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BOOK REVIEW

SMITH, A. J. E.: THE MOSS FLORA OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND. — Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge—London—New York—New Rochelle—Melbourne—Sydney 1978, 1980. 706 pp.

This book is a new comprehensive treatise of the Bryophyta occurring in Great Britain and in Ireland; 175 genera and 672 species are described here. It is over fifty years since the book on British mosses of such extent was published.

In the first chapter a survey of classification is given. The author treats Sphagnopsida, Andreaeopsida and Bryopsida as separate classes, because "there is little relationship between them other than the small size of the plants and the dominance of gametophyte generation". He follows the classification of Fleischer (Musci der Flora von Buitenzorg, 1915—1922), and the nomenclature of Wijk, Margadant and Florschütz (Index Muscorum, 1959—1969).

A key to genera is given in the second chapter. In the following chapters the author describes individual genera and species arranged according to botanical system. He thoroughly deals with anatomy and morphology, and explains how to distinguish between similar species. He also mentions ecology and distribution, but rather briefly. Most of the descriptions are followed by original illustrations mainly demonstrating characteristic details of plants (*e.g.* leaves, capsules, groups of cells), habit drawings are rare. The book contains a list of morphological and anatomical terms with several figures and an index of species.

This work offers an excellent survey of the British moss flora based on recent views on the moss taxonomy; in addition it can be a source of information for the research in other countries because a great deal of species described here are widespread outside the British regions, too.

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