

INTRODUCTION TO
**Plant
Fossils**

This book provides an excellent practical introduction to the study of plant fossils and is especially written for those who have had little previous experience of this type of palaeontology. The illustrated text summarises the main groups of plants that occur as fossils and explains how best to investigate them. It provides useful guidance about modern research techniques that reveal hidden details of anatomical and reproductive characteristics, and of the kinds of features that are used to identify the most commonly found plant fossils. The main approaches for interpreting plant fossils are assessed, and the book highlights how such methods can be employed by the palaeobotanist to increase our knowledge of plant evolution, palaeoecology, palaeogeography and stratigraphy.

This guide to plant fossils includes a discussion on how the science of palaeobotany has developed over the last 300 years, and incorporates examples from a global range of plant groups. It is essential reading for students of introductory or intermediate courses in palaeobotany, palaeontology and plant evolution, and a valuable resource for amateurs looking for help in identifying and studying plant fossils.

- Extensive illustrations of plant fossils and living plants enable the reader to think of fossils as once-living organisms rather than parts of 'dead plants'.
- Set-aside boxes describe the key characteristics of major groups of plant fossils and provide expert guidance on their identification.
- A chapter on the techniques available for the study of plant fossils assists the reader on how to approach the subject.
- A chapter on the changing patterns of vegetation through time provides an overview of how and why vegetation has changed.
- Emphasis on compressions and impressions, the most common types of plant fossil, is tailored to aid student understanding.

Cover illustration: fossil horsetail
(*Annularia stellata* sp.), Italy. Photograph by
John Cancalosi. © Photolibary Ltd. 2009.

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
www.cambridge.org

ISBN 978-0-521-71512-6

