

## REVIEW

K.M. PUROHIT & G. PANIGRAHI: The Family Rosaceae in India (Revisionary Studies on Some Genera), Vol. 1. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehra Dun, India, 1991, vi + iv (unnumbered) + 356 pp., illus. b/w. ISBN 81-211-0064-X. Price unknown.

The title of this volume is a bit misleading. Apart from Rosaceae also the Chrysobalanaceae (two autochthonous species) and the Neuradaceae (one species) are treated. The bulk, however, concerns the Rosaceae in the more restricted and generally adapted sense. In India 32 genera of this family, comprising some 450 species, are autochthonous. Nine genera are treated in this volume, four (*Aruncus*, *Neillia*, *Sorbaria*, and *Spiraea*) belonging to the subfamily Spiraeoideae and five (*Agrimonia*, *Alchemilla*, *Filipendula*, *Geum*, and *Sanguisorba*) to the Rosoideae. Most of the genera have only few species (1 to 6) in India but *Spiraea* has 31 and *Alchemilla* has 26. The second part of the series is now in production and will contain studies on *Rosa*, some Maloideae and *Prunus* of the Amygdaloideae.

The treatment is largely based on Purohit's unpublished doctor's thesis written under the direction and on instigation of the second author. These regional revisions summarize a large amount of information not only on morphology but also on distribution, anatomy, karyology, ecology, chemistry (and some little on uses). In several places theoretical taxonomy is amply considered too, among others in the chapter on "principles for recognition of taxonomic categories in relation to the Rosales", but also in the introduction to the revision of *Alchemilla* where the concept of microspecies is elaborated. There are also special discussion paragraphs on distribution patterns, endemism, and on evolutionary trends in the family as far as India is concerned.

There are extensive notes on typification and older literature and obviously the authors gave much time and attention to these aspects, in the reviewer's opinion not always the most rewarding activity from the botanical-scientific point of view.

The book was published in 1992 but production obviously took a long time since literature is considered only up to 1983 (except for the authors' own publications which are listed up to 1986). So Prance's revision of Chrysobalanaceae in *Flora Malesiana* (1989) is not mentioned or considered in the text, without any dramatic consequences, however.

Identification is made possible by a number of keys which, as far as I could ascertain, work well. The elaborate morphological descriptions are supplemented by a large number of quite satisfactory line drawings. Photographs of types and authentic specimens and of seed structure in Spiraeoids (also scanning electron microscopical) are of much less quality, as is regrettably often the case in books produced in India. The book also contains a list of material examined.

This work is a valuable contribution to Indian plant taxonomy and it may serve as an example for regional revisionary research.

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