

21. Santiago CASTROVIEJO (gen. ed.), J. PAIVA, F. SALES, I. C. HEDGE, C. AEDO, J. J. ALDASORO, S. CASTROVIEJO, A. HERRERO & M. VELAYOS (vol. ed.) – *Flora iberica*. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. Vol. XIV, *Myoporaceae-Campanulaceae*. – Real Jardín Botánico, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 2001 (ISBN 84-00-06221-3 [complete work], -07953-1 [this volume]). pages XLVII + 251, map and drawings, colour photographs; cloth with dust-cover.

When this volume, delayed in the mail, arrived, I was just about to close the column. I reopened it of course, if only by a tiny crack.

So there you are: no sooner had I announced that the former gap in volume sequence had been successfully closed by completion of the legume treatment, a new, much wider gap opens up. Never mind. The plan of the *Flora* appears in a twin index on the flyleaf at the end of the volume, and a complete family key, including monocots, is provided each time in the preface matter. Any published part, irrespective of its sequential place, is thus most welcome.

Volume 14 is relatively small. It treats 9 families, three of them exotic, the largest being *Campanulaceae*. There are 26 species in *Campanula* alone, which is not however the most difficult genus taxonomically – *Jasione* is worse, with its reticulate and almost continuous pattern of variation that resulted in the recognition of infraspecific taxa in *J. montana* and *J. crispa* plus several rather ill defined satellite species.

An innovation of this volume is the presence of colour illustrations: 36 beautiful photographs on glossy white paper, assembled in 15 plates at the end of the book. All belong to *Orobanchaceae*, the volume's second largest family (30 species, of which 29 belong in *Orobanche*), which many botanists loathe as being hopelessly difficult. The main problem resides in the nature of the distinctive characters, which are hard to describe in writing – especially when herbarium specimens are concerned. Colour pictures, especially such high-quality ones, are an ideal means to convey the diagnostic traits. Who knows? With such aid, I might now manage to identify my broomrape specimens correctly. W.G.

22. Inés ÁLVAREZ FERNÁNDEZ (compiler) & Santiago CASTROVIEJO (gen. coord.) – *Claves de Flora iberica*. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. Vol. I. *Pteridophyta, Gymnospermae, Angiospermae (Lauraceae-Euphorbiaceae)* – Real Jardín Botánico, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 2001 (ISBN 84-00-07932-9 [complete work], 84-00-07933-7 [this volume]). XXIV + 776 pages, drawings; boards.

Nine of the 21 planned volumes of *Flora iberica* have by now been published, so the work is not even halfway complete, yet it is a truism that its use as in the field for identification purposes is out of the question. The idea to extract the keys from the available parts (volumes 1-8) and publish them separately in a less bulky format has therefore obvious merit. Designed as a vade-mecum, this book omits descriptions, synonymies and the like but not core information such as each plant's habitat, altitudinal range, flowering time and distribution, both in Spain and world-wide. The *Flora*'s beautiful plates of drawings (almost 1200 by now) have been included in reduced format: even in their new, modest quarter-page size they look well enough and are certainly informative.

No attempt at updating the information with respect to the original treatments has been made, but two interesting lists have been added at the very end. One enumerates 56 Iberian species and subspecies that were newly described subsequent to the publication of the respective *Flora* volume (exactly half belong to only four genera: *Limonium*, *Biscutella*, *Armeria*, and *Helianthemum*). The second is of 25 additional records for the Iberian flora (no less than 18 being naturalised aliens) and 3 erroneous inclusions marked for deletion. The only serious criticism I have is that in the text there are no cross-references to this additional information, nor is it indexed, so that it is normally lost to the user unless she or he annotates her (his) personal copy.

You will need generously dimensioned pockets to use this book as a pocket flora – but field botanists usually have. Their main wish will be for the companion corresponding to volumes 9-21 of the *Flora* to be available soon, so that they may balance their gait. W.G.