

REVIEWS

M.D. DASSANAYAKE & W.D. CLAYTON (eds.): **A Revised Handbook to the Flora of Ceylon**. A.A. Balkema, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 1998. 390 pp., ISBN 90-5410-270-5. Price: NLG 170.

This new volume of the Handbook of the Flora of Ceylon deals with: Acanthaceae by L.H. Cramer; Rubiaceae by C.E. Ridsdale; Sapindaceae by B.M. Wadhwa & Willem Meijer. Each treatment includes: Family description, keys to the genera and species, and with the taxa: accepted name, synonym(s), description, and notes on distribution, ecology, and specimens seen. On the last page a list of new names is given. However, there are no indices to scientific names and specimens.

The taxonomy of the treated genera and species seems to be up to date. Only a few minor errors have been noted. A few illustrations, especially of key characters, would have been helpful. However, this is a useful book on the flora of Sri Lanka. It should go to the bookshelves of those interested in the flora of that island.

FRITS ADEMA

JACQUES FLORENCE: **Flore de la Polynésie française, Vol. 1**. ORSTOM, Paris, 1997. 393 pp., illus. ISBN 2-7099-1387-4. Price: FRF 100.

French Polynesia comprises the island groups Austral, Society, Tuamotu, Gambier and Marquesas, with a total land area of c. 3500 km². The highest point is Mt Orohena on Tahiti (2241 m). The first volume of the Flora of this area includes all indigenous and naturalised species of the following families: Cannabaceae, Cecropiaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Moraceae, Piperaceae, Ulmaceae and Urticaceae. The treatments contain keys, descriptions, literature and notes on phenology, distribution, ecology and vernacular names.

In an introductory chapter brief notes are given on exploration, flora and vegetation of the various island groups. The flora is poor (912 species on p. 7, 675 species on p. 8) but relatively rich in endemics especially on Marquesas and Rapa. An index, glossary and list of collections completes the volume, which forms a first step towards a better knowledge of these remote and fascinating island groups in the Pacific.

Personally I regret that the Cook Islands are not included since they are phyto-geographically part of SE Polynesia.

The photographs are rather small, but printing and execution are good as is to be expected from an ORSTOM publication, with which author and publisher are to be complimented.

I look forward to seeing the next volume(s).

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