ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our thanks are due to Dr J. Cullen (*Aubrieta*), Dr D. Chamberlain (*Sempervivum*), and Dr P. H. Davis (*Lathyrus*, *Geranium*) for examining herbarium material sent to Edinburgh and for their opinion on the taxa here described as new.

The study was partly supported by the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey (Grant no. TBAG–164).

BOOK REVIEW

Tulips and Irises of Iran. Any book written on the subject of petaloid monocotyledons is enhanced in value if it includes some colour illustrations. The delicate nature of the flowers of these beautiful plants inevitably means that herbarium specimens are often lacking some of their specific features and in consequence are difficult to visualize as living plants. Indeed many species, for example in the genus *Iris*, are distinguished by flower colour, perianth shape or general aspect and it is very difficult to describe the differences between them. It is therefore of great importance that descriptions are accompanied by illustrations.

Professor Per Wendelbo, whose name is well-known in connection with the taxonomy of plants from the Near- and Middle-East, is well aware of the need for illustrated works and his fine accounts of *Allium*, Primulaceae, Fumariaceae and Iridaceae for *Flora Iranica* were all well furnished with photographs and line drawings. 'Tulips and Irises of Iran'* is clearly not intended to compete with *Flora Iranica*, for the descriptions are short and relatively un-technical, keys are not provided and the list of species is incomplete. Nevertheless, much useful information is contained in the short descriptions, including notes about the habitat and distribution of each species, and the introductory chapters deal with the general botanical features of the various families involved. The book contains 84 colour plates depicting about 45% of the Iranian representatives of the Liliaceae, Iridaceae and Amaryllidaceae. Of those not illustrated, over half are *Allium* species. The remainder are mostly mentioned in the text, under the nearest related species, with their diagnostic characters indicated.

If, as we are promised in the introduction, this is the first of a series of similar volumes, then they will be of great value as supplements to the available literature on the flora of Iran. The book is published by the Ariamehr Botanic Garden, ". . . whose aim it is to promote the interest and knowledge of botany and horticulture . . .". This is a very good start, and if the Iranian public can be encouraged to appreciate the rich and beautiful, but threatened, flora of their country through such a book then the project will have been very worthwhile. For those not living in Iran, it is a fine record of bulbous plants in their native habitats, some of them such as *Lilium ledebourii* extremely rare and probably depicted for the first time.

The colour reproduction is on the whole excellent and it is a disappointment to find a lapse in this high standard on page 31, where there are some very blurred photographs of *Fritillaria* species. On the other hand, some of the illustrations such as those on page 71 are among the finest *Iris* photographs I have seen in print, the delicate network of veining on the flowers being reproduced with great accuracy.

This is an exciting publication from a botanically exciting country and one certainly hopes that there will be more to follow.

B. MATHEW

* Tulips and Irises of Iran and their relatives by Per Wendelbo. 83 pp., 3 figs, 84 colour plates. Botanical Institute of Iran, Ariamehr Botanical Garden, Tehran, 1977. Available in Britain from R.H.S. Enterprises, R.H.S. Garden, Wisley. £5·95, plus postage.