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#### *About the Institute*

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

**The writings of Ida Kaplan Langman**

Compiled by  
Anita L. Karg, Archivist  
Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

- "A third station in Pennsylvania for Potentilla tridentata." Bartonia, 1939.
- "Guadalajara pearl of the west." Modern Mexico 16(2):20-24, July 1943.
- "We spend a year in Mexico." Modern Mexico 16(9):24-27, Feb. 1944.
- "With plant press in old Mexico.." Frontiers 9(1):12-31, Oct. 1944.
- "Eating is fun in Mexico." The Pan American 5(100): 16-18, 1945
- "The fruit bowl goes tropical." Frontiers 10(5):137-138, 161, June 1946
- "New names in the fruit bowl." National Digest: 52-55, Sept. 1946
- "The Uruapan we knew." The Pan American 6(10):22-24, 1946.
- "Panamericanismo - platitude or reality." Panamericanismo 6(12):1-3, June 1947.
- "Chiapas: where orchids are epiphytes." Panamericanismo 8(10):1-4, April 1949.
- "Profile --busy lady." Panamericanismo 8(11):1, May 1949.
- "Dos figuras casi olvidadas en la historia de la botanica Mexicana." Revista Soc. Mex. Hist. Nat. 10(1-4):329-356, Dec. 1949.
- "Apuntes biograficos del Sr. Mateo Botteri." Bol. Soc. Bot. Mexico 14:21-22, 1952.
- "Nota bibliografica." Bol. Soc. Bot. Mexico 15:29, June 1953
- "Una bibliografia de la flora Mexicana." Memorias Congreso Cientifico Mexicano 6:368-388, 1953

"Botanical impressions of travel in Mexico." Asa Gray Bull., new ser., 2(3):291-296, summer 1953.

"Ensayo para una bibliografía histórica-biográfica de la botánica en México." Mem. Acad. Nac. Ci. "Antonio Alzate" 57:374-429, 1955.

"Flora of Mexico as described in the 16th century relaciones." Asa Gray Bull. 3(1):59-63, 1955.

"Botanical gardens in ancient Mexico." Missouri Bot. Gard. Bull. 44 (2):17-31, 1956.

"From Ida Langman." Panamericanismo 15, Nov./Dec. 1956

"Southern Mexico." Panamericanismo 16(9/10):2, Mar./Apr. 1957

"Mexican botanical bibliography." Panamericanismo 17(3/4):2, Sept./Oct. 1957

"Nota bibliográfica." Bol. Soc. Bot. Méx. 22:53-55, Jan. 1958.

"Castilla Sessé, not Castilla Cerv." Taxon. Index 23(1), Jan. 1960.

A selected guide to the literature on the flowering plants of Mexico.  
Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964. 1015 pages.

"Recuerdos del Dr. Faustino Miranda." Ciencia Méx. 24 (5/6):177-180, 15 Feb. 1966.

"Mexican botany." Taxon 17:301, June 1968.

"Recuerdos del Profesor Maximino Martínez." Bol. Soc. Bot. Mexico 30:27, May 1969.

"Una opinión sobre la Biblioteca Central." La Vanguardia Española  
(Barcelona), 5 April 1972.

"Meeting Report -- Latin American Congress of Botany." BioScience, June 1973

"Hura polyandra and a plant called 'ava'." Morris Arbor. Bull. 26(1):4, March 1975.

Book Reviews:

"Know your wildflowers." Frontiers 12(5):155, June 1948.

"New handling of wildflowers." Frontiers 15(2):54, Dec. 1950.

"Seeing plants on tour." Frontiers 15(4):84, Feb. 1951

"Orchids studied botanically." Frontiers, Oct. 1959

Review -- Woody flora of Taiwan by Hui-Lin Li. Narberth, Pennsylvania: Livingston Publishing Company, 1963. Morris Arbor. Bull. 14(3):54-55, 1963.

Review -- Flowers for the King. The expedition of Ruiz and Pavon and the flora of Peru by Arthur Robert Steele. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1964. Econ. Bot., 1965.

