Within less than a month (the dedication is dated 20 February) Linnaeus managed to study it in depth, compare it with everything that was known and published on bananas, write his book, have drawings executed and two copper plates engraved, and proceed to the printer. Certainly a brilliant testimony of his youthful productivity and efficiency!

This volume is not a mere reprint and translation. It bears ample commentary in the form of notes, a full chronology of events and documentation of the historical context, and an erudite, voluminous and in turn copiously annotated Introduction, by Staffan Müller-Wille. The translation was not done by a good professional but not a botanist, which shows in places. The reader may resort to the Latin original to understand that "plain" stands for botanical "simple" (simplex).

W.G.

Congresses and Meetings

143. Olja VASIĆ (ed.) – Proceedings of the XI OPTIMA Meeting, Beograd, 5-11 September 2004. [*Bocconea* (ISSN 1120-4060), **21.**] – Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum, Palermo, 2007. 421 pages, tables, illustrations; paper. Price: 100 €.

The proceedings volume for the Belgrade Meeting of OPTIMA comprises 43 papers by 111 authors in total, corresponding to 9 lectures and 34 posters among those that were presented. It was released from the press just in time for being distributed at the next subsequent OPTIMA Meeting, at Pisa in 2007.

Contrary to tradition, all papers were peer reviewed, which explains the decrease in bulk in comparison with earlier volumes of the same series. The editors were restrictive in accepting only the best and most suitable papers for publication, and they deserve our thanks and congratulations on that account, and also for their good job of copy editing. The result is a book of which both OPTIMA and the Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum that produces Bocconea can be proud.

W.G.

144. Fabio GARBARI (ed.) – XII OPTIMA Meeting. Pisa, Italy, 10-16 September 2007. Abstracts. Lectures, communications, posters. XIIème Colloque d'OPTIMA, Pise, Italie, 10-16 septembre 2007. Résumés. Conférences, communications, démonstrations. – Department of Biology; Pisa University, Pisa, 2007. XVIII + 217 pages; paper.

The abstract texts (one per page) are preceded by the full scientific Programme of the Meeting. Of the 63 lectures presented during the Meeting's 12 symposia, 57 have their abstract included. They are followed by 76 poster abstracts (plus three latecomers

added on loose sheets), grouped thematically in 9 sections or subsections. The full versions of lectures and posters will, subject to positive peer review, be published as a volume of "Bocconea".

W.G.

145. Ignazio CAMARDA, Santiago CASTROVIEJO & Pietro MAZZOLA (ed.) – Proceedings of the VI Conference on Plant Taxonomy, Alghero, 31 May – 2 June 2003. [*Bocconea* (ISSN 1120-4060), **19.**] – Herbarium Mediterraneum Panormitanum, Palermo, 2006. 308 pages, tables, illustrations (some in colour); paper.

Although it is nowhere mentioned in the proceedings volume, this conference is the 6th edition to what started in 1988 in Sevilla as a purely Spanish event, named "Jornadas de Taxonomía Vegetal". It has long since turned into an international congress of renown, held every three years on average, with its subsequent stations in Madrid (190), Munich (1993), Barcelona (1996), and Lisbon (1999). Its 6th edition is the first to be held on Italian territory. Of the 7th I could find no announcement as yet.

Of the 30 papers here included, 18 are by Italian and 12 by (mainly) Spanish authors. They cover substantially the same geographical area, except for two each that are relevant to Tunisia and Oman. Some new binomials are proposed: *Centaurea delucae, Dipsacus valsecchii, Limonium elfahsianum,* and *Oncostema maireanum ('maireana')*. other groups treated include bryophytes, orchids, *Genisteae*, and the genera *Anthoxanthum*, *Hieracium*, *Lotus*, *Matthiola*, *Orobanche*, and *Quercus*.

W.G.

