Book reviews

Sam Bosanquet, Jonathan Graham & Graham Motley. *The mosses and liverworts of Carmarthenshire.* Published privately, supported by a grant from the Countryside Council for Wales. 2005. 245 pages, 32 colour photos. Paperback, 245 x 174 mm. ISBN 0-9552022-0-5 / 978-0-9552922-0-9. Price £20. Orders will be despatched with an invoice. Available from Sam Bosanquet, 14 Conway Drive, Steynton, Milford Haven, Pembs, SA73 1JA.

The main part of this work comprises species accounts for the mosses (417 species), liverworts (157 species) and hornworts (four species) recorded by the three authors over a 13-year period from 1992 in Carmarthenshire (v.-c. 44). For most species there are dot maps for the tetrads where recording has been done – 95% of the total in the vice-county.

There is a substantial introductory section covering geology, climate, habitats, history of recording, floristic elements and other aspects which are normally included in bryophyte floras. There are also sections on the changing bryophyte flora in the vice-county and key sites for bryophyte conservation.

In the middle of the book there are photographs of habitats and some of the bryophytes, with short explanatory captions for each of these. Most of these were taken by two of the authors and are very successfully reproduced in this book.

The amount of work involved in recording 642 tetrads is massive, but the task of taking this through to publication is also very considerable. To publish this work themselves using modern computer technology would have been impossible not so long ago. The main effort in the latter stage was from Sam Bosanquet. The book comes with an errata slip which states that the 'flora was formatted entirely by SDSB on his home PC'; most of the errors are relatively minor and the errata will be published on the Carmarthenshire pages of the BBS website.

The foreword is by Ray Woods, Science Advisor to the Countryside Council for Wales and also author of an excellent Welsh county flora – that of Radnorshire, which includes bryophyte and lichens as well as vascular plants. He points out that Carmarthenshire 'supports half the entire British bryoflora in an area of wonderful and largely unspoilt countryside' with a great diversity of habitats, including sub-montane cliff and heath and at the other extreme some of the finest sand dunes in Europe. He comments that the 'authors are to be congratulated in producing such a comprehensive and well-researched flora that is of interest and value well beyond the vice-county's boundaries'. Your reviewer fully supports this view and also considers the book very good value for money.

R.C. Stern

Paulo A.V. Borges, Regina Cunha, Rosalina Gabriel, António Frias Martins, Luís Silva & Virgílio Vieira (editors). *Listagem da fauna (Mollusca e Arthropoda) e flora (Bryophyta, Pteridophyta e Spermatophyta) terrestres dos Açores. A list of terrestrial fauna (Mollusca and Arthropoda) and flora (Bryophyta, Pteridophyta and Spermatophyta) from the Azores.* Direcção Regional do Ambiente and Universidad dos Açores, Horta, Angra do Heroísmo and Ponta Delgada. 2005. 318 pages, text figures (some in colour). Hardback, 303 x 215 mm. ISBN 972-8612-22-2. Available free of charge from Direcção Regional do Ambiente, Governo Regional dos Açores, Rua Cônsul Dabney, Colónia Alemã, Açores, Portugal, or on-line from: http://sram.azores.gov.pt/lffta.

This substantial volume provides checklists of much of the flora and fauna of the Azores, along with analyses of the biodiversity of the

archipelago and useful bibliographies. The text is in two parallel columns, respectively in Portuguese and in English.

A lengthy introductory chapter covers patterns of biodiversity and species richness, often making interesting comparisons between taxonomic groups. For example, species totals for the Azores as a whole are given as 851 Spermatophyta, 71 Pteridophyta, 437 Bryophyta, 111 non-marine Mollusca and 2,196 Arthropoda. The proportion of endemic species is as high as 44% of the Mollusca, about 7% for vascular plants, but only 2% of bryophytes (nine species). It is suggested that the low proportion of endemics among bryophytes compared to other groups is probably related to their high dispersal ability. Comparisons between islands show that S. Miguel and Terceira are the richest islands in bryophyte species (with 75% and 73% of all recorded Azorean bryophyte species), whilst the smaller islands (Corvo, Graciosa and S. Maria) have fewer recorded species. Another introductory chapter considers the use of Atlantis-Tierra 2.0 and GIS Environmental Information to predict the spatial distribution and habitat suitability of endemic species as a tool for their conservation.

The bulk of the book consists of annotated checklists for different groups of organisms. The section on bryophytes is on pages 117-129, with an appendix of uncertain records on page 224. It is co-authored by Rosalina Gabriel, Erik Sjögren, René Schumacker, Cecília Sérgio, Jan-Peter Frahm and Eva Sousa, a team of authors that includes most of the bryologists who have been active in the Azores in recent years. The list is fully up to date, including 'new records (localities, islands or archipelago) and taxonomic notes [that] will be published elsewhere (Gabriel *et al.*, in preparation)'. Hence it provides a useful supplement to the more detailed checklist by Sjögren (2001). A tabular presentation shows the distribution of each species on each island of the Azores, with annotations distinguishing taxa endemic respectively to the Azores, Macaronesia as a whole or Europe as a whole.

Reference

Sjögren E. 2001. Distribution of Azorean bryophytes up to 1999, their island distribution and information on their presence elsewhere, including Madeira and the Canary Islands. *Boletim do Museu Municipal do Funchal*, Suppl. **7:** 1-89.

D. T. Holyoak

Society business

Future meetings of the Society

Members are reminded to read the BBS Safety Code, which was published in *Bulletin* **43** and is available from local secretaries for inspection during BBS meetings. Please inform local secretaries well in advance if you intend to join a meeting, even if you are not staying at the headquarters accommodation.

Annual General Meeting and Bryological Symposium 2006, Hatfield, 9-10 September

Local secretary: Dr M.A.S. Burton, School of Life Sciences, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9AB; tel: 01707 284517; e-mail: m.a.burton@herts.ac.uk.

The 2006 AGM and Bryological Symposium will be held in Hatfield, Hertfordshire at the De Havilland Campus, University of Hertfordshire. Accommodation will, as usual, be available from Friday night.

Hatfield has a mainline rail service. For those travelling from further afield, Luton and Stansted airports are within reach: airport coaches link the University campus with them and with Heathrow.