

# Nordic Journal of Botany

## Review

Castroviejo, S. et al. (Eds) *Flora Iberica* vol. 1, 1986 (LIV + 575 pp) and vol. 2, 1990 (LII + 897 pp.) – Real Jardín Botánico C. S. I. C. Madrid. ISBN 84-00-06221-3. Price vol. 2.: ESP 3774.

A team of Portuguese and Spanish botanists is currently publishing one of the finest Mediterranean floras of our times covering the entire Iberian Peninsula. The editorial committee comprises S. Castroviejo, G. López Gonzáles, and F. Muños Garmendia (all Madrid), M. Laínz (Gijón), P. Montserrat and L. Villar (Jaca), and J. Paiva (Coimbra). They have collaborators all over Spain and Portugal.

Vol. 1 covers the Pteridophytes, the Gymnosperms and the Angiosperms from the Lauraceae to the Papaveraceae in the system of Stebbins (1974); vol. 2 extends from the Platanaceae to the Plumbaginaceae, thus including the Caryophyllacean families. With two such large and important families in the Mediterranean area as the Ranunculaceae in vol. 1 and the Caryophyllaceae in vol. 2, a fair basis for evaluating the work exists.

The first pages in each volume (Roman numerals) display provinces in the two countries, abbreviations, basic floras and other introductory chapters, with a key to all families with the treated families numbered.

The reviewer has paid particular attention to the Caryophyllaceae, which occupies 366 pages and treats 36 genera with over 300 species treated. There is a traditional introduction to the family, a key to genera and then generic treatments. The

largest genera in this family are *Dianthus*, with 29 species, and *Silene*, with 78. The generic description of *Silene* covers one page and includes a bibliography of 21 publications, some classic, like Rohrbach's monograph, but mostly recently published papers from the 1970s and '80s. There is of course a key to species, and ample descriptions of these, with chromosome numbers. It is indicated whether these are counted in Iberian material or not. Distribution is given with reference to districts; in many cases there are extensively critical notes.

The most common synonyms in the Iberian floras are quoted; there is, however, no reference to *Flora Europaea* as might have been expected, on the other hand the treatment for most groups here is outdated.

The line drawings are excellent. 65 of the *Silene* species are figured with enlarged illustrations of floral parts and seeds.

Other families are treated equally. The large (54 species) and extremely difficult genus *Armeria* (Plumbaginaceae) is given 79 pages, with every species illustrated, and critical notes on most taxa; it is almost a monograph on the genus.

The volumes end with a number of appendices e.g. lists of authors' names in full, bibliography in full, dictionary of Latin and latinized names and epithets, and an index to all taxa, with authors' names.

All in all, a flora of a very high standard and a worthy successor to Willkomm & Lange: "Prodromus" (1870–80). For botanists working with the European flora this multi-volume work is indispensable – luckily it is at the same time a pleasure to look at the fine print and illustrations. Congratulations to the editors and their collaborators. We are looking forward with impatience to the continuation.

Kai Larsen