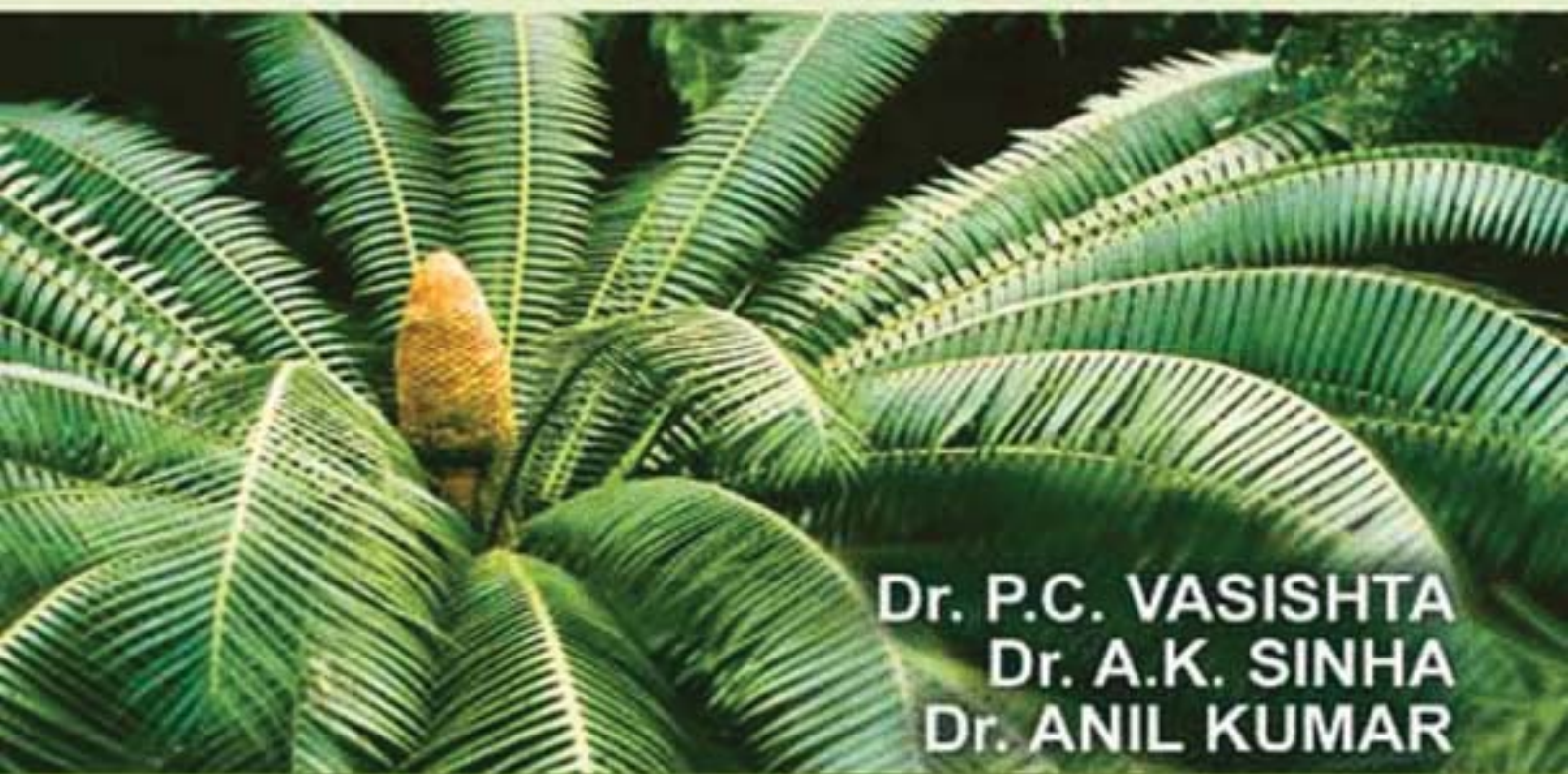


BOTANY

FOR DEGREE STUDENTS

GYMNOSPERMS



Dr. P.C. VASISHTA
Dr. A.K. SINHA
Dr. ANIL KUMAR

S. CHAND

MULTICOLOUR ILLUSTRATIVE EDITION

**Botany for
Degree Students**

Gymnosperms

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Preface to the Revised Edition

This thoroughly revised, improved and multicoloured edition of this popular book **“Botany for Degree Students—Gymnosperms”** has been brought out for the benefit of undergraduate and post-graduate students. While the original format remains unchanged, lot of matter has been added. A new chapter dealing with recent topics like Experimental Embryology and Biotechnology and application of biotechnology, world distribution of gymnosperms, impact of gymnosperms on human society and areas to be explored in studies of gymnosperms is an added attraction. In addition, each and every chapter in the book has been thoroughly revised and wherever needed, recent matter has been added. All the diagrams have been redrawn and several new diagrams have been added. As per the new trend of question papers, the three types of questions essay type, short answer type and objective type questions have been added. We have taken materials from the research journals and recent textbooks. The editors wish to express their sincere gratitude to the authors of the research papers and books and to their publishers.

