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Endemic Plants of Greece The Peloponnese

K. HÜSNÜ CAN BAŞER

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Endemic Plants of Greece The Peloponnese by Kit Tan with G. Iatrou. Colour plates by Bent Johnsen, *Copenhagen 2001. 30x21 cm, 480 pages, including 111 full-sized colour plates, 370 distribution maps, nine other illustrations and three geographical maps. Published with the support of the Carlsberg Foundation. Available from Gad Publishers Ltd., 32 Vimmelskaftet, DK-1161 Copenhagen K, Denmark. ISBN 87-12-03857-1. Price 599 Danish Kroner excluding postage and packing.*

Kit Tan is research associate professor at the University of Copenhagen. She is well known for her botanical publications, her many contributions to P.H. Davis' *Flora of Turkey* (volumes 7-10), and her current work on Greek flora, which includes research on the mountain flora of Greece and the endemics of that country. She is co-editor of *Flora Hellenica*, the first volume of which was published in 1997. Gregoris Iatrou is associate professor at the University of Patras and a collaborator for the first volume on the endemics of Greece. Bent Johnsen, Copenhagen, is an internationally recognized botanical artist, considered by many to be the best in Scandinavia.

The Foreword is written by Philip M. Smith, Edinburgh, followed by Acknowledgements by Kit Tan. The Preface indicates the purpose and necessity of the work. The long Botanical Introduction gives us much information about the geography, geology, mountains, climate and vegetation types of Greece and the history of the Peloponnese. We learn about the expeditions of several eminent botanists who have contributed to the botany of the peninsula, from the mid-eighteenth century up to the present day. We are informed that by August 2000 the *Flora Hellenica Database* already held 54,060 records from the Peloponnese. The floristic composition of the area is then analysed and the endemism discussed. We discover that the level of endemism in the Peloponnese is c. 12%. A following chapter gives much valuable and readable information concerning regions of special floristic

interest. Thirty-eight families and 247 taxa in systematic order are included in the list of colour plates. The list of Greek endemics in the Peloponnese is however much longer, with 353 taxa distributed within 43 families. This second list includes all Greek endemics occurring in the Peloponnese, plus a few Greek endemics occurring outside the peninsula if they were closely related to the taxon under discussion. The main text (pp. 77-458) is reserved for the taxonomic treatment of the endemic taxa (description and typification, habitat, ecology, distribution, chromosome number often based on original counts, comments, and distributional map) and to the colour plates. The book ends with nine pages of bibliographic references and a 12 page index of scientific names.

The book is beautifully produced, with paper of high quality and a matt-laminated hard cover in white with an illustration of one of the endemics once considered extinct, *Adonis cyllenea*, from Mt Killini in the northern Peloponnese. The book is heavy (2,450g) not only in weight, but also is densely packed with scientific information on the Greek endemics of the Peloponnese. The descriptions of the taxa are detailed and the aquarelles are excellent. This admirable book is the result of dedicated research over several years, and is extremely useful to taxonomists who work on the flora of Greece and adjacent countries, as well as to plant conservationists and ecologists. It is the first volume of an envisaged three-volume work on the endemic plants of Greece. The next volume, currently in preparation, caters for the Ionian and Aegean islands, including Crete, and the third volume will cover the rest of mainland Greece. We respectfully wish Kit Tan and her collaborators well.

A. BAYTOP
Faculty of Pharmacy
University of İstanbul