

BOOK REVIEW

Prasad, B.N. *et al.* 1992 169-170

FRESHWATER ALGAL FLORA OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

Vol. I, Cyanophyceae and Bacillariophyceae by Prasad and Srivastava, M.N. 369 pp. Vol. II Chlorophyceae by Prasad & P.K. Misra, 284 pp. Publishers - Bishen Singh, Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehra Dun, India.

These two volumes represent the results of a serious study, by Prasad and his two colleagues, of the freshwater algal flora of the two groups of Bay Islands belonging to the three major algal classes. They describe in all 587 taxa made up of 114 blue greens, 203 diatoms and 270 greens. Each taxon has particulars of the localities of its collection and its distribution on the mainland India. The taxa are illustrated by very well made drawings. Brief comments are given wherever the authors felt the need. The taxonomic part is preceded by information on the history of phycological activities undertaken prior to the present studies, general, geographical and geological information on some of the chief islands, and the hydrological features of the main collection centres as they existed at the periods of collection during Nov. - Dec. 1979 and Dec. 1980. A comparison is also made with floras of neighbouring lands. The authors have shown, and rightly so, a great deal of restraint in creating new taxa. They have in all created 22 new taxa. The volumes have two useful indices, and general lists of references. Each taxon is fully documented. For many genera there are useful keys.

While it is common knowledge that the marine algal flora of the Islands have components which are commonly seen in Indo-Malaysian region, the authors have shown that many F.W. taxa are already represented in the mainland flora. Various classes have different proportions. The characteristic taxa of the main land are still to be reported from the Islands. The authors feel that this being the pioneer in such studies it is to be followed by similar studies extending into the interior parts and origin areas, also for distinct floral components or less common ones of them. Similar serious investigations are needed, the more the better. One must remember that not even a dozen publications are available on the marine algae, but only a couple of them on freshwater algae. Prof. Prasad and his colleagues have done a yowman service to Indian Phycology in bringing out these volumes, which are also nicely got up. It would be a good addition to every library on the subject.

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