

Paperback Re-issue

First published in 1977, this is an authoritative work by one of the world's leading ecologists.

Aleksandrova's account is a very full one with much detail. The methods of classification are as interesting as the results. A wide variety of floristic, vegetational, structural, biomass, life form, soil profile, soil formation, faunistic and ecological data, both qualitative and quantitative, are used to diagnose and characterise vegetation units.

The vegetation of the Arctic and Antarctic is classified according to diagnostic and characteristic features. The Arctic is divided into two provinces, tundra and polar desert and the Antarctic into subantarctic herbaceous cushion vegetation and antarctic polar desert. The arctic tundra is further subdivided into subarctic with shrubby *Betula* (Birch) or true arctic tundra without *Betula*.

The end-result is an analysis of plant communities in the polar regions that enables ecologists to generalise and, perhaps more important, to limit correctly the scope of that generalisation when it is drawn from careful local studies.

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