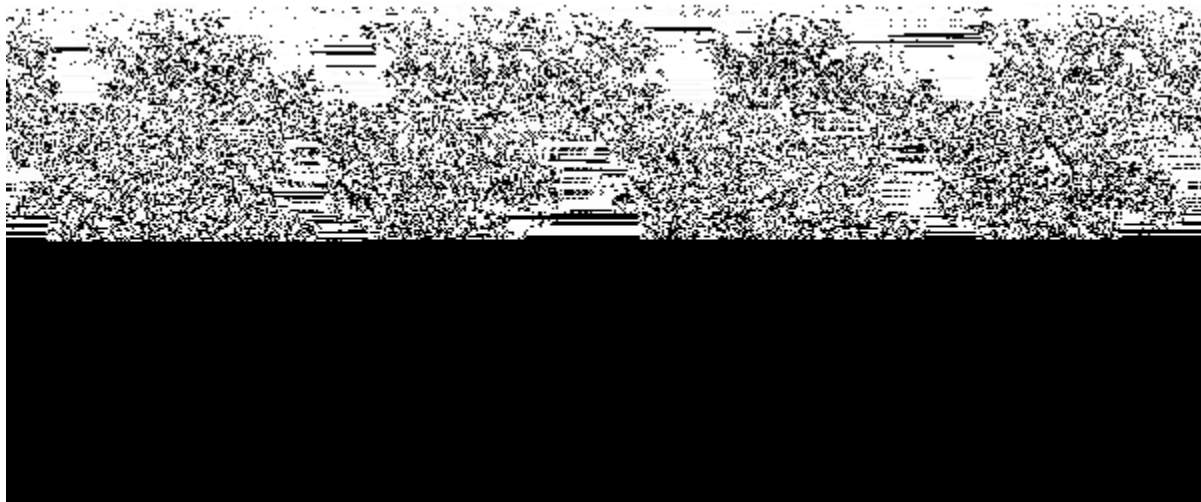




Plant Science Laboratories Herbarium News No. 36

ISSN 0953-0080 Christmas 1997

It has been over two years since the last *Herbarium News* was issued. The problem has been that there has been so much happening that it has become too daunting a task to report it all! However, so many momentous things have occurred that it is essential to bring you up-to-date!

Stephen L Jury, Senior Research Fellow and Editor

Please continue to send in items of news to: Dr Stephen L Jury, Department of Botany, Plant Science Laboratories, The University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 6AS, UK, Telephone: +44 (0)118 931 8169 Fax: +44 (0)118 975 3676 e-mail: s.l.jury@reading.ac.uk

NEW PROFESSOR AT READING

We are especially pleased to report that our established Chair of Botany has been taken by Dr Frank Bisby of Southampton. Many of you know of Frank's work on ILDIS (International Legume Database and Information System) and his recent project SPECIES 2000. Information on both projects can be found on the World Wide Web. E.mail address for ILDIS and Species 2000 are: ILDIS@reading.ac.uk and SP2000@reading.ac.uk respectively.

Frank has been a leading player on the database front, and leading light of TDWG of which Dr Stephen Jury is currently the Chairman. [TDWG is the Taxonomic Databases Working Group, not the Telephone Deregulation Wo

insect antifeedants and of antimicrobial substances. This work led to the production of his very popular undergraduate textbook *Introduction to Ecological Biochemistry*, which is now in its fourth edition and which has been translated into Japanese, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian. *Plant Biochemistry* edited by Dey and Harborne, has now been issued in paperback (London, Academic Press, 1998, ISBN 0 12 799214 6) and is selling well!

Professor Harborne has received five international awards in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the fields of chemotaxonomy and coevolutionary biology. These include the Gold Medal in Botany of the Linnean Society of London (1985), the first Silver Medal of the Phytochemical Society of Europe (1986), an award from the Phytochemical Societies of Europe and North America 'for outstanding lifelong contributions to the discipline of phytochemistry throughout the world' (1992), the Silver Medal of the International Society of Chemical Ecology (1993) and the Pergamon Phytochemistry Prize (1993).

At present Jeffrey is working on medicinal plants with a grant from the Leverhulme Trust to study the phytochemistry of the genus *Tanacetum*. He is also completing a two-volume work with his friend Herbert Baxter called *The Handbook of Flavonoid Pigments*.

TIM UPSON

Another Reading loss to Cambridge is Tim Upson who very recently became the Superintendent of the Botanic Garden. At present Tim will live in the house of the previous Director, Donald Piggott, but this is being done up for him and he expects to move in at the end of this year.

Tim, unlike his predecessor, will also be expected to take an active part in research. Tim has successfully completed his PhD thesis on *Lavandula* and graduated recently.

Congratulations Tim on this prestigious appointment and on your doctorate.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Since the last *Herbarium News*, Professor H F van Emden has retired as Head of the School of Plant Sciences and has been replaced by Professor Philip John. Congratulations to Philip, but also commiserations for all the extra work of admin that has retired as H(41 0 12 394.Tm(de76.75.

helped, especially our research collaborators in our Associated Institutes. Now we have the tough job to maintain our position ready for the next one in four year's time.

Reading, and thus our herbarium will receive a set of the specimens in due course. This is an extremely under-botanized area and this year's work has added several new records to the flora of southern Italy. No doubt many more records will become apparent as the material is sorted and studied early next year. Reading has been fortunate in participating in all but one of these itinera (S. Spain, Israel, Sicily, Cyprus, Morocco, W. Spain and E.C. Portugal, Greece, S. Italy and with specimens from our other home-based expeditions and exchanges now has an excellent collection of Mediterranean flora. Next year's Iter will be to the Black Sea Coast of Bulgaria.

