

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Pondweeds of the British Isles and Ireland.** C. D. Preston. Peterborough: BSBI Publications. 1995. 352pp, incl. 49 distribution maps and 50 full-page line drawings. ISBN 0 901158 24 0. £16.50 (Europe £17.50) (paperback).

*Pondweeds of the British Isles and Ireland* is the long-awaited monograph in this series of handy little books so useful for identification purposes. The pondweeds have always been known to be a difficult group, mainly because of their plasticity. They comprise the Potamogetonaceae, containing the genus *Potamogeton* with 47 taxa including hybrids and *Groenlandia densa*, and the Ruppiaceae with *Ruppia maritima* and *R. cirrhosa*.

After the introduction there are a few pages on the history of pondweed study, followed by a discussion on their nomenclature (necessary as there are some minor disagreements about what some specific epithets represent). Short chapters on classification, evolution, hybridization and variation, chromosome numbers and morphology are all included. The last is well illustrated with clear line drawings including venation, leaf-tip shape, and stem cross-section.

Ecologically this work goes further than its forerunners in the series, with chapters on the use of waterplants as a food and refuge for birds, fish and other aquatic and amphibious organisms. All the different habitats are discussed. Other chapters include the effects of eutrophication and acidification, current status, conservation, and pondweeds in horticulture, the collecting and preservation of material, reference collections and finally the trophic requirements for each species. The keys to the species are easy to use, especially the second one which is broken into segments to make it less daunting. The main body of the book gives a full description, illustration and dot map of each species; comparisons are made between similar species and mention is made of known hybrids. Also included are an extensive bibliography, glossary and an index that has both scientific and common names. At £16.50 the book is good value, and has an attractive powder blue cover adorned with a *Potamogeton*.

D. R. McKean

**Overzicht van de Paddenstoelen in Nederland (Survey of Macrofungi in the Netherlands).** Edited by E. Arnolds, Th. W. Kuyper & M. E. Noordeloos. Netherlands Mycological Society. 1995. 876pp, incl. 16 full-colour plates. ISBN 90-802818-1-6. 2000 Gld.

This hefty volume is a mine of information listing all those species of larger basidiomycete and the major ascomycetous fungi recorded from the Netherlands until 1994 (3488 taxa). There are sixteen composite plates of beautiful watercolours by one of the editors (E.A.) which are extremely useful as they illustrate many species not previously depicted in colour. Distribution maps accompany