Review -- Huntia. Torreya 93:461-462, 1966.

"La historia natural o jardin Americano de Fray Juan Navarro -- 1801." Taxon 23(4):633-634, Aug. 1974.

Review -- Historia Natural y cronica de la antigua California. Adiciones y correcciones a la noticia de Miguel Venegas by Miguel del Barco. Edited with a preliminary study, notes and appendices by Miguel León Portilla. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1973. Plant Sci. Bull. 22(2):20-21, June 1976.

From: Mae K. Millstone  
Additions to the list compiled by Anita L. Karg  
Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation  
The writings of Ida Kaplan Langman

"Instituto Nacional De Investigaciones Sobre Recursos Bióticos"  
AABGA Bulletin, Page 30 1979

Please note: Month of publication not indicated in the tear  
sheet from the Bulletin of the American Ass'n of Botanical  
Gardens and Arboreta.

Book Reviews:

Combined review: Estudios botánicos en la región de Misantla by  
Arturo Gomez Pompa, Vera Cruz. Instituto Mexicano de Recursos  
Naturales Renovables. Mexico. 27 June 1966. Taxon 17:301, June 1968

La Vegetación de Nueva Galicia. Contributions from the University  
of Michigan Herbarium 9(1). Ann Arbor, Michigan. 1966 by Jerzy  
Rzedowski and Rogers McVaugh. Taxon 17:301, June 1968

The Genus Nicotiana by Thomas Godspeed. Waltham, Massachusetts,  
USA "The Chronica Botanica Co." and New York City, U.S.A.  
"Stechert-Hafner Inc.", 1954, XXII (Name of publication not  
indicated on tearsheet Page 141 under heading Notas Bibliograficas

Add to list of writings

"Una bibliografía de la flora Mexicana" Section 2. Memorias  
de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Mexico, Vol. 58 1956



Instituto  
de Biología

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL  
AUTONOMA DE MEXICO

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SECRETARIA ACADEMICA

December 13th, 1991.

MS. ANITA KARG  
ARCHIVIST  
HUNT INSTITUTE FOR BOTANICAL DOCUMENTATION  
CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY  
Pittsburgh, Penn. 15213-3890  
U. S. A.

Dear Ms. Karg:

Here are four more references for your collection:

LANGMAN, I. K. 1958. Notas adicionales para una bibliografía sobre la vegetación de Chiapas. Bol. Soc. Bot. México 23: 146-164.

LANGMAN, I. K. 1960. Works prior to 1800 useful for studies in Mexican botany. Rev. Interamer. Bibl. 11: 219-243. (1961).

LANGMAN, I. K. 1957. Recuerdos de Chiapas. Ateneo (Chiapas) 7: 43-51.

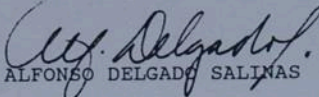
LANGMAN, I. K. y M. F. F. SOUTHWELL. 1969. Proyecto Index Nominum Genericorum. Bol. Soc. Bot. México 30: 95-96.

Could it be possible to have copies some of the paper that Mrs. Millstone sent you. We would like to have a copy of the first page of the article "Una bibliografía de la Flora Mexicana", Mem. Acad. Nac. Cienc. Méx. 58 1956, and copy of the paper on AABGA Bull. page 30 (1979).

Thank you for your help and kindness.

With best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

  
DR. ALFONSO DELGADO SALINAS

\*meem

Paul Langman  
(orig in possession 179)

1481 Hollywood Parkway  
York, PA 17403  
November 5, 1991

Mrs. Anita L. Kesz  
Archivist  
Hunt Institute for  
Botanical Documentation  
Carnegie-Mellon University  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

RECEIVED  
NOV 13 1991  
HUNT INSTITUTE

Dear Mrs. Kesz:

Enclosed you will find a list of Ida Langman's writings omitted from the list you compiled, copies of these items for her file at Hunt, and the updated obituary.

