

REVIEW

R. LENZENWEGER: **Desmidiaceenflora von Österreich. Teil 1.** Bibliotheca Phycologia 101, 1996. 162 pp., 17 plates, 117 text fig. ISBN 3-443-60028-X. Price: DM 90. — **Teil 2.** Bibliotheca Phycologia 102, 1997. 216 pp., 27 plates, many text fig. ISBN 3-443-60029-X. Price: DM 96. — J. Cramer in der Gebr. Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin, Stuttgart.

The two published parts of the Desmid Flora of Austria are well-illustrated review volumes on a group of precious freshwater microalgae. Volume 1 contains a pretty, visual key to the genera, completed by figures of one or more characteristic species. In all keys of the separate genera many visual aids are included, resulting in user-friendly identification tools. In the taxonomic part of volume 1 the paragraphs on species and infraspecific taxa include the scientific name, an abbreviated reference to authors, a reference to the drawing given in this Flora, synonymy based on literature of Austrian desmids, a short description, and a note on distribution of the taxon in Austria, often together with some information on its environment. For the general classification a publication by Ruzicka is used. It is a pity, however, that a reference to that publication is lacking. In volume 2, a different system for coding of dimensions is introduced. Another change is the inclusion to references to international scientific literature, still without full citation of these works, however.

Although most of the contents are painstaking precise, some slovenliness is apparent in the set-up of this Flora. In volume 2 some of the omissions in the list of references on occurrence of desmids in Austria are corrected, but still a list of general references is not included. Especially in relation to the incomplete citation of references that are used as a basis for some of the drawings, these omissions may cause legalistic debate.

What can phycologists and librarians expect further? There apparently will be a third part, for the genera *Cosmarium* and *Cosmocladium* are left out. No reasoning is given for this, nor is explained what is the rationale of the separation of the different parts of the Flora. It seems that the author has some contempt for potential professional users, for even changes in classification between the visual key of volume 1 and the taxonomic chapters of volume 2 are nowhere explained. It is well possible that all these shortcomings will be clarified in a forthcoming next volume, but why is that not announced? There is plenty of empty space available for such announcements in the introductory paragraphs of both volumes.

To summarize: detailed drawings and nice illustrated keys, but bibliographically far from perfect. Nevertheless I advise purchase of this valuable work.

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