

system, anyway, does not permit); and there are cases such as *Festuca*, with 31 recognised taxa, where having answered all questions one is left with up to 20 species impossible to tell apart.

Conclusion? I have just deinstalled the programme. Good news last: deinstallation functioned as described (it is operated by Windows).

W.G.

20. Santiago CASTROVIEJO (gen. ed.), S. TALAVERA, C. AEDO, S. CASTROVIEJO, A. HERRERO, C. ROMERO ZARCO, F. J. SALGUEIRO & M. VELAYOS (vol. ed.) – *Flora iberica*. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. Vol. VII(II), *Leguminosae* (partim). – Real Jardín Botánico, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 2000 (ISBN 84-00-06221-3 [complete work], -07882-9 [this tome]). Pages [I]-XXII + 579-1119, map and drawings; cloth with dust-cover.

Less than four years after the publication of volume 8 of this *Flora* the gap in the numerical sequence of volumes has now been closed, and “law and order” on the bookshelf has been restored. This is not, of course, the main or only reason for welcoming the new book. The legume family being the second most important Spanish vascular plant family, after the *Compositae*, their completion stands as a major landmark in the production of the flagship among Europe’s national Floras (which was awarded a special prize, in the form of a silver plaque, by the Herbarium Mediterraneum Foundation in Palermo).

Owing to the family’s size it has been split into two independently bound but consecutively paged half volumes (see OPTIMA Newsletter 35: (8). 2000 for a review of the first half). The second portion covers five tribes, all of them diverse and widespread in the Mediterranean countries where they probably have their centre of origin: *Ononideae*, *Trifolieae*, *Loteae*, *Coronilleae*, and *Hedysareae*. There are 243 species in 20 genera, 8 of them large to medium sized in the area covered by the *Flora*: *Trifolium* (60 species), *Ononis* (43), *Medicago*, (30), *Hippocrepis* (21), *Lotus* (16), *Anthyllis* and *Melilotus* (12 each), and *Onobrychis* (10).

The split of the family has inevitably resulted in some duplication, and the editors, in an

obvious effort to make each half volume self-contained, have been generous in allowing such redundancy. Both books start with a full generic key covering the whole family (they are not quite identical, even though there has been no change in the recognised genera: in the more recent version some leads have been improved). The indexes to the second half are cumulative and serve for the whole volume, same as the first three Annexes (abbreviations of author names, journal and book titles), but the two next ones are particular to their respective tome.

As in previous volumes, nomenclature and taxonomy of all taxa has been critically assessed and, where necessary, revised. This time, the changes are less dramatic than usual, due perhaps to the fact that there are relatively few critical groups and species limits are as a rule clear cut. There are exceptions, such as the notoriously chaotic *Anthyllis vulneraria* aggregate, here subdivided into 11 subspecies and provided with an additional multi-access key that looks promising. Generic limits mostly coincide with those that *Med-Checklist* adopted upon advice from Per Lassen. The major exceptions are segregation of *Hippocrepis emerus* (better known as *Coronilla emerus*) in a separate genus *Emerus*, recognition of *Tetragonolobus* as distinct from *Lotus*, and maintenance of the traditional generic placement of *Medicago monspeliensis* in *Trigonella*.

An endearing trait of this book is the tribute it pays to Eugenio Sierra Ráfols, botanical artist deceased in 1999 at the age of eighty. Sierra is at the origin of the exceptional quality of the illustration in which *Flora iberica* takes justified pride. He alone made the drawings (over 700) of the first four volumes, and some of his last ones are included in the present volume, illustrating the genera treated by Barcelona botanist Carles Benedí: *Anthyllis*, *Tripodion*, and *Hymenocarpus*. Obviously Sierra’s example has influenced the illustrators of the later volumes, as a challenge to maintain the high standard set initially. It is perhaps unusual, but certainly well deserved, to find a flora volume dedicated to a botanical artist. Sierra’s biography (unsigned; presumably due to the general editor, Santiago Castroviejo) which appears ahead of the preface matter brings credit not only to the artist but to the editors as well.

W.G.