I am also sending an item clipped from the April, 1956 issue of *Frontiers* in which reference is made to the publication of a second section of *The Bibliography of the Flowering Plants of Mexico* in the "Memorias de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Mexico", Vol. 58. No date or pages are given, but since the news item states "a second section has just been published," I think it might be safe to give the date as 1956, which I've done.

I sent a photocopy of your list to Dr. A. E. Schuyler, chairman of the Botany Department at The Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, along with a copy of the additional list, which I'm also mailing to Dr. Delgado.

Many thanks again for your generous help.

Sincerely yours,  
Wae. Willstone

Additional article and  
book reviews by Ida K.  
Langman.

### Mrs. Langman is Honored

For a number of years, Ida K. Langman, of the Department of Education, has been engaged in the preparation of *The Bibliography of the Flowering Plants of Mexico*. The first section, the introduction, has already been published in Spanish, in the *Memoria del Primer Congreso Científico Mexicano*, which appeared in 1953. A second section has just been published, also in Spanish, in the *Memorias de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Mexico*, Volume 58. This is the division of the bibliography which is concerned with the history of botany in Mexico, and with biographical material relating to Mexican botanists and foreign collectors who have lived and botanized in Mexico.

APRIL, 1956 • FRONTIERS

INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE INVESTIGACIONES  
SOBRE RECURSOS BIÓTICOS

IDA K. LANGMAN \*

The *Instituto*, established just four years ago in July 1975, received permission two years ago to establish a botanical garden just outside the city of Xalapa, Veracruz. The site is an abandoned coffee plantation, known formerly as *Rancho Guadalupe*. It was taken over by the state, and about seven hectares of the property now form the basis of the garden. Most of the trees once grown there have been removed, and plants that are native to the region are being planted. The remains of a natural forest have been preserved and are being enlarged. In the beginning help was provided by a specialist from the Royal Botanical Garden at Kew, who spent a month in Xalapa working with the director, Andres P. Vovides, on plans and programs.

The garden, known officially as the *Jardín Botánico Francisco Xavier Clavigero* in honor of the famous scholar who was born in Veracruz, plans three kinds of activities: education, conservation and investigation. Plans include programs to involve the people of Xalapa in various ways. Groups of students have already come to visit the garden. Fiestas, concerts and other functions are held in the garden; at these times, visitors enter free and are given guided tours of the garden. There are now three students, two of them with degrees, helping in the garden. Special publications have been prepared for children—one with drawings submitted by the children themselves.

Most of the plants are now labeled and provide basic information. For large trees covered with epiphytes, large map-like labels are placed near the tree to indicate the location of the epiphytes and their names.

Presently, an indigenous type of hut, a palapa, is being constructed to provide shelter from the rain and sun. There will be a small lake for aquatic plants, a greenhouse for desert plants, a pinetum, a palmatum, a garden of ornamentals and a vegetable garden to encourage residents of the area to grow their own vegetables.

Paths will be available for exploring all parts of the garden. Some unusually large specimens of native trees have been preserved—*Liquidambar*, *Carpinus*, *Platanus* and *Quercus*—that remind visitors of the relationships of the local forests to those of the eastern United States.

Very recently 30 more hectares have been made available to the garden to be used as an ecological park. Four types of vegetation will be labeled as follows: 1) pasture land with grasses; 2) secondary vegetation, known locally as *acahual*; 3) full growth forest (the *bosque*); and 4) riparian areas, along a stream in the garden. Plants in these areas will be numbered, and guides for identification will be available.

\* 116 South Raleigh Avenue, Apt. 7B, Atlantic City, NJ 08401.

*American Association of Botanical  
Gardens and Arboreta*

*Very Late Post publication*

As may be expected, CH. DARWIN is mentioned in many chapters as a pioneer of research in many divergent fields of Galápagos biology. Although the reviewer would not care to underwrite J. HUXLEY's statement, at the beginning of the first chapter, dealing with DARWIN's ideas derived from his studies in Galápagos and their later development, that "Charles Darwin effected the greatest of all revolutions in human thought . . .", this book, on what might be termed an important, perhaps the most important part of the raw material with which DARWIN started, is warmly recommended to botanists, zoologists, geologists, and specialists in evolutionary biology alike.

