

## REVIEW

**Cedrus** by P. Maheshwari and Chhaya Biswas. Botanical Monograph No. 5, published by Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, New Delhi. Pp. 1-115, 55 plates, 1970. Price: Rs. 24.00.

*Cedrus deodara* (Roxb.) Loud. is one of the well known important timber yielding plants of India. This Himalayan cedar, or Deodar is known from time immemorial and has a well known reference in the holy scriptures of India and Deodaru in Sanskrit means the "Tree of Gods". In view of its great importance as a timber yielding plant, it is most gratifying that a monograph on this has been presented by late Professor P. Maheshwari and his student Chhaya Biswas. In the introduction, four species of *Cedrus* are mentioned, describing their important features followed by a very useful key for their identification.

A good account of the distribution of four species of *Cedrus* is provided and in this connection the distribution of *C. deodara* throughout the Western Himalayas from Afganistan to Garhwal is particularly interesting. It is next followed by a detailed account of the morphology and anatomy of the plant, wherein, by carefully selected photomicrographs these aspects are very ably presented.

An outstanding original contribution of this monograph is the chapter on embryology where all phases of this discipline of botany are brought about by carefully selected photomicrographs and neatly drawn illustrations. This portion of the monograph is noteworthy because it forms a very valuable piece of work on the life-history of this plant. An account of the life-history will be

incomplete if time relations are not indicated and this has been well depicted in the diagrammatic representation where it is most interesting to note that at Mussoorie with the initiation of male cone in June 1956 and of the female cone in August of the same year, the life cycle passes up to January 1957 when the seed germinates into the seedling. This type of study is very useful in silvicultural practices and forest genetics. The penultimate chapter includes information on chromosome number, fungal diseases, pests and regeneration both natural and artificial. Finally, the last chapter on economic importance is of great significance.

Late Professor Maheshwari was known for not only his thoroughness in work, but also for his ability to present the results of investigations of morphological study of this nature in the most appropriate and effective manner and this monograph by these two authors amply supports these statements and thus serves as a standing example for emulation by researchers and students of Botany. To all Foresters, Comparative Morphologists and others interested in Conifers, it is an asset and therefore the authors should be congratulated for bringing out this excellent monograph.

Lastly, it is most gratifying to note that as usual the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research has kept up to its high standard in bringing out a monograph of this nature in such an elegant manner. A book of this kind must find a place in all Universities, Research Institutes and Scientific Organisations.

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