

# Handbook of Plant Systematics

## Molecular and Macromolecular Approaches

Keeping the things arranged is a basic human instinct. Laboratories, libraries workshops, shops etc are easier to work in if there is a system to keep track of things. Biology is no exception. It is lot easier to study living things if we have a system that keep something apart from other things. Biologists called this system as classification or taxonomy. Typically, classification can be defined as the systematic arrangement of similar organisms into categories on the basis of their structural or evolutionary relationships. The naming and classification of plants undoubtedly began in the earliest stages of civilization. Our own observations show that plants are of many kinds, and we immediately seek for a name to apply to a plant of interest. The primitive people and tribal communities of today, as well in the past, apply common names to those plants that are peculiar or that affect their life in any way. Early classification systems were utilitarian; plants were grouped as to whether they were beneficial or harmful. With increasing civilization, especially as knowledge grew concerning the uses of plants in food and medicine, the necessity of plant names became even greater. And ultimately, as the number of known plants increased and as botanists collected plants from far corners of the earth, it became necessary to group plants into large categories following rational principles. The collection, naming and classification of plants nowadays are carried out mainly with the objective of showing their origins and relationship, and also to provide positive identification for the hundreds of thousands of different kinds of plants. The present work provides elementary knowledge to the students who have started studying plant systematic. This book will cater the needs of the students as well as the instructors.

### *About the Editor*

**Dr Stuart Smith**, Ph.D. in Plant Biology from the University of Ballarat in 1996 and Master of Science in Plant Biology from the University of Perth in 1990 has been an eminent scholar in the field of plant science. He has various articles and books on his name and is continuously thriving for development in his area of expertise.



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