Book Review

Mouterde continued. Publication of this newest Flora of Lebanon and Syria* has recommenced under the editorship of A. Charpin and W. Greuter; this first 122-page fascicle of the third and final volume was based on the posthumous manuscript of P. Mouterde, who died in 1972. The first two volumes were published in 1966 and 1970, and the current part follows the same format.

The floristic records are largely derived from the rich collections in the Beirut herbarium, and give a much clearer picture of plant distributions within Syria and Lebanon than did the previous floras of Boissier, Post, Bouloumoy and Thiébaut. This is perhaps the most useful part of the Flora for people studying other parts of the Middle East. While the species descriptions are generally based on Boissier's *Flora Orientalis*, the keys and descriptions have been carefully revised by the editors with the result that possible defects appear to have been completely eliminated. I am glad to see that *Onosma*, inexplicably neutered by Boissier in *Flora Orientalis* though not in his earlier *Diagnoses*, is here restored to the feminine gender assigned to it by Linnaeus.

Several of the gamopetalous families covered here, e.g. Boraginaceae and Convolvulaceae, occur in the recently published sixth volume of the *Flora of Turkey*; others, such as Plumbaginaceae, have yet to appear for Turkey. It is often said that Floras too frequently ape their predecessors: not so with these. Here one can compare taxonomic treatments of neighbouring areas written quite independently, and it is pleasant to find that the species concepts adopted in the two works are by and large very similar. The only major exceptions occur in the Labiatae, not yet published for Turkey. Mouterde takes a narrow view of *Ajuga chia* (treating *A. laevigata*, *A. tridactylites* and *A. rechingeri* as distinct species), mentioning *A. chamaepitys* only by way of an italicised entry which signifies an occurrence close to, but outside, the area of the Flora. In view of the number of intermediates encountered in Turkey, Dr P. H. Davis (author of the *Flora of Turkey* account) felt that infraspecific groupings under *A. chamaepitys* would be more appropriate.

A somewhat similar case is exemplified by *Scutellaria orientalis*, represented in Syria and Lebanon by var. *alpina*. This is a hugely polymorphic species in Turkey, parts of which intergrade with *S. cretacea* (known also from Turkey) to such an extent that the two could not be retained as separate species.

Mouterde's generic limits are often broader than those in the *Flora of Turkey*: *Buglossoides* is included in *Lithospermum*, though *Lithodora* is kept apart. There are exceptions, such as *Anchusa*, which Mouterde separates from *Gastrocotyle*, *Hormuzakia* and *Phyllocara*, and *Paracaryum* which excludes *Mattiastrum*. Such subjective differences hardly affect the usefulness of either work though, from the standpoint of a Mediterranean check-list, life would be easier if they were fewer.

Inevitably both works claim species as endemic to their areas which can now be seen to occur in both. Examples are *Symphytum anatolicum* (claimed as endemic to Turkey) which Pabot has collected in Syria, and *Scutellaria cretacea* (claimed as endemic to Syria) which occurs in eastern Turkey. In one case, *Convolvulus galaticus*, there is quite a gap between its Turkish area and the two Lebanese stations near Mt Hermon.

Previous volumes of the Flora were in two parts: text and illustrations. References to 52 plates are included in the text under review, so we can expect these to be published later. A significant omission from volume 1 was a map of the territorial subdivisions employed; this is a necessity for the Introduction of volume 3 which the editors promise will appear with the final fascicle.

The work contains a few nomenclatural innovations, doubtless the result of the editors' hawk-like scrutiny. I hope that the validations will be repeated in the Introduction, since the paper cover on which they now appear is at risk of being discarded during binding. The text is neatly and accurately printed, and costs 20 Swiss Francs when purchased from the OPTIMA Secretariat at Berlin-Dahlem Botanical Museum, with a discount of 10% if an advance order is made for the remaining fascicles. May they not be long delayed.

J. R. Edmondson

* *Nouvelle flore du Liban et de la Syrie*, vol. 3 (text), part 1, by P. Mouterde (ed. A. Charpin & W. Greuter). Pp. iii + 122, 1978. Dar el-Machreq, Beirut. Distributing agent outside Lebanon: OPTIMA Secretariat, Botanischer Garten & Botanisches Museum, Königin-Luise-Str. 6-8, D-1000 Berlin 33. Price 20 Swiss Francs.