

Book Review

MIGUEL ULLOA AND RICHARD T. HANLIN (2000):

Illustrated dictionary of mycology. –

448 p., APS Press, St. Paul, Minnesota.

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(The book is deposited in the library of the Society)

This comprehensive book is meant as a dictionary for students of mycology. More than 3800 terms are included and supplemented with 774 black-and-white photographs and 548 drawings. This makes the book very attractive for all readers. A complete etymology for all of the terms explained in the dictionary is another unique and remarkable feature of this book. Readers will thus be able to understand the origin of mycological terms which are usually used without knowing their linguistic history. I consider this fact one of the most important features of this dictionary, especially in a time characteristic of a decreasing knowledge of Greek and Latin. The dictionary is not taxonomically oriented, but an outline of the classification of included taxa to genus level is added at the end.

The texts are easy to read, exact and rather detailed, which certainly is an advantage when compared e.g. with the brief explanations in Ainsworth & Bisby's Dictionary of Fungi (8th edition). In some cases specifications could be added (e.g. bitunicate ascus – no mention of the fact that the wall is not two-layered but multilayered; p. 193: photograph described as hymenium shows in fact a cross-section of the whole lamella with trama, subhymenium and hymenium). Numerous instructive illustrations help to understand the text better and give the book a very attractive layout. The photographs are usually of good quality and characteristic. On the other hand, the drawings are sometimes slightly atypical (e.g. flabellate fruiting body of *Sparassis crispa*), inaccurate or too schematic (e.g. p. 186: fertile basidium of *Galerina phillipsii* – in fact, the spores are not oriented along the axis of the sterigma and the basidium is not so clavate; p. 34: the spores of *Coprinus comatus* are not a good example of amygdaloid spores). These shortcomings slightly lower the value of the book as accuracy of illustrations should be self-evident in such a compendium. It is not possible here to discuss the explanations of so many terms, but in some cases the selection of examples is disputable. For example, "exannulate" (lacking a ring) is characterised as follows: "like the stipe of *Russula brunneoviolacea*". This character is typical of many agarics, not only of *R. brunneoviolacea*. In the references some important mycological handbooks should have been mentioned, e.g. the mycological dictionary in 8 languages (Berger et al. 1980, Gustav Fischer Verlag Jena), "Lexikon der Mykologie" (Dörfelt et al. 1988) and "Anatomie der Hymenomyceten" (Cléménçon 1997).

The shortcomings mentioned above are quite negligible in comparison with the benefit of the whole book. The "Illustrated dictionary of mycology" will certainly be used not only by students but also by mycologists for an orientation in the terminology of fungal groups and terms which are not in the centre of study. The book can be used as a standard for the correct usage of English terms derived from Latin and Greek, especially for mycologists outside the Anglo-American language area. Finally, the "Illustrated dictionary of mycology" will certainly become a standard handbook for all people dealing with fungi.

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