

with the promotion of traditional phytotherapy systems: the Belize Ethnobotany Project, the WWF ethnobotany programme in Madagascar, and the Ametra 2000 project in Peru. This is followed by an analysis of the international market for herbal medicines, addressing supply issues and their consequences for wild and cultivated sources, and by a discussion of the role of plants in the pharmaceutical industry focusing on each phase of the process: acquisition of raw materials, research and development, production and manufacturing, and synthesis. Lastly, the authors explore the links between medicinal plants and conservation, and make some basic recommendations as to how the two can be of mutual benefit.

The text in this book is uncomplicated and accessible (although an index would have been useful), and its content is interesting. The case studies, which are in many ways its most valuable asset, have been discussed in an intelligent and informative manner, and address the oft-ignored economic and legislative issues which relate to them. Overall, we are provided with a readable and informative introduction to a subject of considerable interest and relevance.

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Biosystematic Monograph of the Genus *Cucumis* (Cucurbitaceae), Botanical Identification of Cucumbers and Melons. J. H. Kirkbride, Jr.; US Department of Agriculture. Boone: Parkway Publishers. 1993. 159pp. ISBN 0 9635752 0 1. £49.00 (hardback plus 5¹/₄" diskette).

Species of *Cucumis* have been in cultivation since the time of the ancient Egyptians and Romans. Whilst the Romans contented themselves with a single name for both the cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*) and melon (*C. melo*), taxonomists in this and the preceding two centuries have managed to ascribe 72 species names to *Cucumis melo* alone. In addition to widespread species such as the canteloupe melon and cucumber, the West Indian gherkin (*C. anguria*) and kiwano (*C. metuliferus*) are two locally important vegetable crops, the kiwano having been introduced as a vegetable in the USA five years ago (see <http://www.produceoasis.com/>) where its brightly coloured flesh and long shelf-life (up to 6 months) make it a popular speciality product.

Kirkbride's monograph contains five chapters: Taxonomic History, Morphology, Biosystematic Data, Materials and Methods, and Taxonomy. It is accompanied by a 5¹/₄" MS-DOS diskette on which is a collections database, a character database and an identification key. *Cucumis* has been previously revised by Naudin (1859) and Cogniaux (1881, 1924). The principal taxonomic changes made by Kirkbride in his revision are the description of two new sections, five new series and four new species, and reduction of 20 species names into synonymy. In all, he recognizes 32 species belonging to *Cucumis*. The systematics of the genus is not dealt with in any great depth and there is a curious division of characters into morphological and 'biosystematic' (i.e. biochemical and molecular). Pollen characters, so informative

for the *Cucurbitaceae*, are omitted altogether and there is no detailed discussion of the biogeography of *Cucumis*, which, given its distribution over Africa, Asia and Australia, could provide important insights into the systematics of the group.

At the practical level I have two main reservations with this work. The first is the failure to link the common names to scientific names, despite their use in the introduction (I had to resort to a web search in order to discover the scientific name of the kiwano). My second reservation is the placing of information not present in the book on an accompanying diskette, which, four years after publication, is no longer compatible with current computers or software. With the pace of development in computer storage media and in the programs themselves, it would seem more sensible to provide an accompanying website as has been done for more recent publications, e.g. *Flora Mesoamericana* (see <http://www.mobot.org/mobot/fm/>), where the website is a distinct publication with access to the information less dependent on the age or type of the user's computer.

Despite the above comments, this monograph represents a remarkably comprehensive taxonomic and nomenclatural revision. The accompanying keys and descriptions are clear and contrast well, and the illustrations are excellent. This work has undoubtedly become the major taxonomic reference for the genus *Cucumis* since its publication in 1993.

References

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 NAUDIN, C. V. (1859). *Ann. Sci. Nat. Bot.*, ser. 5, 5: 5–43.

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Mycology in Sustainable Development: Expanding Concepts, Vanishing Borders.

Edited by M. E. Palm & I. H. Chapela. Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers Inc. 1997. 306pp, 10 b/w photographs, 10 figures and tables. ISBN 1 887905 01 4. Hardback.

The book is composed of the papers presented at a workshop held in San Diego, California as part of the annual meeting of the Mycological Society of America. Fourteen papers are presented, arranged under five main headings and authored by 29 contributors. The volume commences with an informative scene-setter by Palm & Chapela.

The first two sections come within the remit of 'Enlightened Management', the first dealing with *Mushrooms as Non-timber Forest Products* and the second entitled *Inventory and Monitoring of Fungal Biodiversity*. The last chapter in the first section