BOOK REVIEW

Pacific and Malesian Plant Maps. The publication of volume 3 of *Pacific Plant Areas* is indeed welcome. It is 9 years since volume 2 appeared, though in fairness to Dr Balgooy it must be remembered that in the interim he has given us *Plant Geography of the Pacific* (review in Notes R.B.G. Edinb. 31:394, 1972). When reviewing volume 2 (Notes R.B.G. Edinb. 27:219, 1967), no estimate of the size of the task was possible, but in his *Plant Geography* Dr Balgooy was dealing with 1666 generic units of phanerogams. Now *Pacific Plant Areas* includes some species maps and some cryptogams, so that a target of some 2,000 maps is of the right order. In this context the present volume is disappointing, for it adds only 70 new maps; that brings the total to 243 in twelve years. Clearly the funding of this sort of work is difficult and progress can be depressingly slow.

Dr Balgooy has made one major change in this series of maps. In the previous volume a standard outline of the Pacific basin was used throughout; overruns of distribution were indicated by marginal annotation. Now he changes to a wider area, smaller scale, outline where the range of the group extends beyond the Pacific. This presentation is more vivid and makes the maps more enjoyable browsing. Several such maps demonstrate, for instance, how tropical Africa and Madagascar often participate in the more tropical Pacific distributions, but South Africa seldom plays a part in the austral ones. One map is misleading: that is No. 195, *Curculigo* sect. *Curculigo*; here the African coverage includes the section (or, as I would prefer, the independent genus) *Empodium*. Section *Curculigo* is wholly tropical in Africa and the comments on fruits and the phrase "orchid-like" herbs do not apply to *Empodium*.

This project is really two in one. The first part of this volume, as of the previous two, consists of a *Bibliography of Pacific and Malesian Plant Maps of Phanerogams*. In reviewing volume 2, I failed to read this title carefully enough and criticized the inclusion of purely Malesian material. However this part is clearly intended to serve the workers on *Flora Malesiana* as well as those studying Pacific botany. As before, Mrs van Steenis-Krusemann is responsible for this bibliography and it is done with her usual indefatigable energy and thoroughness. It occupies no less than 250 pages, and its value is surely self-evident: our whole cartographic knowledge of the Malesian and Pacific floras is indexed in these three bibliographies: what other comparable area is served so well? Yet, with present-day printing costs, was some of the detail really essential? I question, in particular, the individual entry of every species from Wiggins & Porter, *Flora of the Galapagos Islands*. In that work a small map of the island group measuring 70 × 65 mm is used for 2–5 species: this means that 5 species may be mapped in about 65 mm of text—including collateral legend and waste space. In this bibliography 5 such species (e.g. in Acanthaceae on the first page) take up just about the same space! Surely an abbreviated entry "Galapagos p. x" would have been enough: one line instead of the usual three. Similarly the entries from H. St. John's *Monograph of Cyrtandra in Oahu* take up seven pages: the maps themselves would take six. They only give the distribution within one island of the Hawaiian group, and therefore, like the Galapagos maps, their interest is rather limited in the context of Pacific and Malesian phytogeography.

As one expects in a Leiden publication, this volume is beautifully printed on good paper. It is easy to read, and if there are any misprints at all I have failed to notice them. In the Introduction we are told ". . . the series will hopefully be continued as an irregular publication of the Rijksherbarium". The hope is ours, and with it the wish that "irregular" remains a technical term and never comes to mean "infrequent".

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