

PROGRESS IN THE PREPARATION OF THE FLORA OF EGYPT

by

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With regard to the comprehensive work entitled "Flora of Egypt", it may be mentioned that this work started around 1925 when late Professor GUNNAR TÄCKHOLM was called by the Egyptian Government to found the Botany Department of the Egyptian University (now Cairo University).

This flora is based partly on our own plant collections made from all parts of the country, partly on the collections kept in Geneva, Kew, Berlin-Dahlem, Weimar, Stockholm, etc. The late Professor GUNNAR TÄCKHOLM took part in the preparation of the first volume up to his death in 1933.

The late MOHAMMED DRAR (died 1964) was participating in this work by his great knowledge of wild and cultivated Egyptian plants and their local uses. He selected the cultivated plants which ought to be included and in addition verified the Arabic names, spelling of localities and quotations out of the rich Arabic literature.

Concerning the wild plants, Flora of Egypt is mainly based on E. BOISSIER's "Flora Orientalis". The descriptions of the plants are made short but sufficient enough to distinguish the species from each other.

It is published by the Cairo University Press (formerly Fouad I University) as numbers of the Bulletin of the Faculty of Science. Vol. I (1941) includes Pteridophyta, Gymnospermae and part of the families of Monocotyledoneae (Typhaceae — Gramineae). This is the only volume, in which G. TÄCKHOLM took part. The following volumes are entirely the work of myself and M. DRAR and published under our names only.

Vol. II (1950) includes another part of the Monocotyledoneae (Cyperaceae — Juncaceae).

Vol. III appeared in 1954 and included a further part of Monocotyledoneae (Liliaceae — Musaceae). The 3 volumes are now out of print, but it is planned to have them reprinted within a near future.

Vol. IV, which was delayed by DRAR's death, appeared in 1969 and includes the remaining part of Monocotyledoneae and the beginning of the Dicotyledoneae (up to Piperaceae).

The 4 volumes cover together about 30% of the species of the Egyptian flora. At least 20 years more will be spent to complete the work.

Flora of Egypt is meant as an encyclopedic work to be consulted by research workers who want to penetrate more deeply into any field of Egyptian Botany. It gives the history of every plant, as far as it is known, from Pharaonic times up to the present. It contains detailed chapters on drugs, crops, cultivated plants, Pharaonic plants, etc. It gives the native names and uses of every plant and also its synonyms and localities where found.

A shorter and more handy flora for everyday use appeared in 1956 entitled "Students' Flora of Egypt". It only contains the wild plants of the country and is complete in one volume of 650 pages. It was prepared by myself in collaboration with MOHAMMED DRAR for the vernacular names and AHMED A. ABDEL FADEEL for the drawn illustrations.

Also this flora is now out of print, but a new edition is under preparation with all recent records included and the nomenclature brought up-to-date. It is planned to be richly illustrated and also to be accompanied by a special volume "Vegetation of Egypt" written by M. KASSAS.

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