

'This has been one of my favourite books for a very long time and I still have my cherished, if tattered, copy of the first edition of 1969. The book has grown with the science it describes, but it remains true to the original aim with thoughtful explanations and clear writing. Its greatest gift to the readers is the understanding it provides of how scientific knowledge develops through observation, experiment, analysis and the hard work of insight. It has my highest recommendation.'

Mark Dale, University of Northern British Columbia, Canada

'For several generations of plant ecologists and evolutionary biologists, Briggs and Walters' *Plant Variation and Evolution* has been a standard textbook because of the clarity of its writing style and its panoramic coverage of the core concepts and challenges of the field. Almost fifty years after the publication of the 1st edition, David Briggs updates this classic with a 4th edition for another generation of biologists. The result is the rare kind of book that is accessible to anyone curious, but also serves as an essential reference in the field.'

Tan Bao, University of Alberta, Canada

'"Briggs and Walters" doesn't actually need much more of a title. The conjunction of these two names is now virtually synonymous with "plant variation and evolution", a topic of study that is as deep- and rich- an area of inquiry as any in the biological sciences. Indeed, in this latest edition of a benchmark scientific work, we hear echoes of the voices of critical figures such as Charles Darwin, Gregory Mendel, as well as George Ledyard Stebbins, whose own synthetic "Variation and Evolution in Plants" written in 1950 sets the historical backdrop to this great work of synthesis intended for the twenty-first-century reader.'

Betty Smocovitis, University of Florida, USA

'*Plant Variation and Evolution* has been an important textbook for any student of plants and genetics for over 40 years. For many people, and I include myself in this, this textbook has been an important part of our growth as a plant geneticist. Despite the changes that have occurred in the field of genetics over the lifetime of the editions of this textbook, Briggs and Walters have always managed to keep it up to date and relevant. This fourth edition has expanded to include much of the latest research in plant genetics which will ensure it continues to serve a new audience, and continue the legacy of this important textbook for decades more.'

Jeremie Fant, Chicago Botanic Garden, USA

'This is a marvellously instructive book which provides a richness of examples on plant evolution and variation. Brought up to date and giving copious insights on the latest molecular biological and analytical techniques, this edition is par excellence the textbook in the field.'

Des Thompson, Scottish Natural Heritage, UK

Cover illustration: Images (c. x 1) of flower heads of *Tragopogon* species (Asteraceae), each of which is composed of many small individual flowers (florets) aggregated together into heads (capitula) surrounded by an involucre of leaf-like bracts. Top: representative image of *Tragopogon miscellus* (2n = 24) a newly evolved species originating less than 80 years ago by allopolyploidy from (below, left): *T. dubius* (2n = 12) and (below, right): *T. pratensis* (2n = 12), two European species introduced into western USA (see text for details of origin and extent of variability in *T. miscellus*). Photographs by V. Vaughan Symonds for the research group of Professor D. E. Soltis & Professor P. S. Soltis at the University of Florida, Gainesville, USA.

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