

Editorial



About this volume: the monograph of *Hypericum* by Norman Robson

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With about 470 species *Hypericum* Linnaeus (1753) is one of the 100 large angiosperm genera that collectively comprise an estimated 22% of angiosperm diversity (Scotland, 2000). The size of such genera means that complete monographic treatments to account for species diversity are time-consuming, costly and labour-intensive. Consequently, the species-level taxonomy of most such groups is poorly known (Frodin 2004, Scotland & Sanderson 2004). This presents a substantial barrier both to the goal of completing the global inventory and to understanding the evolution of the diversity they contain.

Hypericum is now a notable exception to this problem as the paper published in this volume of *Phytotaxa* represents the final taxonomic part of a worldwide monograph of the genus produced by Dr Norman Robson from the Natural History Museum in London. During the last 50 years, Robson has published over 80 papers on *Hypericum*. The first part of the monograph was published in 1977 and the seven subsequent parts have been published as ten papers, the first having appeared in the *Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History)*, *Botany*, a journal that was later renamed the *Bulletin of the Natural History Museum*, *Botany*, and later *Systematics and Biodiversity*. To remain in style with the previously published parts, the general style of *Phytotaxa* is somewhat diverted in the current volume.

Each part of the monograph dealt with one or more of the taxonomic sections that Robson (1977) established (Table 1) and for which evolutionary hypotheses were developed (Fig. 1). One further part of the monograph is envisaged, which will provide a summary, and deals with addenda and corrigenda of the former volumes.

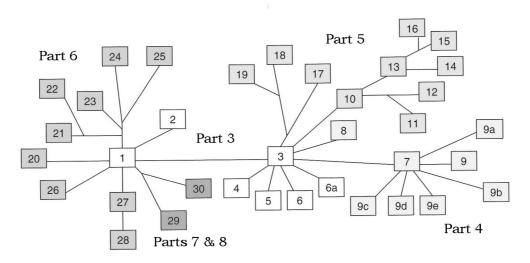


FIGURE 1. Relationships of sections of *Hypericum* (modified from Robson, 2003). Parts 1 and 2 of the monograph deal with infrageneric classification and characters respectively. Parts 3–8 are taxonomic and the sections dealt with in each are indicated. Table 1 provides further details of each of the sections recognised.