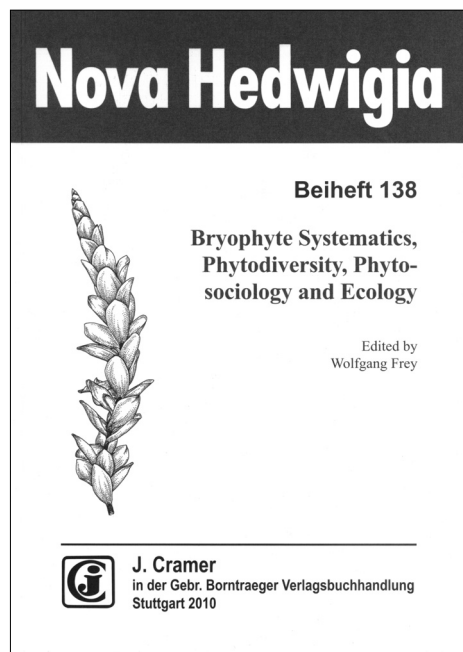


WOLFGANG FREY (ed.) 2010. *Bryophyte Systematics, Phytodiversity, Phytosociology and Ecology*. Nova Hedwigia Beiheft 138. J. Cramer in der Gebr. Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart, 333 pp., 85 figures, 36 tables, 9 plates and 8 appendices. Paperback, 24 × 17 cm. ISBN 978-3-443-51060-2; ISSN 1438-9134 (Nova Hedwigia Beihefte). Price: 139.00 €.

In 2010 the 60th birthday of Professor Harald Kürschner was celebrated. This German bryologist has been associated for nearly 30 years with the Institute of Biology of the Free University of Berlin, where he passed all the milestones of his academic career, from assistant in 1982 to the professorship to which he was appointed in 2006. His scientific interests span a broad range of topics in bryology and geobotany. The main regions of his activity are the Near East, Central Asia and Europe, including Macaronesia, but he has also worked and published accounts from tropical Asia (Borneo), Africa (Rwanda, Congo) and South America (Ecuador, Peru). Kürschner's work covers a wide spectrum of scientific branches, from systematics through phytogeography and ecology (with special reference to the life strategies and ecomorphological adaptations of bryophytes) to phytosociology and geobotany. Although he is engaged primarily in the study of bryophytes, he is also an eminent expert on vascular plants, which he has dealt with in numerous publications. During the more than thirty years of his scientific career, Harald Kürschner has published about 240 research papers and has undertaken nearly 70 scientific research journeys. As befits the occasion of his 60th birthday, his colleagues, friends and disciples have completed a special volume dedicated to the celebrant in recognition of his huge contribution to bryology and plant science.

The Harald Kürschner Festschrift consists of 23 papers contributed by an international gallery of 45 authors from 16 European countries and the United States of America. They are arranged in four subject groups corresponding to the main research areas of Harald Kürschner, namely systematics (8 papers), phytodiversity (9), phytosociology (3) and bryophyte ecology (3). As is the custom with festschriften, the volume begins with a biographical sketch of the celebrant written by his friend and collaborator of many years, Professor Wolfgang Frey, who also edited the book. This introductory tribute is illustrated with photographs from various scientific expeditions which are of no small historical value. In most festschriften the person to whom they are dedicated serves as an eponym for newly described taxa, and that is the case here. Professor Kürschner's name is immortalised in the generic name *Kuerschneria* Ochyra & Bednarek-Ochyra which was established for a Brazilian endemic species, *K. laevigata* (Herzog) Ochyra & Bednarek-Ochyra, of the family



Sematophyllaceae, and in two African liverwort species of the Lejeuneaceae: *Lejeunea kuerschneriana* Pócs from Kenya and *Ceratolejeunea kuerschneri* Eb. Fisch. & Vanderpoorten from Gabon.

The papers presented in this volume should be of interest to bryologists working in various fields. In the section on systematics, five new species are described, including *Oxystegus minor* Köckinger, O. Werner & Ros from Europe, and a number of new synonyms have been proposed for exotic hepatics and mosses. Among the taxonomic accounts, the surveys of the genera *Gymnostomiella* M. Fleisch., *Palustriella* Ochyra and *Oxystegus* (Broth.) Hilp. in Europe should be of general interest. The first is based upon a morphometric analysis of the species concerned, and the other two papers include molecular analyses. The remaining systematic papers are classical studies based on morphological and anatomical features. They provide new country or continental records and offer a number of taxonomic and nomenclatural novelties. The change of name and generic placement of the well known Asian species *Forsstroemia remotifolia* (Broth.) Hedenäs & Zare (formerly *Pseudoleskeella laxiramea* (Schiffn.) Broth.) merits the

special attention of students of the moss flora of the Near East.

The section on phytogeography consists of nine papers devoted to the bryodiversity of various regions of the globe, ranging from Europe (Greece, Montenegro, Turkey) and Macaronesia (Selvagens Islands) through Asia (India, Bhutan, Nepal, China) to southern South America (Isla Navarino in the Tierra del Fuego archipelago) and the very isolated and remote Île Amsterdam in the South Indian Ocean. They give many valuable and interesting records of taxa which often throw new light on the phytogeographical status of the species.

The phytosociological and ecological sections comprise two accounts of neotropical trunk epiphytes, a treatment of the bryophyte vegetation of the Pelagian Archipelago in the Sicily Channel, a description of a new aquatic moss association from France and an ecological study of the hepatic genus *Porella* L. in Madeira. The final article is a valuable and interesting contribution dealing with asexual reproduction by var-

ious types of propagule in common and widespread European moss species, including *Abietinella abietina* (Hedw.) M. Fleisch., *Pleurozium schreberi* (Brid.) Mitt., *Pseudoscleropodium purum* (Hedw.) Broth. and *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus* (Hedw.) Warnst. It is generally overlooked that these species propagate mainly through clonal reproduction by more or less specialized propagules, including brood branches or branchlets, caducous shoot apices and caducous leaves.

Harald Kürschner deserves special recognition for his distinguished scholarship and outstanding contributions to bryology and geobotany, and the present collection of papers honoring his scientific and academic career is the best gift he could receive from his friends and disciples on the occasion of his 60th birthday. The book's pleasing appearance, perspicuous editorial style and elegant printing, coupled with its high scientific standard, make it a highly absorbing work.

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