Book Review

Botanical Publications in Iran. 1976 saw the first appearance of two new Iranian journals* containing botanical papers. *Acta Ecologica Iranica* is devoted essentially to ecological matters, both of plants and animals, and the *Iranian Journal of Botany* to plant taxonomy, anatomy and geobotany. They are therefore different in their scope, as might be expected from their places of origin: the former stems from the National University of Iran, Tehran; the latter from the Ariamehr Botanic Garden, Tehran. Active and developing, these two institutes are well aware of the need for local publication outlets for their research activities.

Acta Ecologica Iranica vol. 1, with an introductory preface by Prof. S. Mobayen, contains a range of papers covering such diverse topics as molysmology (study of pollution), water-mites, cytotaxonomy, a new species of *Scrophularia*, and a geobotanical study of the great desert of Lut in SE Iran. It is a well laid-out and clearly printed production run by an editorial staff and board of eleven, all except one from Tehran. Seven of the papers are in French, one each in English and German; English and Farsi abstracts precede each paper. Not all the papers are of Iranian content: one deals with sea spiders from Turkey and the Aegean, another with the benthic organisms of the Berre lagoon in S France. In the botanical papers, which *do* deal with Persian plants, the absence of an experienced guiding or editorial hand is at times evident. In, for instance, the description of the new species of *Scrophularia*, the new taxon is related to and distinguished from a species (without an authority) whose name I have been unable to trace, and no indication is given as to where the holotype of the new species is conserved. Proof reading throughout has not been accurately done, and there are not a few errors or faulty spellings.

The *Iranian Journal of Botany* owes its inception largely to the enthusiasm and drive of one person, Prof. Per Wendelbo, Göteborg, who was the Scientific Adviser to the Ariamehr Botanic Garden and Herbarium for a two-year period. All the papers in the first issue deal with the native plants of Iran: phanerogams for the most part, but also with contributions to the study of ferns and gasteromycetes. One of the longer papers is a full account by K. H. Rechinger & P. Wendelbo of the plants of the Kavir, one of the many Protected Regions in Iran. There are now almost 50 such regions throughout the country and the account of the Kavir, a huge area of desert and steppe in N Iran, shows just how interesting and worth protecting these areas are, and also how much useful work can be done in them. That there is much that the resident botanist can contribute to our knowledge of Iranian plants is one of the main impressions one forms from reading through this issue. Printed on high-quality paper, very well illustrated with line drawings and beautifully reproduced colour plates, this first part of the new journal is a credit to its originators and printer.

Both these periodicals have got off to a good start and one can but wish them well for the future. It is good to see that in both cases a considerable amount of collaboration with other botanists or specialists has taken place. One hopes that, in succeeding parts, the percentage of papers written by home-based Iranian botanists will rise and that the mutually advantageous links with colleagues abroad will continue.

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* Iranian Journal of Botany vol. 1. Published by the Ariamehr Botanic Garden, Tehran, P.O. Box 8-6096, Iran.