

## REVIEW

K. IWATSUKI & P. H. RAVEN (eds.): **Evolution and diversification of land plants**. Springer-Verlag, Tokyo, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, 1997. XIII + 330 pp., illus. ISBN 4-431-70203-2. Price: ¥ 11,000 (For members of the Botanical Society of Japan: ¥ 6,000).

This book intends (according to the preface) to afford at once a review, a general outline of what has been accomplished, and a set of signposts for the future. It attempts to do so in three sections on Origin and Diversification of Primitive Land Plants (4 papers), Origin and Diversification of Angiosperms (6 papers), and Speciation and Mechanisms of Diversification (5 papers).

In a sense our discipline is in a state of change that could be called revolutionary, rapidly acquiring new facts. In this situation the need is felt for a survey of what has been accomplished and what the future may bring. This slim volume serves as a prime example of an attempt to do so. It covers phylogenetic fields: early land plants, Pteridophytes, conifer families, Angiosperms from various angles (flower evolution, fossil history of magnoliids, sequences in chloroplast and ribosome genes, pollen characters, chromosome evolution), and some papers on speciation mechanisms. However, built as it is by 24 authors in 15 chapters often repeating in a wider context what they have published earlier, the book does not give a balanced review. It also regrettably lacks a good summary in which the different specialist approaches are melted into one view.

Among the more instructive chapters we found those of Edwards on early land plants and of Endress on flower evolution the most interesting. Illustration is sparse, but of good quality if one forgets the usual tree- or shrub-like diagrams. Literature references, one of the useful aspects of this kind of book, are amply presented, often citing more than 100 titles.

Concluding: This is a useful and interesting book that we warmly recommend.

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