K. U. KRAMER

#### MEXICAN BOTANY

ARTURO GÓMEZ POMPA — *Estudios botánicos en la región de Misantla*, Veracruz. Instituto Mexicano de Recursos Naturales Renovables. México, 27 Jun, 1966. 173 p. 49 fig.

JERZY RZEDOWSKI and ROGERS McVAUGH — *La vegetación de Nueva Galicia*. Contributions from the University of Michigan Herbarium 9(1): 123 p. 28 fig. map. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1966.

Here are two important works on regional botany in Mexico which have appeared in recent years. Both are examples of the contributions being made in this field by the two leading young botanists in Mexico: Dr. Gómez Pompa and Dr. Rzedowski. (Dr. McVaugh is already well known for his work in plant taxonomy, vegetation studies, history of botany, etc.). Both are examples of the kind of work which will have to be done for all the regions of Mexico before we can begin to hope for the much needed Flora of Mexico or Flora of Middle America. Both are quite similar in their treatment: both show to a considerable extent the influence of the botanist, Dr. Faustino Miranda, who was responsible for stimulating and training many of the younger botanists of the Mexico of today.

The regions considered lie on opposite sides of the country; Misantla along the Gulf of Mexico in the east; Nueva Galicia in the west (the old Virreinato in the times of Spanish rule) includes the states of Jalisco, Colima, Aguascalientes as well as parts of Nayarit, Durango, Zacatecas, Guanajuato and Michoacán. In the first study a smaller area

is covered somewhat more intensively. But, in both studies, there are summaries of data from all the basic fields which contribute to an understanding of the flora and the vegetation of a region: physiography, climate, soils, etc. In both, the types of vegetation are described in some detail but with some differences. In the Misantla publication Dr. Gómez Pompa, interested in both ecological and taxonomic problems, emphasizes primary and secondary vegetation types and the components of each. In the Nueva Galicia study, the emphasis is on vegetation; thirteen vegetation types are discussed as divided among four physiographic regions. And in both, maps and photographs add immeasurably to an understanding of the areas being studied. The work by Gómez Pompa concentrates on the trees and shrubs of the flora (reflecting, perhaps, the special interest of his teacher, Dr. Miranda), listing the families with tree or shrub species and then considering the families in detail. Rzedowski and McVaugh, on the other hand, close with a systematic enumeration of 1400 species of vascular plants covering collections which were made between 1949 and 1966.

As a final note, it should be stressed that both works are in Spanish. This is not unusual with regard to the Gómez Pompa work, which was published in Mexico. But it is noteworthy with the Rzedowski-McVaugh work since that was published in the United States. The University of Michigan is to be commended for its contribution to Inter-American cooperation by recognizing that in presenting a study of a region in Mexico the most logical procedure is to publish it in Spanish. Bravo!

The two works here reviewed should be studied not only by all who are interested in Mexican botany, but also by those who are interested in general vegetation studies, and in tropical and sub-tropical botany, whether worldwide or limited to the Americas.

I. K. LANGMAN

#### DIATOM CATALOGUE

SAM L. VAN LANDINGHAM, *Catalogue of the Fossil and Recent Genera and Species of the Diatoms and their Synonyms. Part 1. Acanthoceras through Bacillaria*. xi + 493 pp. 1967. Verlag von J. Cramer, 3301 Lehre, Germany.

The origins of the work under review go back a long way, to the *Catalogue of the*

## NOTAS BIBLIOGRAFICAS

Goodspeed, Thomas Harper: *The Genus Nicotiana*, Waltham, Massachusetts, U. S. A., "The Chronica Botanica Co." and New York City, U. S. A.: "Stechert-Hafner Inc.", 1954, XXII-536 pp., 118 figuras e ilustraciones, u\$s 12. 50.

