

Flowering plants of Tamil Nadu: a compendium

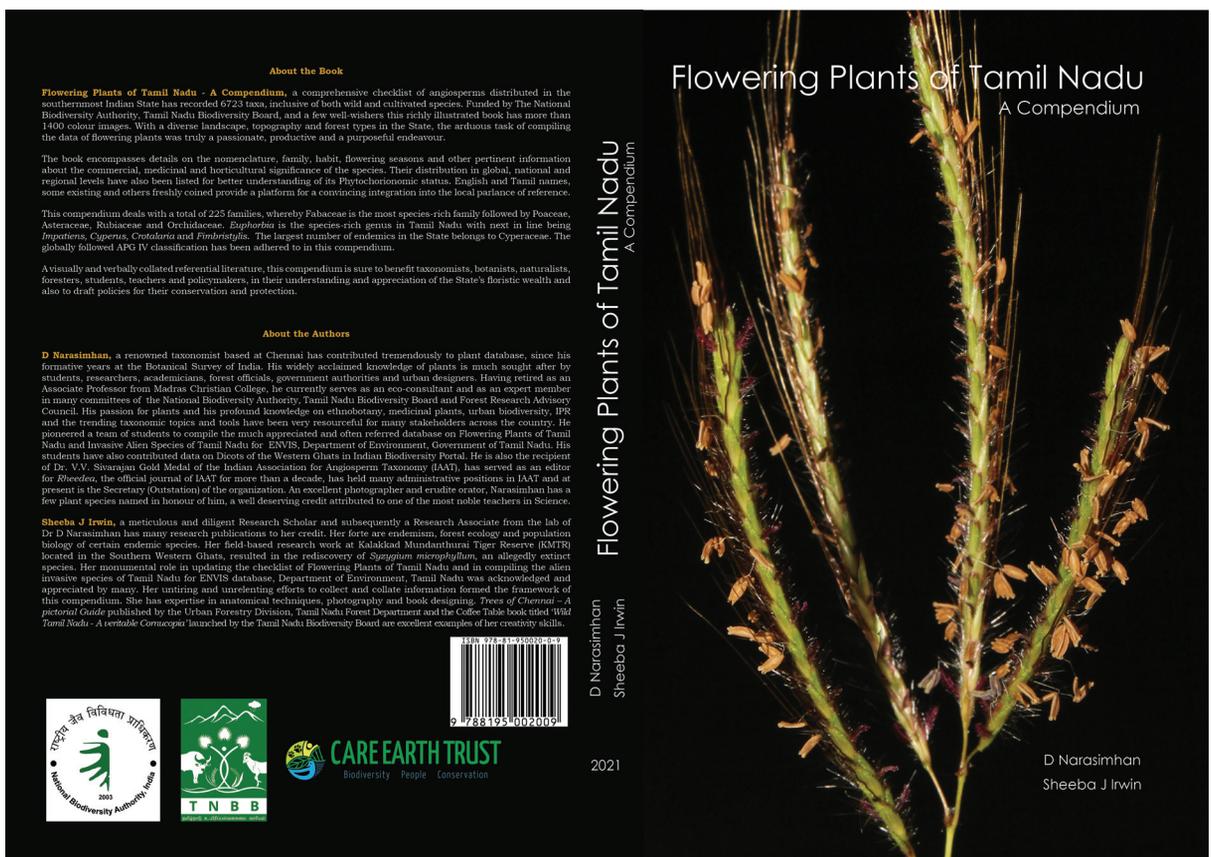
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In this age of biodiversity erosion, documentation, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and bioresources is of crucial importance. A checklist of plants of a region forms the very basis of every action taken towards biodiversity conservation, utilization, policy framing and social awareness. Tamil Nadu is one of the most diverse states in Peninsular India with respect to geology, geography, topography, edaphic, climatic and environmental factors and comprises an array of diverse habitats. Obviously, this is also one of the states in Peninsular India possessing a huge diversity of flowering plants with a high level of endemism. This compendium has been released at a very apt

time, and is a most desired checklist of flowering plants of the state with benefits to various stakeholders such as biologists, taxonomists, naturalists, ecologists, students, teachers, research scholars and especially for officials of the Forest Department and policy makers.

The compendium runs into 1001 pages and is very well-supported by 1400 quality images of flowering plants. It provides very pertinent concise information on the forest cover, forest and vegetation types and protected areas (PAs) of Tamil Nadu. The data on 25 speciose families and genera that account for 60.6 % and 17.17 % taxa



respectively set a stage for further field explorations, taxonomic works and conservation activities. This information is followed by a table providing a statistical analysis of angiosperms of Tamil Nadu and an annotated checklist that is comprehensive and very handy. Nomenclature, family, habit, flowering period and other relevant information on commercial, medicinal and horticultural significance of the species are given under notes. Furthermore, global, national and regional distributional details are provided for every species. Plant names in English and Tamil, whenever available, are provided which greatly enhances the practical utility of the work to non-botanists and amateurs. This compendium is an important treatise on flowering plants of Tamil Nadu accounting for 6723 taxa belonging to 225 families of flowering plants. The authors have followed the latest APG-IV system of classification to enumerate the families, and the genera under each family. The design, printing and binding of the book needs special appreciation. I find the wastage of space in the

enumeration part which could have been avoided by dividing the pages into two columns, however, it does not lower the value of the book.

To summarize, this compendium is the handiest complete reference to the flowering plants of Tamil Nadu to date. This publication has set an example for other states of the country to emulate so that the flowering plant wealth of our biodiverse country can be thoroughly documented and sustainably utilized. The price of the book of Rs. 2500 is reasonable.

I congratulate the entire author team including Dr. D. Narasimhan, Dr. Sheeba J Irwin, National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and Care Earth Trust for achieving this milestone and sincerely hope that this compendium occupies the bookshelf of anyone interested in flowering plants.

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