

BOOK REVIEWS

H. SLEUMER, *Die Gattung Escallonia (Saxifragaceae)* – Verh. Kon. Ned. Akad. Wet. afd. Nat. ii 58 no. 2, 146 p., 1 fig. (North Holland Publishing Company; Amsterdam 1968), Dfl. 20.—, ± \$ 6.00.

The beautiful appealing cover conceals a piece of botanical scholarship which may at first sight disappoint the reader who wants to know more about these nice profusely flowering shrubs. Illustrations, except for the area of the genus, have not been given, and the keys and descriptions are all in Latin. Long lists of examined specimens are not very exciting, either, and the chapter on '*Escallonia* im Gartenbau' consists largely of an enumeration of introductions. The typographical execution is very fine.

The Latin soon turns out to be simple and concise, and can be understood without great effort, in South America, where the genus is indigenous, probably even better than English and German could have been. The lack of illustrations is not a real manco, since practically all species have been well illustrated in literature, to which references are made. The descriptions are brief but carefully prepared and well-balanced, showing that this study is one absolutely confined to essentials. This may seem paradoxical in view of the pages full of cited specimens examined, but it should not be forgotten that this vast body of documentation is the basis of the whole work, that it, once dispersed, is unlikely to be ever assembled again, and that here, too, the essentials are given, for instance, geographical latitude only in Chile. All discussion and interpretation has been avoided; the general part gives mainly the facts about Vegetative Merkmale, Merkmale der Blütenregion, Verbreitung, Ökologie, Bestäubung, Pollen, Chromosomen, Bastardierung, Inhaltsstoffe, Nutzen, in ten pages. Former subdivisions of the genus have gone into synonymy almost without a word, and no new subdivision has been proposed. But not avoided was a careful study of all the local floras Dr. Sleumer could lay hands on, in order to correct the misinterpretations which obscured the picture of *Escallonia* in literature.

This monograph is one expression of the interest taken by Rijksherbarium taxonomists in groups of horticultural importance.

The author was eminently qualified for his task. He is one of the most productive taxonomists of our time, with great experience in various groups of plants, in the Neo- as well as in the Paleotropics, and in cultivated plants, too; think of his work in Ericaceae. His countryman Engler had monographed the genus in 1870; of the 47 species recognized by him, he had seen material of 30. Dr. Sleumer studied the genus alive during a prolonged stay in South America, and ± all the dried materials in existence later on, twenty times as many numbers as Engler had. Of Engler's taxa, 31 have been maintained. There are now recognized 39 species and 14 (non-typical) varieties, and 19 natural hybrids. I list the novelties here: *E. myrtilloides* var. *patens* (*Steroxylon* p. R. & P.), *E. alpina* var. *glabrata* (*E.g.* PHIL.), *E. laevis* (*Vigieria* l. VELL.), *E. hispida* (*V.h.* VELL.), *E. ledifolia* from Brazil, *E. megapotamica* var. *spiraefolia* (*E. resinosa* var. s CHAM. & SCHLECHT.), *E. farinacea* var. *jordanensis* (*E.j.* SLEUM.).

This is a book of facts; the facts are solid, and well-presented. As far as can be judged, this monograph will stand the ages, I hope as the basis of other papers on *Escallonia* with more illustrations and more discussion.

M. JACOBS

G. H. M. LAWRENCE *et al.*, *Botanico-Periodicon-Huntianum*, 1063 p. Hunt Botanical Library, Pittsburgh 1968. Distributor Stechert-Hafner, 31 East 10th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003, U.S.A., 30.

A periodicon is a directory to periodicals, and a periodical is "Any publication intended to be published in successive numbers or parts (and usually in volumes), with a common title for all, issued at regular intervals, intended to be continued indefinitely, and of which each number or volume usually contains one or more separately titled papers by one or more authors. Included in this are such serial publications as yearbooks and annual reports." On page 7 we find this clever definition, which excludes encyclopedias and large floras (which eventually have covered their whole field and then are concluded), the *Index Kewensis* (which does not contain articles), and yet include all serials that came to an untimely end, or were resumed after a long period of rest.

B-P-H (as the editors want it to be known) is the first list of periodicals in which papers of botanical interest have been published, that aims at completeness. It is in connection with this aim, that the book has not been printed (only the introductory part of 23 pages and the appendixes of 58 pages have), but was produced with computer aid in a special elaborated offset type. This procedure makes revised editions possible at regular intervals and within market price range. All fields of botany have been covered, from bacteriology to forestry, from horticulture to paleontology. Special attention has been given to older medical periodicals, which often contain papers of direct or indirect botanical interest, literature which contained new names, and to literature from Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia.

It will interest the reader who is fond of statistics, that the total number of periodical titles found in the field amounts to over 12,000, and that according to a knowledgeable estimation these represent about 70% of the total number of periodicals on biology in existence. So with half the effort, we may suppose, it would be possible to produce a book giving all botanical and zoological periodicals! The reason for the small difference is, of course, that so many periodicals contain both botanical and zoological matter, and that these have already been incorporated.

For all periodical titles, a standard abbreviation has been devised, according to a set of rules which, to my knowledge, for the first time have been explicitly formulated, and as such are very useful for study by any beginning student, who, by the way, will regret the lacking of a similar set of concise rules for the title description of botanical books. These standard abbreviations are in many cases longer than necessary, and it remains to be seen if botanists will adopt these consistently, or prefer established usage. That standard abbreviations are now available to anyone who wants to follow in safety is anyway most fortunate, and a number of synonymous abbreviations which refer to the accepted abbreviations, about another 12,000, is most useful for retrieving references. Besides the abbreviation and full title are given the place of the first issue, the number of volumes if the periodical was discontinued, the year of birth and of death if the latter occurred, the reference to it in the *Union List of Serials*, and in many cases the titles of periodicals which preceded or succeeded it. The copying and transcription of the data (in 45 languages) has been done with a really amazing accuracy. Just look at the titles in Dutch!

The completeness is very great. Of course, I could from personal familiarity with literature pertaining to Malesia come here up with a few additions, and think it possible that differently inclined specialists could come up with a few others. But it makes more sense to communicate these to Dr. G. H. M. LAWRENCE, Hunt Botanical Library, Pittsburgh, Pa., who on page 9 cordially invites the readers, adding that photocopies of pertinent title-pages will be welcomed. Considering the great service and benefit he and his team gave to a wide circle of biologists and librarians, we hope that many will respond in consulting and improving it.

M. JACOBS