

grapher or research team, especially one willing to look at the plants in their native surroundings.

REFERENCES

- Ball, P. W. (1972). *Lamium* and *Lamiastrum*, in *Flora Europaea* 3: 147–149. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Briquet, J. (1897). Labiatae, in A. Engler & K. Prantl, *Die natürlichen Pflanzenfamilien* IV.3a: 183–384. Leipzig.
- Mill, R. R. (1980). *Lamium* and *Galeobdolon*, in Davis, P. H. (compiler), *Materials for a Flora of Turkey XXXVII: Labiatae, Plumbaginaceae, Plantaginaceae. Notes RBG Edinb.* 38: 23–64.
- Mill, R. R. (1982). *Lamium* and *Galeobdolon*, in Davis, P. H. (ed.), *Flora of Turkey and the East Aegean Islands* 7: 126–148, 150–151. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

R. R. Mill

List of Vascular Plants of the British Isles. D.H. Kent. London: Botanical Society of the British Isles. 1992. Pp. xvi + 384. ISBN 0-90115-821-6. £11.50.

The 'Kent List' follows in the long tradition of numbered plant lists which British botanists have been privileged to use since the *London Catalogue of British Plants* first appeared in 1844. It replaces Dandy's list of 1958. Like its predecessors, 'Kent' is simply a numbered list giving the correct scientific name of every plant on the current British list, with appropriate synonyms including the basionym in all relevant cases – but nothing else. Common names are *not* included; a sad omission since they would have taken up little extra space. Also useful, but sadly lacking, would have been an indication of the conservation status of our rarer plants.

Some comparisons with its predecessor (Dandy, 1958) prove illuminating. 'Kent' lists more species (3354) than 'Dandy' (2822), but much of the extra bulk of the former consists simply of empty white space. The net increase of 532 species on 'Dandy' is made up of an extra 118 native and 414 aliens. The former are more than accounted for by the fact that, in 'Kent', all 220 microspecies of *Taraxacum* are listed, whereas 'Dandy' only enumerated four species aggregates. There are also numerous additions in *Limonium* and *Hieracium*. However, they are compensated for by a marked decrease in accepted *Rubus* taxa, from Dandy's 389 to a 'mere' 321. The Introduction includes a helpful list of species included in 'Dandy' but excluded in 'Kent', comprising 9 natives, 74 aliens and casuals, and 9 hybrids.

The family sequence, generic concepts, and nomenclature have all been brought up to date. The arrangement of families follows Cronquist (1981), also used in Stace's *New Flora* (Stace 1991). Although it was intended that the two books be compatible, the family numbering diverges slightly, since Kent excludes various families included by Stace. Both books take a conservative view of Liliaceae.

This is the first BSBI publication to have been produced using the Society's database, at Leicester. It is a pity that the book could not have been made more user-friendly by

having family and genus names as running heads on facing pages. Errors seem to be very few; where they do occur, they tend to be major howlers, such as the citation of *Cotoneaster humifusa* as a synonym of *Taraxacum hamatifforme*, on p. 236 and in the index, as well as what is presumably its rightful place, on p. 139.

Already the British Herbarium at the Natural History Museum has been re-arranged according to this work and doubtless other curators will follow its example. It does not solve every problem, especially for the more casual aliens, on which information is often wanting. Attractively enclosed within a laminated cover depicting the BSBI's symbol, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, 'Kent' is an accurate enumeration of the British flora in the 1990s and will be the standard reference list for British botanists and plant ecologists for some time to come (though I suspect not another 35 years).

REFERENCES

- Cronquist, A. (1981). *An integrated system of classification of flowering plants*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dandy, J. E. (1958). *List of British vascular plants*. London: British Museum.
- Stace, C. A. (1991). *New Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

R. R. Mill

An Annotated Catalogue of the Vascular Plants of Oman and their Vernacular Names. Shahina A. Ghazanfar. Meise: National Botanic Garden of Belgium. 1992. Pp. 153. ISBN 90-72619-08-0. Forming Scripta Botanica Belgica 2. 1600 Belgian Francs.

Until recently the flora of the Sultanate of Oman was largely unknown, but extensive botanical exploration over the last twenty years has revealed a surprisingly rich flora, with a large number of endemic species, particularly in the southern province of Dhofar. As the author states in her introduction, this *Catalogue* is the first comprehensive list of the flowering plants and ferns found in Oman and lists an impressive 1174 species - exclusive of cultivated plants. Species are listed by family, together with brief descriptions and notes on habitat and distribution; there are also some diagnostic keys. Representative collections are cited and vernacular names are given using a simplified, and therefore accessible, system of transliteration into English.

As a compilation of published and unpublished plant names related to the Oman flora this *Catalogue* succeeds quite well. It appears to cover all major collections and I have found comparatively few omissions. The nomenclature is up-to-date and the author has been assiduous in picking up recent names, including those very recently published such as *Sporobolus gloeocladus*. There is no doubt that this *Catalogue* will be an essential source of reference for all those studying the Oman flora until the publication of the new, comprehensive, Flora of Arabia.

However, to be really reliable, a checklist must be based on thorough taxonomic research, and it is in this area that I have some misgivings. It seems that collector's lists have been accepted uncritically and little or no research into the specimens has been made. I am not certain whether the many species identified only to genus represent