146. Giuseppe VENTURELLA & Francesco Maria RAIMONDO (ed.) – 102° Congresso della Società Botanica Italiana, Palermo, 26-29 Settembre 2007. Orto Botanico. Riassunti. Relazioni – comunicazioni – poster. [*Collana Siciliana Foreste,* 34.] – Università degli Studi di Palermo, Dipartimento di Scienze Botaniche, Palermo, 2007. 425 pages; paper.

The 2007 Congress of the Italian Botanical Society in Palermo comprised 6 symposia on subjects related to botanic gardens, monumental trees, cell biology, tropical vegetation, proteomics, and biodiversity conservation. The abstracts here presented are mostly extensive, often covering the allotted page in full, some with bibliography, a few even spilling over to a second page.

The abstracts of 37 symposium lectures and almost 300 posters are printed here, grouped into 21 sections and subsections, by 796 different authors – and with up to 18 posters for a single author. It is obvious that Italian botany is in a healthy state!

W.G.

147. Salvatore GENTILE (ed.) – Botanici dell'Ottocento in Liguria. Atti del Convegno. Genova, 25 ottobre 2002. Chiavari, 26 ottobre 2002. [*Accademia Ligure di Scienze e Lettere, Collana di Studi e Ricerche,* **29.**] – Accademia Ligure di Scienze e Lettere, Genova, 2003 (ISBN 88-86746-16-4). 255 pages, illustrations in black-and-white, colour and half-tone; paper.

Thanks to its clear structure, with invited lectures each on one 19th century Ligurian botanist, plus an account of the Genoa herbarium, this book is more that the haphazard assemblage of loosely interconnected papers that is usual in symposium proceedings. It is a useful and informative compendium of Liguria's botanical history, from 1800 to 1900 and with spinoffs until today.

There are 15 botanists treated here, not all of Ligurian origin, nor all remembered

mainly because of their activity there, but all scientifically active in the 19th century, and many of them famous. In the order of their dates of birth, which range from 1744 to 1875, they are: Batt, Gallesio, Viviani, Bertoloni, Turio, De Notaris, Casaretto, Baglietto, Delpino, Giacomo Doria, Bicknell, Antonio Piccone (with his great-granduncle Gian Maria), Penzig, and Béguinot. For each, an account of their life and work is provided, often extensive and with plentiful, carefully researched detail (allowing for some fallout as the initial uninformative chat on Batt).

The paper on collections and herbaria is, however, disappointing. One would have hoped to find concrete data there, in particular on the amount of destruction caused by the Second World War, and on which parts of the collections were saved (and how) – but there is nothing on the sort, and the losses are treated in such cursory, hidden manner as if they were shameful and best ignored.

W.G.

148. Sulejman REDŽIĆ & Samir ĐUG (ed.) – "Plant resources in the creation of new values". Third International Balkan Botanical Congress, Sarajevo, 18-24 May 2003. Book of abstracts. – Center for Ecology and Natural Resources, Faculty of Science, University of Sarajevo, 2003 (ISBN 9958-9281-2-4). [8] + 429 pages; laminated cover.

The previous (second) Balkan Botanical Congress was held in Istanbul in May 2000 (see OPTIMA Newslett. 36: (47). 2002). Three years later, exactly as promised, Sulejman Redžić hosted number three. The abstracts volume testifies to the excellent, international attendance, dominated as is natural by participants from SE Europe.

The Congress programme included 14 plenary lectures and 8 broadly defined symposia, each with 1-2 keynote lectures, several short talks, and associated poster presentations. The symposium titles were: Balkan flora and vegetation; Biodiversity: conservation and management; Biosystematics, taxonomy and evolution; Plant geography and vegetation science; Structure and physiology; Phytochemistry, natural products and ethnobotany; Genetics, genetic engineering and biotechnology; and Ecology and environmental botany. Abstracts are included for 100 talks (27 plenary or keynote lectures) and 289 poster presentations, with an overall authorship of 289.

W.G.