We have been guided and assisted by a number of university and college professors and friends. We express our grateful thanks to each one of them.

Our heartiest thanks are due to Mr. R.K. Gupta, Managing Director, Shri R.S. Saxena, Shri Navin Joshi, General Manager (Sales and Marketing), Ms. Malini Kothiyal Asstt. Editor, Mr. Santosh Kumar Singh Asstt. Editor & Mr. Kaliram, Sr. D.T.P. Operator for their help, encouragement and cooperation in bringing out the book in this improved form. It is hoped that this multicolour, revised and improved edition of the book will prove more useful to all its users.

Suggestions for further improvement of this book will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged.

**A.K. Sinha
Anil Kumar**

Preface to the First Edition

This text has been written in a manner to suit the needs of degree students of Indian Universities. It is fifth in the series Botany for Degree Students that was started by my father in the year 1960, and describes the morphology and reproduction of both living and fossil gymnosperms. Special care has been taken to present the subject matter in a simple and lucid style and to include maximum of recent information available upto date. Large number of research papers have appeared and many new horizons of both living and fossil forms have been unravelled. Much work has been done on the fossil gymnosperms and several details, hitherto unknown, have been brought to our knowledge. The works of Arnold, Andrews, Florin, Delevoryas, Beck, Taylor, Eggert, Miller, Rothwell, Phillips, Crepet, Banks, and Jennings needs special mention. In India Awasthi, Bharadwaja, Bose, Chowdhury, Ganju, Ghosh, Gupta, Jain, Mehta, Pant, Prakash, Tripathi, Sahni, M.R. Srivastava, Sharma, and Vishnu Mittre have done much work on the fossil gymnosperms and have kept up the tradition started by the Indian stalwarts of the calibre of Birbal Sahni and M.B. Raizada. Lot of work has been done on the living gymnosperms and in this context names of Prof. P.N. Mehra, Prof. P. Maheshwari, Prof. B.M. Johri, Prof. T.N. Khoshoo, Prof. D.D. Pant, Dr. L.N. Rao, Prof. R.N. Konar, Dr. R. Khan, Dr. Hardev Singh and their students will be remembered for ever. The works of Coulter and Chamberlain, Chamberlain, Pearson, Thomas, Thompson, Sporne, Martens, Waterkeyen, Namboodari, C.B. Beck, T.A. Steeves, Alosi and Alfieri and large number of other workers have added a great deal to our knowledge of extant gymnosperms. In writing the present text the author has tried to consult all the available literature and especially by the above mentioned botanists of international fame. The author takes this opportunity to express his deep sense of gratitude to these famous botanists and the publishers of the books and journals that contain the valuable information.

The illustrations, wherever possible, have been drawn from original specimens and slides. A number of photographs have been given. All of them have been taken by the author from various places in India. They clearly illustrate the morphological features of plants and give an actual and a clear picture of the habit and external features of the sporophytes.

I am indebted to my father Prof. B.R. Vasishtha who has introduced me in this series and from whom, besides inheriting my interest in the subject of botany, I have inherited the capacity to write. I express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Y.P. Oberoi for sending me reprints of his research papers and some other valuable papers on various aspects of gymnosperms. In this context I am also grateful to Prof. Tej Nath Lakhnypaul, Prof. P.S. Gill, Prof. V.P. Chadha, Prof. K.P. Sood, Prof. S.P. Kanwal, Prof. S.S. Malik, Prof. M.S. Sethi, and many other friends in India and abroad. I also thank Mr. Muni Lal Verma, the artist for taking keen interest in drawing illustrations for this book. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not thank my publishers M/s. S. Chand & Company Ltd., who have extended me full co-operation during the process of printing this book and in bringing it out in the present form.

I request my colleagues all over India to send me their healthy criticism and their useful suggestions to improve the book.

AUTHOR

CONTENTS

chapter

Page

1. INTRODUCTION

1—74

Characteristic features—Reproductive Organs—Embryogeny—Origin of Gymnospermous Structures— Classification of Gymnosperms—Gymnosperm in India, their distribution and Economic Importance—Comparisons with Pteridophytes and Angiosperms—Indian contribution on Gymnosperm—Progymnospermopsida: Archaeopteris.