Esta obra maestra del catedrático de Botánica y director del Jardín Botánico de la Universidad de California, (Berkeley, California, U. S. A.), forma el volumen 16 de "Chronica Botanica". Consta de seis partes. Las cuatro primeras forman la base de una interpretación (que se desarrolla en la quinta) de los orígenes, relaciones y evolución del género nicotiana (el tabaco). La Parte VI presenta una reorganización taxonómica de esta importantísima planta, con claves de los sub-géneros y descripciones de todas las categorías incluidas en el género.

Durante más de treinta años, el autor se ha dedicado a investigaciones de la planta nicotiana, por medio de exploraciones, experimentos de cultivo de varias especies, y estudios en la distribución, morfología y citología de la planta, logrando reunir una colección de plantas vivas de 56 de las 60 especies reconocidas, la cual hizo posible estudios muy extensos sobre la morfología y citología del género, y experimentos en la hibridación de las varias especies. Ahora, en este libro, cumbre de sus trabajos, ofrece al mundo científico todos los resultados de estas investigaciones en una forma que seguramente servirá como obra básica por largos años en el futuro.

En la parte primera de la obra hay un resumen de la distribución (actual y prehistórica) de nicotiana en el mundo: en América del Sur, en Norteamérica, en Australia y en el Sud-Pacífico. Mapas bien detallados acompañan los cuatro capítulos de esta sección. Esta parte ha de tener gran interés no solamente para los estudiantes de la fitogeografía y la historia de la distribución de las plantas, sino también para todos los que se interesan en la historia geológica de las regiones del mundo donde la nicotiana es planta indígena. Para los lectores de *Ciencia y Tecnología*, los capítulos 3 y 4, sobre la distribución de nicotiana en América del Sur y en Norteamérica tendrán especial importancia porque el Dr. Goodspeed presenta sus teorías sobre la distribución de nicotiana, bien apoyadas con datos detallados de la historia geológica de gran parte del Nuevo Mundo.

La segunda sección presenta informes sobre la morfología y anatomía de nicotiana, y la tercera, una de las más importantes secciones del libro, trata de su citología. Aquí se consideran los

números de las cromosomas, la citología de la reproducción de la planta, la citología de los híbridos, y estudios en euploidía, aneuploidía y amphiploidía. La parte cuarta ahonda más en la citología de los híbridos inter-específicos. En la quinta, el Dr. Goodspeed ofrece sus teorías de la evolución del género: por medio de amphiploidía, hibridación, introgresión y reorganización de los cromosomas.

En la última sección hay descripciones de más de 60 especies y variedades del género nicotiana. En esta parte el autor reconoce la colaboración de la Dra. Helen-Mar Wheeler y del Dr. Paul C. Hutchison. Las ilustraciones (hay un dibujo para cada especie y variedad), demuestran muy claramente todas las diferencias de importancia en la morfología de la planta. También hay ilustraciones de todos los cariotipos, con la excepción de cuatro especies. La evolución entera del género se presenta en diagramas, en las cuales se incluye la derivación de cada una de las 60 especies. Completa el libro una bibliografía muy extensa de todos los trabajos citados.

Como se ve por este resumen, la obra del Dr. Goodspeed debe ser incluida en todas las bibliotecas científicas que se especializan en la historia natural, particularmente en la botánica. Servirá como obra de consulta para los estudiantes en todas las ramas de la botánica, tanto como para los que se dedican a estudios de la genética, citología, fitogeografía, etnobotánica, etc.

Prá. Ida K. Langman  
Academy of Natural Science of Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Hall, Thomas S. and Moog, Florence: *Life Science*, New York, U.S.A., John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1955, X-502 pp., 411 fig., u\$s 6. 50.

