REVIEW

ELDREDGE BERMINGHAM, CHRISTOPHER W. DICK & CRAIG MORITZ (eds.): **Tropical rainforests. Past, present, and future.** The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 2005. vii, 745 pp., (colour) illus. ISBN 0-226-04466-1 (cloth), 0-226-04468-8 (paper). Price: GBP 31.50 (paper).

The book contains the updated and edited versions of the papers read at a symposium held in Cairns, Australia, April 1998. The book starts with an introduction by the editors after which it is divided into three parts. Part I: 'Evolutionary and ecological determinants of tropical rainforest diversity' is devoted to general aspects of tropical rainforests. This part starts with an overview: 'The history and ecology of tropical rainforest communities' by Bermingham & Dick. The other papers deal with patterns of diversity and species richness, palynology, Pleistocene vectors, biogeography, gene flow, etc. Examples of Neotropical and African rainforests are presented. Several papers are devoted to animals. Part II: 'A multidisciplinary perspective on an entire rainforest system: The Australian wet tropics' treats Australian rainforests only. It starts with an overview of the history and dynamics of Australian rainforests by Moritz. The other papers deal with the origin, evolution and history of Australian rainforests, with the effects of climate and vegetation change, seedling recruitment and conservation. Part III: 'Rainforest futures' starts with an overview by the three editors. As the title indicates, the other papers discuss this future and deal with processes, people, politics and prospects. The book closes with a list of references and an index.

The range of subjects discussed and of areas treated in this volume is quite large and at first sight the book may make a bit chaotic impression. However, as a whole it is a well-written, up-to-date account of various aspects of tropical, especially Australian, rainforests. As such it is a welcome addition to our knowledge of these forests and should find its way to all professionals interested in rainforests.

FRITS ADEMA