2. CYCADOPSIDA—PTERIDOSPERMALES

75—133



Characteristic Features—Family : Lyginopteridaceae—Family : Medullosaceae—Microsporangiate Organs Attributed to Medullosaceae—Phylogeny of Medullosaceae—Family : Calamopityaceae

3. PTERIDOSPERMALES FAMILY GLOSSOPTERIDACEAE

134—167

Glossopteris—Gangamopteris—Vertebraria—the Stem or Rhizomes—Male Reproductive Organs—Female Reproductive organs – Fructifications—Habit or Reconstruction of Glossopteris—Affinities of Glossopteris



4. PELTASPERMACEAE AND CORYSTOSPERMACEAE

168—175

Lepidopteris—General Structure—Seed Bearing Organ—Pollen Bearing Organ—Family Corystospermaceae—Female Reproductive Organs—Male Reproductive Organs.

5. CAYTONIACEAE

176—187

Caytonia (Megasporophyll and Microsporophyll)—
Structure of the Seed—Microsporophyll
(Caytonanthus)—Phylogenetic Relationships.



6. BENNETTITALES

188—204

History and Distribution of Bennettiales—Charac-
teristic Features of Bennettiales—Features of
Cycadeoideaceae—Features of Williamsoniaceae—
Features of Wielandiellaceae.



7. PENTOXYLALES

205—210

Introduction—Characteristic Features—Reproductive
Organs—Affinities with Different Groups



8. CYCADALES

211—233

Cycadaceae : Characteristic Features—Reproduc-
tive Characters—Economic Importance of Cycads.

9. CYCADOPSIDA—(Contd.) 234—273

Cycadopsida—Characters and Distribution
General—Morphology of Cycadopsida—
Secondary Growth—Development of male
and Female Gametophyle—Embryogeny—
Economic Importance of Cycads—Family
Nilssoniaceae.





10. CONIFEROPSIDA—CORDAITALES 274—288

Order Cordaitales-Introduction—Diagnostic Characters—Family-Cordaitaceae—Family-Eristophytaceae—Affinities of the Cordaitales

11. CONIFEROPSIDA—GINKGOALES 289—316

Ginkgoales : Characteristic Features—Ginkgo-External Characters—Microsporangiate Strobilius—Megasporangiate Strobilus—Gametophytic Generation—Embryogeny—Economic Importance of Ginkgoales—Fossil Members of Ginkgoaceae.



12. CONIFEROPSIDA—CONIFERALES

317—377



Cycadopsida : Economic Importance—Primitive Conifers—Family : Pinaceae : Reproductive Structures—Family : Taxodiaceae— Family : Podocarpaceae—Family : Cephalotaxaceae—Family : Araucariaceae—Family : Lebachiaceae—Family : Voltzaiceae—Family : Palissyaceae—Economic Importance.

13. CONIFERALES—LIFE HISTORY OF PINUS

378—421

Pinus-External Features—Pinus-Anatomy—Reproduction in Pinus—Pollination in Pinus—Embryogeny in Pinus—Alternation of Generations.



14. CONIFEROPSIDA—TAXALES

422—446

Distribution, Habit and Habitat—Anatomy—Reproduction—Embryogeny—Economic Importance.

15. FAMILY—EPHEDRACEAE

447—473

Family Ephedraceae :—Anatomy and Reproduction in Ephedra—Embryology—Economic Importance of Ephedra.



16. GNETACEAE

474—508

Gnetum : Distribution and Habit—Structure of the Stem—Structure of the Root—Anomalous Secondary Growth in Stem—Reproduction—Endosperm Formation—Economic Importance

17. WELWITSCHIACEAE

509—530

Welwitschia : Distribution, Anatomy and Reproduction—Difference Between—Gnetum and Ephedra—Gnetum and Welwitschia—Gnetum and Cycadeoidales—Gnetum and Angiosperms—Affinities of Gnetopsida.