Los autores, ambos profesores universitarios de Washington, especializados en Zoología, son muy conocidos entre los biólogos. Y si esto no fuera garantía bastante para leer este libro, ellos mismos nos dicen en el prólogo que los distintos capítulos han sido sometidos a la revisión y crítica de biólogos especializados en la respectiva materia. El libro viene anunciado como de texto para el "College" americano; esto es, para la formación de una cultura superior. En los once capítulos de que consta se trata de la vida celular, de las plantas, de los vertebrados e invertebrados, reproducción, origen de las especies y el organismo frente al medio. Es tanta la cantidad y tal la calidad de las ilustraciones, con esquemas, grabados, fotos y

From: Mae K. Millstone, 1481 Hollywood Pkwy, York, PA USA/Tel: 717-843-4443

### OBITUARY OF IDA KAPLAN LANGMAN

Ida Kaplan Langman, botanist, bibliographer, and author of 50 articles published in English and Spanish language journals dealing with botany and bibliography, died July 10, 1991 at Stapeley in Germantown health care center in Philadelphia, where she resided for more than five years. She was 87 years old.

Suffering from the effects of Parkinson's disease for many years, she died of cardiopulmonary arrest.

Mrs. Langman is best known for her book, A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico, published in 1964 by The University of Pennsylvania Press. This monumental work of over 1,000 pages that took more than 16 years to compile, includes in addition to the annotated bibliography of botanical literature, works in such related fields as the economic uses of plants in agriculture, horticulture, medicine, pharmacology, industry, and the history of botany in Mexico.

Following publication of the book, Mrs. Langman was elected a Corresponding Member of the Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Mexico. And the American Library Association announced its selection as the outstanding book of the year.

Funds for the preparation of the book were provided by the National Science Foundation and the American Philosophical Society.

Mrs. Langman was born on February 7, 1904 in the city of Nezhin in the Kharkov district of the Ukraine in Czarist Russia. That year, while just an infant of only a few months, she came to the United States with her parents, who were eager to leave before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War.

She received her education in Philadelphia, graduating from Sharswood Elementary School and South Philadelphia High School. Upon graduation from the Philadelphia Normal School at the age of 18, she started on her first career--teaching--which ended 35 years later when she retired from the position of museum teacher assigned by the Board of Education to the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

While working as a teacher, Mrs. Langman continued her education at the University of Pennsylvania. After many years of after-school, evening and Saturday morning classes, she earned a B.S. in Education in 1930 and a master's degree in Botany in 1947. For her thesis topic she chose a bibliography of the flora of Mexico. Having spent the summer of 1938 in that country, she became enamored of the country's plant life, its people, its history. And when she returned home, she started to study Spanish and became fluent in that language. The thesis, expanded after additional years of research in libraries in the U.S. and Mexico became her award-winning Selected Guide.

In 1949, assisted by a Travel and Maintenance Grant from the U.S. State Department (through the U.S. Office of Education), she took a leave of absence from teaching to continue her research in libraries in Mexico.

After retiring from teaching in 1956, she continued work on the book as a Research Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania.

With the publication of the Selected Guide, a new career as a bibliographer opened up for her. She served as the first leader of the Index Nominum Genericorum project at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. in the late 1960's.

In 1972 the Botanical Society of Mexico awarded her a medal for making a special contribution to Mexican botany. She was also appointed an associate bibliographer at the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation of Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. In that capacity she continued to work in libraries in Utrecht, The Netherlands, and in Spain.

In 1988 Jerzy Rzedowski, a Mexican botanist, named a new mint species he found, *Stachys Langmaniae*, in honor of Mrs. Langman.

The Philadelphia Botanical Club awarded her a Life Membership.

She was also an active member of long standing in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Philadelphia Teachers Union and the American Civil Liberties Union.

*She was married in 1928 to Oscar Langman, a professional violinist and photographer, who died in 1987.*

*Survivors include a brother, Frank S. Kaplan, M.D., of Doylestown, and a sister, MAE K. Millstone, of York, both of Pennsylvania, five nephews and two nieces.*

Reviews of A SELECTED  
Guide to the Literature on  
The Flowering Plants of Mexico  
by Sda Kaplan Laupman

Science 4/23/65

### Flowering Plants of Mexico: A Literature Survey

#### A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico.

Ida Kaplan Langman. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1964. 1015 pp. \$25.

