

VIII. INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING BAMBOOS

Although our knowledge of reproductive parts of bamboos is still very defective, an adequately collected vegetative specimen is valuable and sufficient for identification. Like in tree ferns (see p.567) and in rattans, a well-collected specimen does not need to be excessively bulky, provided the essential parts are taken.

We hope that field workers will overcome the hesitation they might feel to attack this difficult but very important plant group.

Here follow some instructions:

General. Always avoid to mix material from more than one plant under one number on the assumption that they represent the same taxon. Make always complete specimens for permanent preservation, as scrappy specimens taken 'just for quick identification' may represent new species or new records, are more a burden than a help. Make markings or attach tag-labels at once to each piece, however small. Take a representation as complete as possible, by means of specimens, photographs, drawings, and notes.

Material. Take at least 10 CULM SHEATHS from mature culms, above node 5, mark them with node number, keep all parts (take care for the small apical leaf), try to press flat but if that is impossible, let them roll up, wrap them in paper without pressing. The more complete the series of sheaths, the better.

LEAFY TWIGS should be taken as to include leaves of all sizes, young and old, healthy and diseased (if any). Press promptly.

BRANCH COMPLEMENT. Take at least one typical branch complement from the middle of a mature culm, add a piece of c. 12 inches of the culm segment to which it is attached. The part of the segment opposite the insertion may be discarded after splitting.

CULM NODES AND INTERNODES. Take a segment of a mature culm, consisting of nodes 4 and 5 with the internode between. Cut back branches, if any, to 6 inches. The segment may be split lengthwise, no more than once.

RHIZOMES. Take one complete example, wash and trim roots; it may be photographed or sketched instead of preserving (indicate size).

FLOWERING BRANCHES (if any). Collect as long a series of flowering branches as necessary to show the variability. Seek

fruits (which may fall quickly when mature). Be careful with the spikelets, wrap them up separately.

SEEDLINGS. Seek for seedlings, number them separately but refer to the possible parent plant; try to keep the seed scale intact.

Notes. Take down anyway particulars on the

- 1) habit of clump and culm
- 2) maximum height of culm and diameter at the base
- 3) length and diameter of the 5th internode
- 4) length and number aboveground of the longest internode
- 5) location so that the clump can be found again
- 6) reference to photographs and sketches.

This is, of course, in addition to those data that are recorded to any collection.

Abbreviated from F.A. McClure, Bamboo as a building material (see Book Notices). Dr. McClure's address is Smithsonian Institution, U.S. National Museum, Washington 25, D.C., U.S.A.
--M.J.

VARIA

"Still, however, the taxonomic rendering lags. Instead of being monographic and comprehensive, it is becoming floristic, regional and political, by territories, and, as this compartmentalisation grows, the taxonomist becomes less aware of his importance to biological theory in building the framework of evolutionary thought. It is a fashion, indeed, for this brow-beaten person to ignore the consequences of his classification. This is one reason why I think modern botanical thinking should restore monographic taxonomy to its pedestal."

E.J.H. Corner in Macleod & Cobley,
Contemporary Botanical Thought (1961).