

BOTANICAL LITERATURE OF AFGHANISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

The botanical literature of Afghanistan was very sparse indeed until quite recently. Boissier, for example, who included the country within his *Flora Orientalis* (1867-1888), had only the small pioneer collections of Griffith (c. 1839) and Aitchison (c. 1880) at his disposal. Afghanistan was then and until about forty years ago, a very difficult country to travel in and only since it has been opened up has the richness and interest of its flora been fully realised. In the 1930's Koelz made important collections and since then, particularly since the end of the last war, more and more collectors have been drawn to Afghanistan. As a result, the bulk of botanical references date from about 1950 onwards.

Although the most important collections of Afghan plants are to be found in European herbaria, particularly in the Natural History Museum in Vienna, a start has been made at the Botany Department of Kabul University in association with the University of Bonn to build up a herbarium of native plants. Although at present fairly small, the herbarium does contain many of the important specimens collected by H. F. Neubauer between 1949 and 1951 and from 1962 until 1965. It is also being added to every year by the German botanists of Bonn University affiliated with Kabul University.

It is therefore an appropriate time when so much interest is being taken in the flora of the country to provide a useful list of references.

The following bibliography attempts to give a reasonably comprehensive coverage of works dealing with the phanerogams, cryptogams and the vegetation of Afghanistan. Although primarily concerned with native plants, there are references to cultivated plants and to the agriculture of the country.† There are also references to works dealing with geography, climate, ecology and palaeontology.

A separate section lists some of the most important botanical references to adjacent countries or areas; another section gives a brief list of useful maps of Afghanistan.

Many colleagues—too many to mention individually—have contributed towards this bibliography. We wish to record our gratitude to all of them.

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† The bibliography of Pickett (see below) dealing with agriculture in Afghanistan is very comprehensive and includes many references to allied subjects.

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