This bibliography is the most important event in Mexican botany since Standley's *Trees and Shrubs*. In what amounts to both a love of labor and a labor of love, this *Guide* to the literature of Mexican seed plants has been arranged by the author and fully cross-indexed as well. There is a topical four-column index of 156 pages. Many authors (for example, Berlandier, Blake, Liebmann, Orcutt, and Purpus) take on a new dimension; for others the enormity of the bibliographic problem is only suggested. Books, articles, theses, manuscripts, archivia, and trivia—all come in Langman's purview. Some authors have supplied addenda; Ruggles Gates corrects his paper published 50 years ago. Librarians' comments spice the entries *passim*: See Miss Meeder's estimate of Orcutt. Just browsing will be rewarded.

Accuracy, said A. E. Housman, is a duty and not a virtue. Yet a bibliography that is both scholarly and meticulous will not be free from error.

Unfortunately, this volume's narrow margins will not accommodate corrections, and, worse, rebinding will be a catastrophe. The indexes, like directions given by the man at the filling station, will prove to be approximate at best.

Sixty years ago J. Christian Bay insisted that the urgent needs of botanical bibliography would be solved only by the single-minded enthusiasm of individuals. The human mind remains irreplaceable in the face of mechanical devices often deemed the salvation in the compilation of a bibliography like Langman's. A computer has a medulla oblongata but lacks a cerebrum. The Swiss bibliographer Haller set forth the author's contribution, not the minutiae of the book's torso. Langman, like Haller, is concerned with what the book offers the reader. For society it is fortunate that such bibliographers have not gone with the chimney sweep. *Labor ipse voluptas*. Every user will be grateful to the foundations that have intermittently supported the enterprise, but most grateful to the compiler for her persistence.

JOSEPH EWAN

Department of Biology,  
Tulane University

Frontiers October 1965  
earlier in *A S B Bulletin* 12(3):69, 1964  
(Association of Southwestern Biologists)

## BOOK REVIEWS

### A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico

By *Ida Kaplan Langman*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 1015 pages. \$25.

A tremendous amount of work by a dedicated bibliographer has produced this massive, impressive, and valuable book at a most opportune time. As more and more botanists follow their research interests south of the Rio Grande across artificial political boundaries, they often soon encounter a boundary—no, a barrier—that slows further progress to a discouraging pace. This barrier is the “resources barrier,” and it is automatically reached in taxonomic work when the search for an appropriate monograph, article, or other reference takes twice as long as does the identification once the reference is discovered.

With this excellent annotated bibliography, containing some 22,000 rather thoroughly cross-indexed references, the identification and classification of Mexican plants will be a much quicker and more enjoyable task. And through proper use of the various cross listings in the index, the *Guide* also functions as an interesting source of information on the history, agriculture, ethnobotany, drug plants, Indians, plant collectors, and botanists of Mexico. In the 28 pages of “Journal Titles Cited” are given the full title of each periodical and a valuable note as to where some of the more obscure of these publications may be found.

From an *Errata* sheet (kindly supplied by the author) and from my personal perusal of the book, it seems to be about 99% perfect. Although an

occasional typographical error in a date (such as “1950” for “1960”) may cause a temporary question in the mind of a research worker, other “errors” are only relative. Considering the problems of transliteration and of orthographic variants involved with many Aztec and Mexican common names, the change of “Citotzel” to “ci-tzotzil” (on page 894, in the index) and the change from “Amarillo” to “Amarilla” (on page 864, in the index) are certainly of no consequence except to those who seek perfection, over utility, for perfection’s sake alone.

More books such as this, that add significantly to our research resources on tropical botany, are sorely needed. Perhaps now that the way has been shown others may follow.

—C. RITCHIE BELL  
Department of Botany  
University of North Carolina

## REVIEWS

*A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico.* By Ina KAPLAN LANGMAN. 1015 pp. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1964. \$25.00.

