

Book review

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Book review

Lippert W. & Meierott L.: Kommentierte Artenliste der Farn- und Blütenpflanzen Bayerns: Vorarbeiten zu einer neuen Flora von Bayern. – München: Bayerische Botanische Gesellschaft, 2014. – 408 p., 29 colour photos, 1 map; hardcover. – Price: EUR 25.

With its 70 500 km², Bavaria is the largest of the 16 German lands. Germany is thought to have between 3100 and 3500 species of vascular plants (Kowarik [1999] assumes 3062 vascular plant species, while an online list of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation [FloraWeb 2015] shows 3500 taxon “portraits”), and Bavaria has at least 2863 flowering plants (Scheuerer and Ahlmer 2003) and 3200 species and subspecies of vascular plants (below), implying that 80–90–100 % of all German vascular plants may occur in Bavaria. These numbers illustrate three things: the difficult species concepts in certain large and poorly understood taxonomic entities, especially *Alchemilla*, *Hieracium*, *Rubus*, *Sorbus* and *Taraxacum*; the importance of the Alps as a factor contributing to the species diversity of Bavaria; and, thirdly, the importance of the “Kommentierte Artenliste der Farn- und Blütenpflanzen Bayerns” (Annotated list of ferns and flowering plants of Bavaria) being reviewed here. The list contains 3156 named taxa indigenous to Bavaria, including names at the ranks of species, subspecies and variety. In addition, it includes 282 established neophytes (defined as species that established in Germany after 1500) and 1446 not (yet?) established escapees from cultivation, neophytes, and adventive species (defined as species that arrived in Bavaria from a different region, but are not self-sustaining). For each of these taxa, Lippert and Meierott provide the literature and/or herbarium sources for its occurrence in Bavaria and its distribution in one of the eight Bavarian bioregions, for which a map is provided at the end of the book’s brief Introduction. It is especially the notes on the distributions – including notes on increases, decreases, or disappearances during the past c. 100 years – that make the book so important. This will be the floristic baseline for the largest part of Germany for years to come. Lippert and Meierott’s taxonomic assignments are also the taxonomic backbone for an online “Flora of Bavaria”, and an Excel spreadsheet with all taxon names can be downloaded there (Flora von Bayern 2015).

The book includes a 28-page literature list and is beautifully produced, with ample space for notes. That it also includes 740 named hybrid “taxa” and 148 entities that may or may not occur in Bavaria may help draw

attention not only to under-collected regions but also to hotspots of hybrid evolution and/or asexual evolution that could fruitfully be analysed with genomic approaches.

With the publication of this book, the Bavarian Botanical Society, founded in 1890, is continuing its series of special publications, the overall goal being to document the dynamics of the local flora, help conserve landscapes and contribute towards a deeper understanding of plant diversity in southern Germany.

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