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圖書紹介

**"Collected Species of the Genus *Camellia*,
An Illustrated Outline"**

by Gao Jiyin, Clifford R. Parks and Du Yuequang

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There are 119 to 280 species of the genus *Camellia* depending on the taxonomist who has done the classification. This book describes, briefly discusses, and illustrates with photographs, 199 named species. It is the first time so many species have been brought together with photographs.

There has never been anything quite like this book. It fills a great need for general information about camellia species that has not been readily available.

The International Camellia Species Garden in Jinhua, China, which holds more than 200 species (2003 *Journal*, p, 18-24) is the basis for the book. It follows the classification system of Chang Hungta, published in 1981 and amended in 1982 and 1996, and revised in 1998. Chang, a professor at Sun Yatsen University in Guangzhou, China, has estimated that there are about 280 species.

In 2000, Ming Tienlu, a professor at the Kunming Institute of Botany, published his revision of the genus, in which the number of species is reduced to 119. Ming's revision follows more closely the first modern revision of the genus, published in 1958 by J. Robert Sealy, a botanist at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Sealy named 82 species which were known at that time, and mentioned an additional 24 doubtful ones.

The bare bones of these systems are outlined in the new book. The text is in

Chinese and English. It tells where each of the 199 species is found, and includes general comments and botanical characteristics. The general comments explain why each species is important, and often where it fits into the different classification systems. The reader is assisted in following the botanical terms near the front of the book – a help for those who have never studied botany.

The book might have been more user friendly if the species had been presented completely alphabetically rather than alphabetically by Chang's sections, which can be a bit confusing. But the index is straightforward and helps to overcome this.

The book was produced in a rush to have ready at the Locarno Congress. As a result, the photos of a few camellias – for example, *C. gilberti* and *C. chungkingensis* – are of leaves only, no blooms. Some of the colors, particularly the reds (always difficult) and some of the yellows, are not well done. A few photos are either out of focus or were out of register when printed. And there are a few errors that might have been found with more time to proofread. However, the binding is an improvement on most books produced in China.

Over-all, the authors are to be congratulated on a fine achievement.

This book is available at single-copy prices ranging from US\$78.00 airmail to US\$51.00 sea mail. Prices do not include money transfer fees. For details contact Gao Jiyin; e-mail addresses: gaojiyin@fy.hz.zj.cn
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