

REVIEW

A. S. GEORGE (Ed.): Flora of Australia Volume 19. Myrtaceae—Eucalyptus, Angophora. Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1988. XVI + 540 pp., col. illus. Paperback. Price Aus.\$ 44.95. ISBN 0-644-05865 X.

After my rather critical review of the first eight volumes of the Flora of Australia (Blumea 33: 510. 1988) it is a great pleasure to announce here the ninth, Volume 19. This is the first of three volumes on the Myrtaceae. It comprises the genus *Eucalyptus*, with 513 accepted species one of the largest in the Australian flora, and the closely allied genus *Angophora* with but seven species (and two presumed hybrids). This is the work of a single botanist, G.M. Chippendale, and we cannot but congratulate him. As such, the revision of a genus of this size is quite an achievement. This becomes something special if, like in the present case, the quality meets a very high standard indeed.

Eucalyptus is taken here in its usual wide sense. It is divided into 92 series, the only taxonomic level accepted between genus and species. The key is subdivided into 20 groups, some very short (Group 17 consists of one couplet only!), some long (Group 20 encompasses 207 couplets). The keys look very simple: most leads consist of one or two characters only, clearly distinct from their opposites. I have tested the keys by identifying about 20 species taken at random on the basis of their descriptions, and the ease with which one comes to the right name, sometimes along different ways when the variability of some character so required, is surprising. The format is the usual one for this flora: accepted name and synonyms with only the original publication cited; full citation of types which apparently in this case nearly all have been seen; citation of some illustrations; rather short descriptions, about 8 lines, but here nicely parallel and hence in case of doubt easily compared; geographical distribution and habitat summarized in a few lines; citation of a few representative collections; and finally in a few lines a short characterization of the species, sometimes in comparison with one or two allied ones. Of all species and (the few) subspecies buds and fruits are illustrated by simple but clear figures and the usual small map of the distribution in Australia has been given. A point I forgot to mention in my former review is the beautiful colour photographs, in the present volume 38, depicting bark types and flowers; one could only wish to have more of them! The accepted species are followed by a list of more than a hundred presumed hybrids. A second list of some 60 'doubtful names', mainly old ones the types of which are unknown, constitutes a nomenclatural time-bomb; one can but hope that the types never will be found.

A final remark: some pairs of species that key out in the same couplet appear to differ only very slightly. Examples are *E. eremaea* and *E. fordeana* or *E. gunnii* and *E. morrisbyi*. Thanks to the nicely parallel descriptions comparison is easy and learns that these species are hardly different indeed.

Summarizing, an excellent work, well executed and at a reasonable price. There is also a casebound edition at Aus.\$ 59.95 and though the paperback edition seems rather sturdy it may be wise to buy the bound one if one expects to use this book frequently.

P. W. LEENHOUTS