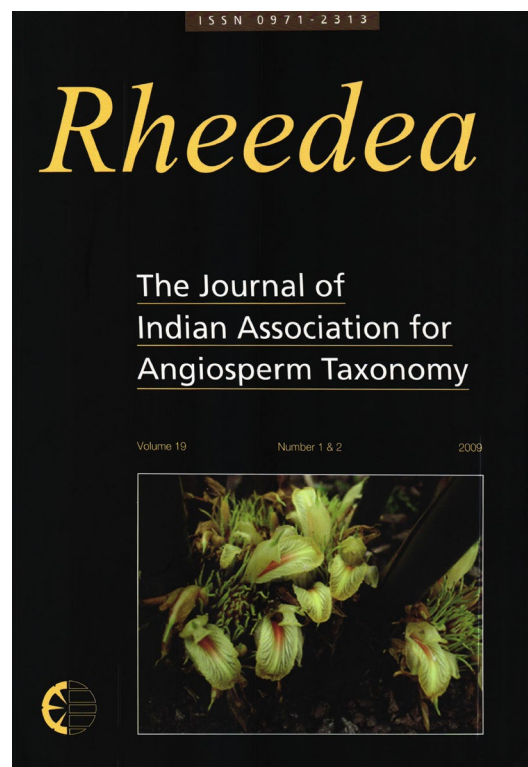




Book Review: Flora of Baramati

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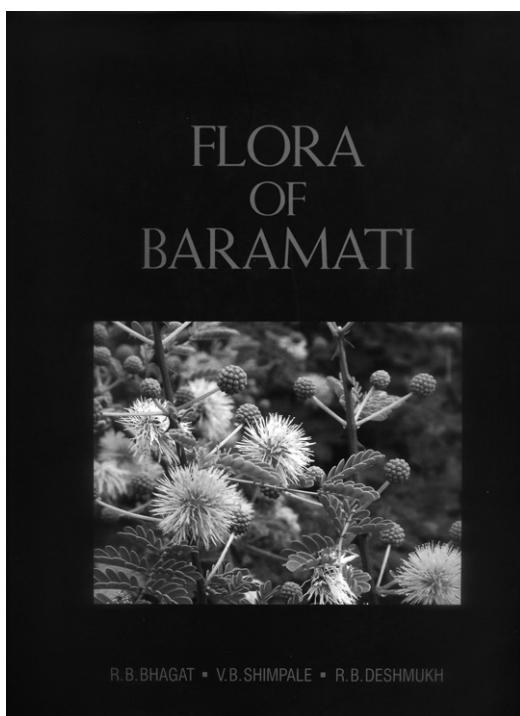
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Book Review

R. B. Bhagat, V. B. Shimpale, R. B. Deshmukh

Flora of Baramati, Funded by Pawar Public Charitable Trust, Mumbai, Published by Ms. Rani B. Bhagat, A/P-Hol (8-Phata), Tal.-Baramati, Dist. – Pune – 412 306. I – XVII + 449PP, 51 colour plates, 3 plates of line drawings, 4 plates of colour maps.

ISBN 978-81-8465-009-9, Price: Rs. 1000/-



Writing a Flora is an old practice in India starting from van Rheed's *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*. A good Flora always triggers future explorations and additional information on plants of the region concerned and results in the publication of Floras of neighbourhood regions. Regional Floras still remain irreplaceable and one of the best sources of reference for plants of concerned regions. Several Floras at the district and local level have been published after independence and in the process they helped in enriching the herbaria and in enhancing our understanding on the distribution of species. Flora of Baramati also follows this tradition.

The details on Baramati and the statistical analysis of the flora given in the introductory chapter provide the necessary background information to understand the place and its flora. Maps provided in this book are quite useful. This Flora describes 938 species of which 44% are cultivated plants that corresponds with the land use pattern of this

region wherein nearly 84% of the total area forms cultivable lands.

Key to families is given in the indented format and the lead characters are clearly contrasting making it user friendly. Similarly key to genera is also based on easily observable exomorphological characters and are workable. Nomenclature for each species is updated and the descriptions given are concise. Photo plates (47 in all) are of excellent quality and remind the Kolhapur School of plant photography. Identities of photographs labeled as *Glinus oppositifolius*, *Ficus religiosa* and *Securinega leucopyrus* need to be verified. The illustrations are only a few and of average quality.

The authors have not interpreted much of the analysed data. This Flora also has the usual tables of comparison with earlier Floras, a practice started by Gamble. I do not see any purpose for these tables without interpretation. The authors should have also paid adequate attention in abbreviating certain words, for instance, subspecies should have been 'subsp.' and not 'ssp.'; 'T. Asia' and 'T. America' should have been represented at least as Trop. Asia and Trop. America.

The design and print quality is excellent and the price for this book is reasonable. However, reducing the space between the lines both in nomenclature and in description would have saved several pages that in turn would have brought the cost down. On the whole this book is a useful resource for taxonomists and public, especially of Maharashtra.

I have a suggestion for the future Flora writers to follow APG Classification which is now followed in several databases such as Missouri Botanical Garden's electronic database (TROPICOS) and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN).

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