

Floras

6. **Santiago CASTROVIEJO** † (gen. ed.), **R. MORALES, A. QUINTANAR, F. CABEZAS, A. J. PUJADAS & S. CIRUJANO** (vol. ed.) – **Flora iberica**. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. Vol. **XII**, *Verbenaceae-Labiatae-Callitrichaceae*. – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Real Jardín Botánico, Madrid, 2010 (ISBN 978-84-00-09041-8, volume; 978-84-00-06221-7, set). LIV + 650 pages, map, 149 plates of drawings; cloth with dust jacket.
7. **Santiago CASTROVIEJO** † (gen. ed.), **S. TALAVERA, M. J. GALLEGO, C. ROMERO ZARCO & A. HERRERO** (vol. ed.) – **Flora iberica**. Plantas vasculares de la Península Ibérica e Islas Baleares. Vol. **XVII**, *Butomaceae-Juncaceae*. – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Real Jardín Botánico, Madrid, 2010 (ISBN 978-84-00-09112-5, volume; 978-84-00-06221-7, set). XLVIII + 298 pages, map, 55 plates of drawings; cloth with dust jacket.

A year of bliss: two volumes of *Flora iberica* have been published in 2010. This is quite remarkable, taking into account the very thorough editing that the Flora undergoes before it is cleared for printing. The volume editors must have had a busy time. But then, Spain is rich enough in botanical brainpower to afford two full and fully different editorial teams of four to be entrusted with that job. Not to speak of the two dozen authors of the treatments.

Yes, indeed: Spain is a fortunate, a rich country, botanically speaking. And undoubtedly it owes that wealth to the very flora project that now benefits from it. We are

witnessing an upward spiral, a self-reinforcing process, just as real as, and infinitely more enjoyable than, the fatal downward spiral that has affected our discipline in other countries of Europe.

The two present volumes cover widely different groups of plants. The smaller one, N° 17, is devoted for one half to the aquatic (freshwater and marine) families of the former *Helobiae*, no less than 22 in number (and there might have been one more, had not *Cymodocea* been included in *Zannichelliaceae*), totalling only 58 species among them. The second half, disregarding the single naturalised representative of *Commelinaceae*, is devoted to *Juncaceae*, with only two genera but no less than 59 species. The *Juncus* treatment follows faithfully Snogerup's excellent revision, and that of *Luzula* Kirschner's, but both look very well structured and are (as the whole Flora) superbly illustrated. I for one will certainly often use the comparative drawings of fruiting *Juncus* perigons, grouped together on two opposite pages, which better than any key helps recognise the different species.

As to vol. 12, it has the major family *Labiatae* at its core, sandwiched so-to-say between two much smaller ones: *Verbenaceae* and *Callitrichaceae*, each with 10 species. *Callitriche*, another of those tricky aquatics with extreme phenotypic plasticity that makes it almost impossible to key them out properly, are also an example of a treatment that I will often consult when looking at non-Spanish plants, as the illustrations, quite apart from the text, are extremely helpful.

As to the *Labiatae*, much could and should be written about them, but I will limit myself to pointing out those genera which have a main centre of diversity in Spain, where they are represented by many species often difficult to define, last not least because of frequent intraspecific hybridization and introgression phenomena. They are: *Teucrium* (67 species, 22 hybrids), *Thymus* (36 species, 71 hybrids), *Sideritis* (34 species, 35 hybrids), and *Lavandula* (8 species,

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9 hybrids). The present treatments are a major if basic step toward a proper understanding of the evolutionary processes that have led to their present multiformity. W.G.