18. GENERAL TOPICS

531—543

Experimental Embryology & Biotechnology—Female Gametophyte and *Invitro* Gynogenesis—Embryo-Culture—World Distribution of Gymnosperms—Impact of Gymnosperms on Human Society—Gymnosperms: Areas to be explored.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

544—573

INDEX

574—580



GNETUM MALE STROBILUS

CHAPTER

1

Introduction

- Characteristic features
- Reproductive Organs
- Embryogeny
- Origin of Gymnospermous Structures
- Classification of Gymnosperms
- Gymnosperm in India, their distribution and Economic Importance
- Comparisons with Pteridophytes and Angiosperms
- Indian contribution on Gymnosperm
- Progymnospermopsida: Archaeopteris

The word '**Gymnosperm**' was used in 300 B.C. by Theophrastus, a pupil of Aristotle, in his book "Enquiry into Plants". Theophrastus used this term to embrace all those plants whose seeds are unprotected (*Gymnos* = naked; *sperma* = seeds). The seed plants (Spermatophyta) are grouped into two major groups on the basis of protection afforded to the ovule before and after fertilisation. These groups are the **gymnosperms** and the **angiosperms**. The gymnosperms have their **ovules** freely exposed before and after fertilisation. They are not enclosed by any ovary wall, whereas in the angiosperms (*angios* = vessel; *sperma* = seed) the ovule or the ovules are completely

enclosed within a structure called the **ovary**, which forms the lower distended part of the **carpel**. Due to the protection afforded to the ovule and the seed, the angiosperms are considered to be advanced than the gymnosperms, which are, therefore, regarded as intermediate between the **pteridophytes** and the **angiosperms**. The evolutionary high status of angiosperms and their conquest over other groups of the plant kingdom is due to their

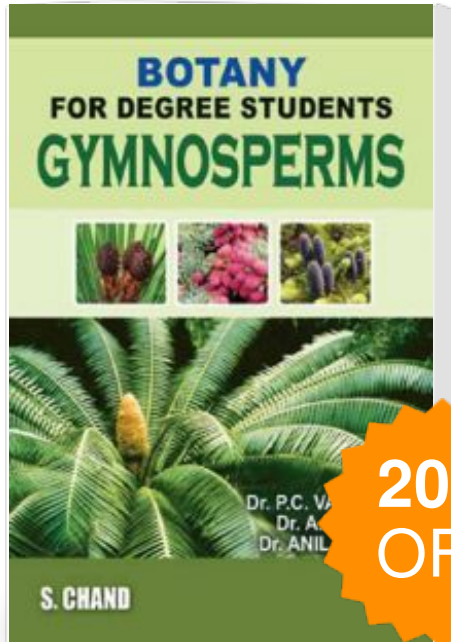
- diversified habit and vegetative forms;
- higher degree of perfection of the vascular system; the xylem in addition to the tracheids, contains wood vessels, and the phloem possesses companion cells;
- successful invasion of all habitats;
- adaptation of flower to insect pollination;
- bisexual flower, the bisexuality ensures self-pollination if cross-pollination fails, hence the seeds are formed in any case;
- development of ovules within the ovary which ensures proper protection to the developing ovules and seeds;
- efficient and effective dispersal by insects, birds, other animals, wind, water and by many other specialised mechanisms;
- efficient and varied means of vegetative propagation, which result in rapid multiplication;
- their utmost economic importance; and
- besides the above listed reasons, there must be some hereditary causes such as better equipment of gene potential and useful gene mutations, which enabled them to encounter variations in temperature and other environmental changes and led to their conquest over other plant groups.

The gymnosperms are not in such an advantageous position because :

- they lack vegetative means of reproduction by means of cuttings, layering, etc., and are slow growers;
- limited means of dispersal (only wind and by man) and their failure to grow under varied habitats (e.g., water);
- absence of vessels (a few exceptions are there) in xylem and of companion cells in the phloem;
- absence of bisexuality which reduces the chances of self-fertilisation and lot of pollen is wasted as wind pollination is the main source of carriage of pollen grains;
- unprotected ovules and seeds and
- their decline may also be due to the running out of the gene potential for environmental adaptation and appearance of certain harmful mutations and chromosomal alterations. Due to their beautiful foliage and stately appearance, man has attempted and is attempting to grow them in his gardens, but with little success, because they are slow growers and have little means to adapt to varied habitats. Economically too they are less important as compared to angiosperms.

In both the gymnosperms and the angiosperms, the sporophyte, in the course of evolution has become perfected to adapt to the various environmental conditions, composed of widely different land habitats, and climates of plains, of mountains and valleys of oceans and rivers and their bank and shores, of deserts and of a great variety of micro-environments. Through millions of years of evolution, the sporophyte of the seed plants was organised, capable of bracing the terrestrial environments. That the evolutionary experimentation leading to death was still at work at the stage of origin of the seed plants, is supported by the fact that the early gymnosperms became extinct in the same way as the early pteridophytes. The origin of angiospermous plant-body represents, perhaps the last or say latest outcome of sporophyte evolution in the plant kingdom. The sporophyte of the seed plants is the only visible individual bearing the '*gametophytes*', both male and female. The male gametophyte or the '*pollen grain*' is mobile whereas the female gametophyte or '*megaspore*' is '*quiescent*' and en-

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