The specimens in HJMB's herbarium are a great contrast, and hence very complementary: they provide specimens of all those horticultural plants that JEL missed or eschewed. HJMB has visited those sites that JEL would not make an effort to visit, notably parks, estates and derelict gardens. HJMB has sp

a place as central Edinburgh. We did not have to wait for a table, though I suspect the establishment will become more and more popular. The only black mark given was having to wait for our bill when the computerised till seemed to crash. However, I shall return when I have an excuse to go to Edinburgh again!

BOTANICAL TRANSECT OF SOUTHERN PATAGONIA

This was an international project, sponsored and funded by the Royal Society of London, the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas, Argentina and the Instituto de la Patagonia, Punta Arenas, Chile, commenced in 1975 and was brought to a fruitful conclusion in 1981. The objectives of the programme were as follows: (1) A study of the flora and vegetation of Patagonia between 51° and 52°S. lat., and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans; (2) Preparation of a complete and critical catalogue of the flora of the region, including both phanerogams and cryptogams; (3) Determination of the vegetation communities and the preparation of a phytosociological map of the Transect; (4) Determination of correlations between the distribution of plants and vegetation with such features as climate, soils, etc; (5) A search for criteria which permit an evaluation of the degradation of vegetation and soils as a result of human influence; (6) Training of younger, less experienced, colleagues in the methods of work involving groups of professional botanists having different backgrounds, experience and knowledge. Coloured maps were produced pertaining to items 3-5 above. They are based on 1112 relevés, undertaken by Dr Fidel A. Roig (Mendoza) and his team within the programme, which are representative of the vegetational variation within the 28,000 km² covered by the Transect. The maps follow international norms in that the gradation from red to blue reflects the progression from xeric conditions to those with increasing water-availability. Detailed descriptions of the phytosociological units shown in the maps are provided by Boelcke *et al.* (1985) and Roig and Faggi (1985). Spare copies of these maps exist at Reading and may be obtained from Dr S L Jury (address on p1).

Sadly, no spare copies of the books are available.

BOELCKE, O., MOORE, D.M. & ROIG, F.A., 1985 *Transecta Botánica* de la Patagonia Austral. Argentina: CONICYT. xxviii + 733pp.

ROIG, F.A. & FAGGI, A.M. 1985. Analisis Geobotánica de la Vegetación de la Transecta (with English translation by D.M. Moore). Argentina: CONICYT. 189pp.

MEDITERRANEAN BOTANY IN THE FIELD IN SOUTHERN SPAIN 1998

For almost thirty years, the Department of Botany of the University of Reading has run a field course for final-year students to Spain in springtime. In recent years, this has centred on the botanically diverse province of Almería in Eastern Andalucía, staying on the coast within the Parque Natural de Cabo de Gata. A spectacular range of plants is encountered,

on a comprehensive programme of visits to very varied habitats. A visit to the Sierra Nevada also allows the changes in vegetation to be seen with increasing altitude.

Friends will recall Gordon's enthusiastic winter talk and wonderful illustrations on succulent plants in Plant Science Laboratories. The book continues in Gordon's inimitable style and is sumptuously illustrated throughout its 424 pages with spectacular colour photographs, diagrams, figures and tables.

Gordon's book is at present my bed-time reading. However, unlike Davis and Heywood's *Principles of Angiosperm taxonomy* where one wakes up in the night as the book falls off the bed, here one reads avidly into the small hours only to oversleep in the morning!

Gordon has box files in his living room labelled "Books written", "Books in progress", "Other possible books" and "Impossible books". We hope that the second and third box-files are still rather full!

ADVISORY PANEL ON NOMENCLATURE AND TAXONOMY FOR HORTICULTURE

The Royal Horticultural Society has set up an advisory panel to provide authoritative guidance on nomenclatural and taxonomic issues. This Panel, under the chairmanship of Mr Chris Brickell, includes Dr Stephen Jury, and reports to the new RHS Science Committee which includes Professor John Parker. It is proposed that the committee will advise and act as a filter, ensuring that only those name changes which are unavoidable or which have positive value to gardeners are taken up for use in horticulture. Its aims are to provide uniformity, accuracy and stability in nomenclature.

At first, the Panel's main work has concerned problems amongst the plants listed in *The Plant Finder*, since this is now a RHS publication. (It also helps with the nomenclature for use in all publications of the Society, and including the new *A-Z Dorling-Kindersley Encyclopædia* edited by Chris Brickell)

About 40 members and friends met for coffee and biscuits in the Foyer. In the lecture theatre, the first speaker Geoff Wilson from Louth, Lincolnshire, enthused about his experiences growing and breeding Orchid Irises, illustrating his talk with many slides. During a buffet lunch Geoff sold many of his irises; those left he gave to the Department. Plants from members' gardens were also on sale, as were cards, books, etc. Members also

The extremely long time span of the AFE project (approximately 150 years using the present mapping system) creates a number of problems that the database approach may alleviate. The dynamic nature of the AFE database makes it possible to update distribution data for the published taxa, as well as to make distribution data, collected from the national databases, available as preliminary maps on WWW, independently of the editorial process. Therefore, the AFE database may gradually transform into a European floristic surveillance network that expands the original mission of the AFE.

Furthermore, changes to the status categories used in mapping and the AFE grid system are being considered. Now there are several pan-European biological mapping projects