

REVIEWS

CONSTANTINE N. GOULIMIS & NIKI A. GOULANDRIS, *Wild flowers of Greece*, edited by W. T. Stearn — Goulandris Botanical Museum, Kifissia, Greece. XXXII + 212 pp., incl. 103 coloured plates. — £ 26.—.

The Rijksherbarium received this finely illustrated book from Mr. Anghelos N. Goulandris, chairman of the Board of Governors of the Goulandris Botanical Museum, Kifissia, Greece. In the accompanying letter Mr. Goulandris wrote that this is the first publication of the recently (1963) founded Museum, an institution which has the object of promoting and assisting plant taxonomic activity and research in Greece.

The beautiful botanical paintings were made by Mrs. Niki Goulandris, of Athens. They depict many Greek endemics but also species of a much wider distribution. All illustrations are, however, as the author's introductory note says, of outstanding native wild flowers, especially collected for this purpose by the late Dr. C. N. Goulimis, who also drew up the text, which afterwards, after his death, was checked over and supplemented or occasionally rewritten by Dr. Stearn of the British Museum (Natural History). Descriptions of the depicted species have been omitted with a few exceptions. These descriptions and further data relating to most of the species are to be found in the well-known flora's by Halacsy, Hayek, and Rechinger. Of species described since the publication of these standard works, the original descriptions have been reproduced in the book, so that, as Dr. Stearn writes 'the present work thus provides a kind of illustrated supplement to these'. From a scientific point of view the value of the book is especially qualified by the number of species not previously depicted in botanical literature, and by the detailed data on the distribution.

S. J. VAN OOSTSTROOM

E. NYHOLM, *Illustrated Moss Flora of Fennoscandia, II, Musci*, fasc. 1—6, pp. 799, 498 fig. — C. W. K. Gleerup, Lund, 1954—1969 (1970). Price 118.50 Sw. Kr.

This year the last instalment appeared of Nyholm's excellent flora, fifteen years after the appearance of the first one. The author is to be congratulated on the completion of this great achievement. Her 'magnum opus' will be welcomed with gladness by all English reading bryologists interested in the temperate and arctic moss flora of the northern hemisphere. Mrs. Nyholm has spared no pains to give an up-to-date, copiously illustrated account in a book of rather restricted size.

Nyholm has closely followed Fleischer's classification of the *Musci*, but she gives many new interpretations of species and infraspecific taxa in difficult genera. Consulting many colleagues and doing much research herself she has succeeded in giving a modern and sometimes original treatment. Opinions will surely differ on the results, but these will often meet approval. To me it appears almost impossible to give an always satisfactory treatment of such an extremely difficult and large genus like *Bryum* without having the disposal of the results of culture experiments and ecological and genetical research. Nevertheless, Nyholm's revolutionary treatment, including the reduction of many species, appears to be a great improvement. However, the proof of the pudding is in the eating! On the other hand I cannot agree with her splitting in the *Hypnum cupressiforme* group.

Most keys work good, but it is regrettable that a general key to families or genera has been omitted. This will surely discourage beginning bryologists. The diagnoses are very short, but clear and sufficient in most cases. They are followed by short notes on distribution, ecology, and variability. Contrasting with the concise text are the illustrations which are exceedingly numerous. Each species is depicted in (sometimes too) great detail. Unfortunately, the drawings are very small and often faint, especially in the first fascicle. In general, however, the illustrations surely add to our knowledge.

A reviewer must point out the shortcomings he has found. This easily leads to a rather negative enumeration, which might leave an unfavourable impression with the reader. Therefore, it may be stressed once more that Nyholm's nicely executed flora forms a very important and useful addition to bryological literature and is an indispensable tool.

A. TOUW