149. Panayotis DIMOPOULOS, Erwin BERGMEIER, Milan CHYTRÝ, John RODWELL, Joop SCHAMINÉE & Karle SÝKORA (ed.) – European oak woodlands: past, present and future. Proceedings of the 13th EVS Workshop at Ioannina, Greece, 16-20 April 2004. [*Botanika Hronika* (ISSN 0253-6064), 18(1).] – Ergastêrio Botanikês, Panepistêmio Patrôn, Patra, 2005. 316 pages, black-and-white illustrations, tables; laminated cover.

The European Vegetation Survey workshop on oak woods in Ioannina, NW Greece, was attended by 133 participants from 13 European and 4 extra-European countries.

There are 23 papers in this symposium volume, two of them of a general, introductory nature: Sandro Pignatti's thoughts on the European Vegetation Survey and its ongoing struggle with uncertainties and inconsistencies of vegetation classification; and Costas Thanos' analysis of Theophrastos' works with respect to the oaks there mentioned, which can be equated with 9 of the 11 currently known Greek oak species. The remaining papers are of a more special nature. Most of them concern the oak woods of Greece and adjacent countries (Albania, Bulgaria and W Anatolia).

W.G.

New Journals

150. Kochia, Band **1** (ISSN 1863-155X). – Gesellschaft zur Erforschung der Flora Deutschlands e.V., Berlin, 2006. 171 pages, black-and-white illustrations, tables, 1 map in colour; laminated cover.

Two novelties in one: the new journal commemorating Wilhelm Daniel Joseph Koch, known among others as the author of "Synopsis florae germanicae et helveticae", is published by the equally new Society for the Exploration of the Flora of Germany. My welcome to both!

Floristics experiences an obvious renaissance, in Central Europe and elsewhere. This phenomenon is best explained by the keen awareness, among the younger generation, of environmental problems, man-made changes, and the need to inventory and document what we have now in order to save it for the future – ideally by securing its survival in situ, but at the very least by recording it in our archives.

The contents of this firstling volume are indicative of a clear editorial programme, not yet explicitly spelled out. The new journal has the double function of a forum on which new results of German floristics can be presented, and of an easy means, especially for those not associated with an institution with a well stocked library, to know what's up in an international context. Half a dozen of the included papers are examples of the first kind, dealing with *Rubus* (with three new binomials), *Arabis sagittata*, *Knautia drymeia*, the nomenclature of a *Selinum* species and a *Galeopsis* hybrid, and the floristic inventory of the heights of SW Germany. The second function is fulfilled by to-be standing columns: new chromosome counts based on German material, a survey of relevant taxonomic and nomenclatural changes found in the literature, and an extensive section with book reviews.

W.G.

151. DSB Newsletter, No. **1,** December 2005. – Università degli Studi di Palermo, Dipartimento di Scienze Botaniche e Orto botanico di Palermo, 2006. 32 pages (including cover), illustrated in colour; paper.

The Botany Department of Palermo University became reality at the beginning of 1985. It had been set up to provide a common administrative roof to botanists who were previously assigned to three different faculties. The Botanic Garden and the Herbarium, belonging to the Faculty of Science, are also part of that same structure. Plans for publishing a newsletter of the Department go back to the early 1990s but had not so far materialised. Thanks to the initiative of the present editors, Giuseppe Venturella and Franco Raimondo, they now became reality. The Newsletter is bilingual (Italian and English, printed in colour in DIN-A4 format, and due to be produced annually (I have seen No. 2 of 2007, too).

The Newsletter is intended both for internal use and an international audience. After a concise historical introduction it describes the department and its subdivisions (9 Laboratories), lists the personnel, both scientific and technical-administrative, and the curricula available for master's and doctorate studies. At the end, the publications, lectures and posters by Department members are listed for 2005.

Since it was created, the Department has almost doubled the number of its professors, from 12 (3 of them full professors) to 23 (6 full), whereas there has been little variation in the number of researchers (now 8) and technical-administrative staff (27). An impressive aspect, unusual for a university institution, are the numerous (11 in 2005!) and diverse cultural and social activities such as exhibitions and conferences. In future issues, one may hope to find some more data on ancillary structures such as the garden, library and herbarium.

W.G.

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(2007-2013)

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