

BOOK REVIEW

ISSN 0976 5069

A-Z in Ethnobotany (Dictionary of Words and Who's Who in Indian Ethnobotany including around 185 Illustrations). S.K. Jain & A.K. Jain. Deep Publication, New Delhi (deep_pub@hotmail.com/deeppublications@gmail.com). 2013.xii, 177pp.+8 plates with 82 B&W+ 96 colour portraits, ISBN 978-93-80702-04-9, price ₹500.00 (\$60.00).

Over the past sixty years or so, Ethnobotany has evolved into a multidisciplinary subject in India with many interrelated sub-disciplines. As the subject is directly concerned with the human society in general and ethnic populace in particular, its vocabulary is full of terms related to folklore, culture, traditions, medical science, anthropology, etc., scattered across different glossaries, dictionaries and several other sources of information. The subject is fast growing, both in scope and the spread, the students and researchers often fail to understand many terminologies dealing with medical conditions or medicinal or nutritional properties of the plant species. Even the names of many ethnic groups and the tools, gadgets, toys, instruments, or other articles related with the life, occupation or recreation, used by them are not clear to many scholars, especially amateur Ethnobotanists.

The book 'A-Z in Ethnobotany' by Dr. S.K. Jain and Dr. A.K. Jain is, therefore, a welcome compilation of terminologies, information on different indigenous people and brief biographies of the eminent ethnobotanists of the country. Besides defining various terms, the authors have also provided information about different ethnobotanical societies, associations, organizations, research institutes and several new folk terms not defined earlier. The authors have meticulously scrutinized all available issues of major journals on the subject and have included not only their main key-words but also names of authors and words used for medicine men, musical and other instruments, agricultural tools, toys, household goods and the agencies funding research projects on ethnobotany that would immensely benefit the budding ethnobotanists within and outside the country.

In this dictionary the words(entries) are arranged in alphabetical order. The common words related to the theme have been documented with a simple interpretation. The illustrations and a brief write-up given on some ethnic communities of India is a special feature in this book that provides an instant glimpse of these people inhabiting different regions of the country. The portrait of Ethnobotanists of past and present is an attractive feature too that would help young researchers easily relate with them. The book is a true reflection of the vast experience and knowledge of the authors about not only the 'who is who in Indian Ethnobotany', but also 'what is what in Ethnobotany'! The authors deserve to be richly complimented for bringing out this compact and reasonably priced book that will be a useful companion to all the ethnobotanists and would serve as a "Dictionary-cum-Directory" to the beginners in this important field of research.



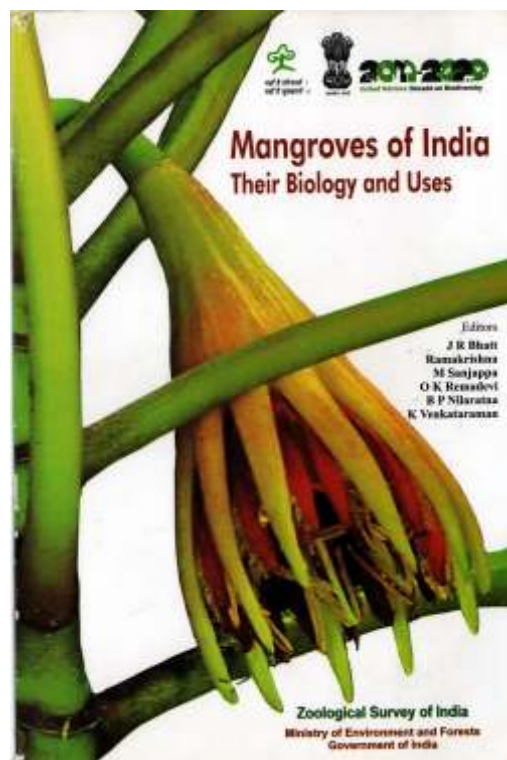
D.K. Singh
Botanical Survey of India
Kolkata

Mangroves of India – Their Biology and Uses: Edited by J.R. Bhatt, Ramakrishna, M. Sanjappa, O.K. Remadevi, B.P. Nilaratna, K. Venkataraman, 2013; xvi, 640pp, ISBN: 978-81-8171-336-0, published by Zoological Survey of India, Prani Vigyan Bhawan, New Alipore, Kolkata. Price: ₹2950/-

Mangroves are unique group of plants spread over more than 200 thousand square km in 117 countries of the world. They have great ability to thrive in extreme hostile conditions of high salinity, high temperature, and anaerobic soil condition. They play an important role in maintaining ecological equilibrium by mitigating soil erosion, cyclonic effect, safeguarding against tsunamis in coastal ecosystems; by maintaining the nutritional balance in different estuarine ecosystems; and render socio-economic services by creating enormous scope for livelihood in the extreme harsh conditions. Therefore, conservation and management of mangrove forests and thereby restoring the fragile ecosystems is the need of the hour. Ministry of Environment & Forest sponsored a two days National Workshop on 'Mangroves in India: Biodiversity, Protection and Environmental services' in 2008 at Bengaluru. This book includes the selected papers presented in this workshop on the various research initiatives taken by various stakeholders in the field of mangrove conservation and management in India.

The book comprises of 56 articles placed under six thematic sections. The first section "Status of conservation and management of mangroves in different states of India" deals with articles on the status of mangroves conservation in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Sunderban (W. Bengal), besides an overview of Conservation and Management of Mangroves in India. The second section "Floral diversity and ecology" deals with 17 articles. The mangrove diversity of Indian coast, different river estuaries, fungal and cyanobacterial diversity in mangroves, ecological changes along the Indian coast, and phenological studies on major mangrove genera like *Ceriops*, *Rhizophora* and *Bruguiera* are discussed. The third section "Faunal diversity and ecology" deals with 24 articles with focus on the diversity of insects, birds, mosquitoes, wood borers, nocturnal insects, mollusks in coastal ecosystems of India. The section also deals with the different faunal resources and its distribution, knowledge gap in the faunal studies in mangrove forest scenario. The fourth section "mangrove utilization and environment services" deals with six articles highlighting the durability and anatomy of mangrove wood, pollinators of mangrove flowers and phytochemical analysis and utility of mangrove species. In the fifth section "mangrove conservation initiative and peoples participation", the six articles highlight the interesting case studies of mangrove conservation in Karnataka and Maharashtra. In the last section "Policy and legal issues related to mangrove conservation" the five articles deal with policy and programmes for protection of mangroves, and legal issues. The article on conservation of mangroves in India: Role of remote sensing and GIS is more appropriate for the first thematic section dealing with status of conservation and management of mangrove in different states of India.

Overall, the book provides an updated compilation on mangrove vegetation, comprehensive data on its conservation and management. The authors and editors deserve congratulations for bringing out the present compendium. The book will be useful for all those concerned with conservation and status of mangroves in the region.



Paramjit Singh & S.S. Dash
Botanical Survey of India
Kolkata