

AN INTRODUCTION TO BOTANICAL NOMENCLATURE

A.R. NAQSHI

Centre of Plant Taxonomy
University of Kashmir
Srinagar - 190 006 (J & K) INDIA



Published by

SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHERS (INDIA)

5 A, New Pali Road, P.O. Box 91

Jodhpur 342 001 (INDIA)

E-mail: info@scientificpub.com

Website : <http://www.scientificpub.com>

Print : 2019

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ISBN: 978-81-7233-051-4 (Hardbound)

ISBN: 978-93-87893-63-4 (E-book)

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Printed in India

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PREFACE

The study and teaching of plant nomenclature has had a very early start in the West; but unfortunately it has received scant attention in most of the Indian Universities. Thus, in writing this book (mostly based on class notes) my object is to present a simplified version of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature to benefit students, research workers as well as teachers; in order to provide helpful guide for understanding the nomenclature problems and assigning correct names to plant species.

My grateful thanks are due to Prof. P. Kachroo (Emeritus Fellow, UGC) who was very keen to prepare a book on Plant Nomenclature and without whose efforts the preparation of this book was impossible. Thanks are due to Prof. G.N. Javeid (Head, Botany Department and Director, Centre of Plant Taxonomy) for his helpful suggestions and encouragement and to my research fellows and colleagues for helping me in one or the other way.

June 11, 1993

Abdul Rashid Naqshi

FOREWORD

There was time when the term species was loosely used to denote merely a kind of a plant. However with gradual evolution in plant classification the term species assumed an individuality and the concept of genus was established; much later the concept of species was circumscribed and Linnae's *Species Plantarum* (1753) gave it respectability and the status of a single name now known as species name !

It took however a century more to realise the need for having uniform rules of nomenclature to be followed by all throughout the world to avoid the regional influences that had run amuck. Thus was born the first International Botanical Congress at Paris in 1867. The formative history down to the present is admirably given by the author of this book.

The code of nomenclature simply represents a set of rules to help biologists in applying names by which taxa are recognised in classifications. Unfortunately these are based on consensus of opinion and not on unanimity. Thus influential as well as dominating experts often influence the rules according to their judgement. Obviously such action necessitates revision and rarely confusion results. Wisely perhaps the Paris Code (1867) had among other things stated that natural history can make no real progress without a regular system of nomenclature acknowledged and used by a large majority of naturalists of all countries.

The explosion of taxonomic investigations both descriptive and critical in this and neighbouring countries has made it very imperative that an authoritative treatise on plant nomenclature be made available to the research workers and teachers alike. To fill this void the present book will prove very useful since Dr. Naqshi is a knowledgeable plant explorer, energetic taxonomist and a dedicated teacher. He deserves encouragement and praise for this endeavour.

P. KACHROO
June 29, 1993.
Delhi

