PREFACE

The first International Rhododendron Conference took place at the New York Botanical Garden in 1978 (see Luteyn, J. & O'Brien, M, *Contributions towards a Classification of Rhododendron,* New York Botanical Garden, 1980). At that meeting it was decided that a second conference should be held in Edinburgh; this took place during May 1982, and its proceedings are published here. The delay in publication has been considerable, much to our regret, but has been caused by problems outside of our control.

Between 1978 and 1982 a considerable amount of research on the genus *Rhododendron* was published. The Edinburgh Conference provided the opportunity for the discussion of all this work and for the consideration of further lines of research and their application to the taxonomy of the genus. Following the ideas of the New York conference, botanists and horticulturists came together to try to work out what each could contribute towards a better and more easily usable classification. The ideal may not have been achieved (and probably never will be), but the Conference helped to clear up some of the problems that have arisen from the differing needs of the botanist and gardener.

The Edinburgh Conference was organised by Dr C. C. Wood (now at the National Vegetable Research Centre, Wellesbourne, Warwickshire) and other members of the staff of the Royal Botanic Garden; thanks are due to them for all their efforts in making the Conference a success. Thanks are also due to Dr B. J. Coppins, Mrs N. Gregory and Dr D. F. Chamberlain, who did the necessary (and long-sustained) editorial work on these proceedings.

JAMES CULLEN