

Preface

THE SEED TO put together this book was sown several years ago by the late Professor Taylor Steeves and myself with the objective of providing, for a growing community of students and researchers in plant developmental genetics and molecular biology, an abridged version of plant anatomy. At the time of our proposal to Oxford University Press, there were excellent plant anatomy texts available, including *The Anatomy of Seed Plants* by Katherine Esau, *Plant Anatomy* by Abraham Fahn, *Plant Anatomy* (Parts 1 and 2) by Elizabeth Cutter, and *Plant Anatomy* by James Mauseth, and more recently other books such as *Esau's Plant Anatomy* by Ray Evert and *Plant Anatomy: An Applied Approach* by David F. Cutler, Ted Botha, and Dennis Wm. Stevenson. Although most of these books in plant anatomy are superb in their content, they are exhaustive in detail. By using several examples from different groups of plants, they provide a comparative account of plant structure and function as well as evolutionary trends in plant structure. We felt then, and even now, a need for an abbreviated text in anatomy with a plant developmental perspective. This book should be useful to researchers and students in plant biology in general, and in developmental genetics and molecular biology in particular. This book could also serve as a complementary text to an excellent laboratory exercises volume, *Teaching Plant Anatomy* by R. Larry Peterson, Carol Peterson, and Lewis H. Melville, published in 2008.

It has taken a long time to bring this project to fruition, and there are several reasons for this. Initially, Prof. Steeves and I tried to fit the writing work in

between our other commitments of teaching, research, and administrative work (both Prof. Steeves and I served as Head of the Biology Department at different times in our university). After we had a draft of the text, we exchanged our writings for comments on the content and uniformity in writing style. We then sought input from Prof. Ian Sussex of Yale University, a world-known developmental botanist, who provided valuable comments and suggestions. Then, while we were working on getting suitable illustrations for the book, Prof. Steeves took ill. That was followed by his prolonged illness, and then his passing in 2011, contributing to further delays. After my retirement in the summer of 2014, I took it upon myself to complete this project, especially in honor of my late colleague and dear friend, Taylor Steeves.

There are several people who deserve a big thanks for the completion of this project: Prof. Ian Sussex for his thorough reading of the text and for his constructive comments (unfortunately Prof. Sussex passed away earlier this year), Prof. Ed Yeung for his comments on the text and for providing a number of excellent images, Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Steeves for editing the entire text, Marlynn Mierau for his very competent and enormous help in putting together the illustrations, and Profs. Art Davis and Ken Wilson for their comments on some chapters. Finally, I am indebted to Jeremy Lewis and the Oxford University Press for their patience and support of this project, and to David Joseph and the production department of Newgen KnowledgeWorks for their competent and efficient work for the completion of this project.

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