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The Liverwort Flora of Antarctica (2000)

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The Liverwort Flora of Antarctica (2000) The Liverwort Flora of Antarctica by Halina Bednarek-Ochyra, Jiri Vana, Ryszard Ochyra and Ronald I. Lewis Smith, 2000, 24x17 cm, XI + 236 pages with 96 figures including photographs, illustrations and distribution maps. Published by W. Szafer Institute of Botany, Polish Academy of Sciences, Ul. Lubicz 46, PL-31-512 Cracow, Poland. Price \$35.00 + 3.75 handling and postage.

The Liverwort Flora of Antarctica (2000)

This is the first comprehensive account of the liverworts of Antarctica to be published. H. Bednarek Ochyra is curator of bryophytes in KRAM (Poland). Her main interests are the taxonomy and phytogeography of bryophytes, with special reference to the genus *Racomitrium*. She is also an expert illustrator of bryophytes. J. Vana is a professor of botany. His main scientific interest is the taxonomy and chorology of hepatics on a worldwide basis especially of the families *Jungermanniaceae*, *Lophoziaceae*, *Gymnomitriaceae*, *Cephaloziaceae* and *Cephaloziellaceae*. R. Ochyra is a professor and is currently head of the laboratory of bryology in KRAM. His main research interests are the taxonomy and phytogeography of bryophytes on a world scale. R. I. Lewis Smith is senior ecologist with the British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, and director of the B.A.S. herbarium (AAS). He has worked extensively on cryptogam research in the Antarctic for almost 40 years.

The book describes in detail 27 liverwort species, belonging to 19 genera and 12 families from the Antarctic biome. It comprises five chapters, together with a glossary of terms and a substantial bibliography. The chapters consist of a comprehensive introduction

(Chapter 1), which includes bryogeographic zones, climate and geology; history of hepaticological investigations (Chapter 2); ecology and conservation (Chapter 3); diversity and phytogeography (Chapter 4); and systematic treatment (Chapter 5). The role of liverworts in Antarctic plant communities, the conservation of liverworts, the general features of the *hepaticoflora*, the phytogeographical elements, the origin of the liverwort flora, and the aims and objectives of the study are discussed in detail. All the taxa are described in detail and some new combinations, new names and excluded taxa are also given in the systematic chapter.

A very large number of specimens were examined, which has greatly aided the reliability of the identifications and distributions. The first author has provided detailed fine line drawings to illustrate all diagnostic structures for each species. Taxonomical and nomenclatural notes, differentiation, reproductive performance in Antarctica, and habitat preferences are provided. Antarctic and global distributions with explanatory maps, specimens examined and literature records are given for each species.

User friendly keys, very detailed taxonomic descriptions, excellent illustrations and other information about species make this a practical and informative book for bryologists with a special interest in liverworts and their southern hemisphere distribution patterns.

In conclusion, this book will be extremely useful to specialist and non-specialist botanists interested in understanding the floristic features of the Antarctic biome and similar harsh environments, with particular regard to hepaticology.