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Progress of the Flora of Tropical East Africa

R. M. POLHILL

Since the last meeting of AETFAT in September 1970, the following parts have been published: *Annonaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 90 species), *Cabombaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 1 sp.), *Combretaceae* (G. E. Wickens, 71 spp.), *Escalloniaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 1 sp.), *Flagellariaceae* (D. M. Napper, 2 spp.), *Geraniaceae* (J. O. Kokwaro, 17 spp.), *Gramineae*, Part 2 (W. D. Clayton, S. M. Phillips & S. A. Renvoize, 267 spp.), *Haloragaceae* (R. Boutique & B. Verdcourt, 3 spp.), *Hamamelidaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 3 spp.), *Juncaginaceae* (D. M. Napper, 1 sp.), *Lecythydaceae* (G. R. W. Sangai, 3 spp.), *Leguminosae* Parts 3 & 4 – *Papilionoideae* (J. B. Gillett, R. M. Polhill, B. Verdcourt & al., 952 spp.), *Lemnaceae* (F. N. Hepper, 8 spp.), *Lentibulariaceae* (P. Taylor, 24 spp.), *Montiniaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 2 spp.), *Oxalidaceae* (Christine H. S. Kabuye, 20 spp.), *Phytolaccaceae* (R. M. Polhill, 4 spp.), *Plantaginaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 6 spp.), *Rhamnaceae* (M. C. Johnston, 24 spp.) and *Typhaceae* (D. M. Napper, 3 spp.). – The following parts are in press: *Cannabaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 1 sp.), *Cochlospermaceae* (B. Verdcourt, 1 sp.), *Dioscoreaceae* (E. Milne-Redhead, 19 spp.), *Melastomataceae* (G. E. Wickens, 91 spp.), and *Velloziaceae* (L. B. Smith & E. S. Ayensu, 8 spp.).

These parts make up 1620 species, about 15% of the total Flora, which is estimated at 10 000-11 000 species. Since publication began in 1952, about one-third of the Flora has been covered, and it is hoped to complete most of it this century.

In the more immediate prospect, *Rubiaceae* Part 1 (B. Verdcourt, 280 spp.), *Bixaceae* (D. Bridson), *Flacourtiaceae* (H. Sleumer) and *Vahliaceae* (D. Bridson) are virtually complete or with the Editor, and *Euphorbiaceae* (P. R. O. Bally, Susan Holmes & A. Radcliffe-Smith, 500-600 spp.) is nearly half complete.

Good progress is also being made with the following families: *Amaranthaceae* (C. C. Townsend), *Amaryllidaceae* (Inger Bjørnstad), *Aponogetonaceae* (K. A. Lye), *Balanitaceae* (M. J. Sands), *Balsaminaceae* (C. Grey-Wilson), *Burseraceae* (J. B. Gillett), *Celastraceae* (N. K. B. Robson), *Compositae* (C. Jeffrey), *Campanulaceae* (M. Thulin), *Cruciferae* (B. Jonsell), *Gramineae* Part 3 (W. D. Clayton & S. A. Renvoize), *Liliaceae* (M. A. Hanid), *Meliaceae* (B. T. Styles & F. White), *Passifloraceae* (W. J. de Wilde), *Scrophulariaceae* (F. N. Hepper), and *Urticaceae* (I. Friis).

Following the retirement of Mr. E. Milne-Redhead in June 1971, I continue to edit the Flora under the direction of an Editorial Board composed of J. P. M. Brenan, J. B. Gillett (East African Herbarium), and B. Verdcourt. With the late W. B. Turrill, E. Milne-Redhead, a founder member of AETFAT, designed the Flora and edited it for 20 years; a tribute to his work is given in *Kew Bull.* 26: 1-3 (1972) and I should like to record here my special appreciation for the kindness and help he has given me personally. Under the new arrangement I am very glad to be able to rely on the wide experience and shrewd judgment of Mr. Gillett and Dr. Verdcourt for reading texts and advising on points arising. Mr. Gillett and Miss Kabuye (for grasses) have also given much time to the Flora, checking, annotating and selecting for loan material in the East African Herbarium, Nairobi. I should also like to thank my wife, Diana Polhill, for tirelessly checking typescripts and proofs, compiling indexes and tracing obscure collecting localities, etc. The premature death in March 1972 of Miss D. M. Napper, who was actively engaged on *Acanthaceae*, was a sad loss to the project; an obituary is given in *Kew Bull.* 28: 1-4 (1973).

The East African Herbarium (EA) is the main repository for current collections and over 10 000 duplicates were received at Kew in 1971-1973. Under the direction of Mr. K. A. Lye, the Makerere University Herbarium has been considerably enlarged in recent years and 1700 duplicates were presented to Kew in 1971-mid 1972. The University of Dar es Salaam has established a Tanzanian National Herbarium (DSM), which has grown rapidly under the direction of Dr. B. J. Harris and subsequently Mr. R. Wingfield. Other notable collections received at Kew in 1971-1973 include: Kenya, N Region (Bally & Radcliffe-Smith, 700 numbers), E Region (selective but interesting collections by Faden, Gillett, Glover, etc.); Tanzania, N Region (Richards, 800 numbers); National Parks, development of which has provided access to very interesting areas (Bjørnstad, 1100 numbers; Greenway, 800 numbers); Montane Region (Mabberley, 800 numbers, including first material from the very interesting Ukaguru Mts.; Pócs, mostly Uluguru Mts.); Miombo Research Centre (Rees, Rodgers, etc.). The most notably undercollected areas are still those peripheral to the Flora area, namely W and NE Uganda, N and E Kenya, W, S and SE Tanzania, but critical collecting is still desirable from almost all regions.