

REVIEWS

A. C. SMITH: *Flora Vitiensis Nova. A new Flora of Fiji (Spermatophytes only)*. Vol. 4. Pacific Tropical Botanical Garden, Lawai, Kauai, Hawaii. 1988. 377 pp. Hardcover. Price unknown.

The first volume of this flora appeared in 1979, followed by volume 2 in 1981 and volume 3 in 1985. The issue of volume 4 – containing the families Apocynaceae, Asclepiadaceae, Caprifoliaceae, Loganiaceae, Oleaceae, and Rubiaceae – means an important step towards the completion of Dr. A. C. Smith's magnum opus. The revision of the large and difficult family of the Rubiaceae (co-authored by Dr. S. P. Darwin), in particular, must have given the author great satisfaction.

The present volume follows the example set in the previous ones: detailed genus descriptions, elaborate keys to the species, whereas the species descriptions themselves are often extremely brief. This flora is rendered particularly useful by the extensive comments under each taxon, a testimony to the author's profound personal acquaintance with the flora.

To make critical remarks about a flora of such high quality is like splitting straws and they are reluctantly enumerated here:

- a) It is unfortunate that introduced and indigenous taxa are not easily distinguishable, for instance by using different letter types.
- b) Most of the illustrations of plants are taken from dried specimens and although this is how most herbarium botanists see plants, more photographs of living plants and some line drawings would have been very welcome. As it is, some of the photographs are too dark (e. g. figures 2, 6, and 106) to see much detail.
- c) *Strychnos vitiensis* (p. 26) has already been typified by Bisset c. s. (Lloydia 36, 1973, 195), fortunately by the same lectotype: *Seemann 302*.
- d) On p. 9 in the key to *Geniostoma* the first lead reads: 'Stipules interpetiolar' ... opposed to 'Stipules interpetiolar' instead of 'Stipules intrapetiolar' ...
- e) On p. 370 colour photographs are shown of *Ipomoea* and *Nymphoides* both belonging to families to be treated in the next volume.
- f) It is regrettable that there is no index.

Two more volumes are to appear: volume 5 containing the remaining Lamiidae and the Asteridae, and volume 6, the Orchidaceae. I look forward to seeing them in print soon. The author and the Pacific Tropical Botanical Garden are to be congratulated with this fine piece of work.

M. M. J. VAN BALGOOY

SUNITA GARG: *Indian Gentianaceae (A Check List)*. Northern Book Centre, New Delhi. 1988. xiv + 42 pp. Bound. Price Rs 40.–. ISBN 81-85119-52-X.

An alphabetical list of the correct names of the 17 genera, 153 species, and 43 varieties of Indian Gentianaceae with citation of synonyms, original literature, and distribution within as well as outside India. Four new combinations are included.

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