

XIII. GUIDE TO BOTANISTS' PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

A R E A O F P E R F O R M A N C E

Degree of performance	Quality of work	Promptness	Initiative	Adaptability	Communications
Far exceeds job requirements	Can produce major revision a year	As fast as greased lightning	Can determine plants to species by feel	Walks on water	Talks to other botanists
Exceeds job requirements	Can produce a revision	As fast as lightning	Can determine plants to species by key	Keeps head above water	Talks to boss
Meets job requirements	Can describe plants if prodded	Needs greasing	Can determine plants to family	Washes with water	Answers only by letter after six months
Needs job improvement	Needs a year to begin a revision	Needs bolt of lightning to start	Cannot tell leaves from flowers	Drinks water	Loses arguments with new graduates
Does not meet job requirements	Needs revision	Slips in grease	Cannot tell plants from animals	Passes water in emergencies	Cannot understand question

(From the N.A.S.B.S. 22 (1980) 13, who adapted it from Tarmac Topics 223 (1978). --- Ed.

UNEXPECTED USEFUL QUALITIES IN JUNGLE PLANTS

The New Scientist (Dec. 1984, p. 53) reported a distinct useful quality of a jungle plant from Northern Australia. This shows again the immense importance of the inexhaustible reservoir of phytochemical values present in native jungle plants. The article stressed the great importance for conservation of jungle reserves of tropical vegetation which represent untapped potentials for human welfare:

'An experiment is taking place in North Australia that may have far reaching repercussions in the utilization of native bush for commercial purposes. The landscape here is littered with ecological disasters coming from ill-conceived plans of large-scale clearing for exotic monocultures.

Recent investigations, however, have shown that a small native tree, Terminalia ferdinandiana, carries a small edible berry with a vitamin-C content of up to over 3100 mg per 100 g of edible pulp, compared with 50 mg for oranges. The tree is common close to Darwin and in some areas of undisturbed bush constitute a major part of the system.'

LETHAL YELLOWING OF PALMS IN FLORIDA

Lethal yellowing is a disease caused by species of Mycoplasma, the smallest organisms known today. They are the third major group of bacteria, neither Gram negative, nor Gram positive, a colouring based on the structure of the bacterial cell wall, which, however, is lacking in the Mycoplasmas. Like virus they can pass through filters that retain bacteria. Mycoplasma cells are bound by a simple membrane and contain ribosome and DNA, but do not possess nuclei or other complex organelles. Acquaintance started with the great pleuromonia epidemic of cattle which swept through Europe in the past century

In an interesting account H. DONSELMAN and R. McCOY (Bull. Fairchild Trop. Gard., Jan. 1985: 19-25) exposed the threat to infected palms in Florida. The Bull. Agric. Exp. Sta., Inst. Food & Agric. Sc., Univ. Florida, Gainesville 834 (Nov. 1983, 100 pp., 34 fig.) contains a monograph of lethal yellowing in palms. The only remedy at present seems to be the selection of resistant races.

REQUESTS FOR MATERIAL

Ms. Drs. M.T.M. BOSMAN (L) started working on a monograph of the polypodioid genus Microsorium for her Ph.D. Her research will also include some smaller, related genera, e.g. Colysis, Leptochilus. Dried or living material of these genera, especially spores for propagation in the botanic garden, would be highly appreciated.

Facilities for the cultivation of life-cycles of Polypodiaceae at the Botanical Gardens of L and U have greatly improved. The receipt of living spores or rhizomes of all Polypodiaceae is greatly appreciated. Materials should preferably be sent to Dr. G.J.C.M. VAN VLIET, Director of the Leiden Botanic Garden, Nonnensteeg 3, 2311 VJ Leiden, the Netherlands.