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The recent discovery of diverse fossil flowers and floral organs in Cretaceous strata has revealed astonishing details about the structural and systematic diversity of early angiosperms. Exploring the rich fossil evidence that has been accumulated over the past three decades, this unique study follows the evolutionary history of flowering plants from their earliest phases in obscurity to their dominance in modern vegetation.

The book provides comprehensive biological and geological background information, before moving on to summarise the fossil record in detail. Including previously unpublished results based on research into Early and Late Cretaceous fossil floras from Europe and North America, the authors draw together direct palaeontological evidence of the pattern of angiosperm evolution through time.

Synthesising palaeobotanical data with information from living plants, this book explores the latest research in the field and highlights connections with phylogenetic systematics as well as the structure and the biology of extant angiosperms.

COVER ILLUSTRATION: reconstruction of the fossil flower *Scandianthus costatus* from the Late Cretaceous of Scania, Sweden. The fossil flower is tiny, but has a well-developed perianth and nectary indicating insect pollination. Watercolour by Pollyanna von Knorring.

COVER DESIGN: SUE WATSON

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