The publication of this annotated bibliography culminates more than 20 years of dedicated labor. The breadth of Mrs. Langman's research on the literature of Mexican botany is indicated to some extent by the journals and the bibliographic titles cited in the preliminary materials and by the list of libraries which she consulted. In order to obtain references to local material that might not have found its way to the larger libraries, Mrs. Langman visited libraries in 27 states of Mexico, so that here we have an invaluable tool for all having an interest in any aspect of Mexican botany from the time of the Conquistadores to the present. The vicissitudes of publishing evidently made impossible the last minute inclusions of references to the most important taxonomic contribution to our knowledge of the flora of northwestern Mexico, I. L. Wiggins, *Flora of the Sonoran Desert* (Stanford University Press, 1964).

Of the 1015 pages, 792 are devoted to an alphabetical compilation of author citations. The user should refer to Mrs. Langman's remarks (p. 12) regarding the difficulties encountered in citing authors' names, especially the Latin American "trinomials."

The 156 pages of Index (four columns to a page) immeasurably increase the value of the Bibliography, for the author's labor has forestalled ours. Familiarity with its organization will enable knowledgeable researchers to by-pass several of the reference steps. Otherwise, a step-by-step search for information about *Jicama* would lead the reader from *jicama* to the genera *Cacara*, *Dolichos*, and *Pachyrhizus*, each of which in turn refers him to "Leguminosae." Under this family the genera are listed in alphabetical order. Under the genera are various subject headings, and, finally, the desired author references to the main part of the Bibliography, q.v. A typographically understandable but unfortunate structural difficulty in the Index is the minimal indentation of the first subheadings. This, coupled with the fact that the main heading (when a subject is carried from column to column) is included only on the first of the four columns of each page, sometimes makes it difficult to find the desired entry in the Index. This problem is amply illustrated by perusal of the several pages of references to the Cactaceae.

Ida Langman, the institutions and grantors which supported her work, and the University of Pennsylvania Press deserve our thanks and congratulations for bringing this work to fruition. It is a "must" for all libraries having any interest in Mexico, as well as for all people concerned with any aspect of the plants of the area. Anyone using the volume should first turn to p. 9 and lighten his day by reading "Random Thoughts on Bibliographies."—ANNETTA CARTER, Department of Botany, University of California, Berkeley.

## Book Reviews

A SELECTED GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE ON THE FLOWERING PLANTS OF MEXICO. By Ida Kaplan Langman. A Morris Arboretum Monograph. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia. 1964. 1015 p. \$25.00.

When a reviewer is confronted by a volume of this size, he is inevitably reminded that a few statistics may help him answer those all-important questions: Does the book have substance? Would I want it for my own library? Mrs. Langman does not say, as far as I can see, just how many titles are included in her bibliography, but the body of the text occupies almost 800 pages. Random counts indicate that there are usually about 25 references on a two-column page, so we arrive at once at a figure of about 20,000 articles listed in the entire work. It is stated in the introduction that compilation was begun in 1946 and the manuscript completed in 1962. This is a far cry from Nicolás León's *Biblioteca Botánico-Mexicana*, which has been up to the present the most generally useful and available bibliography in the field of Mexican botany. León's little book was completed in two and one-half months, and listed the works of 866 authors.

As another statistic it may be noted that on pages 33-61 are listed the journals cited or examined in the preparation of the *Guide*. Sample counts indicate that between 2250 and 2400 journals are listed. In the list are not only the expected botanical periodicals, and those more general ones devoted to natural history, but also a wide selection of suggestive and intriguing titles like *Parfums de France*; *Mercurio Volante* (Mexico, 1772-73); *Modern Philology* (Univ. of Chicago, 1903); *Vegetarian News* (London, 1921); and *Tribuna Israelita* (Mexico, 1944). Scanning these lists of titles, one suspects that the coverage of the *Guide* may be broad rather than narrow; this is indeed the case.

Not the least impressive part of the book is the index, which occupies pages 859-1015, and is set up in a four-column format. More of the index anon; it seems a good sign, however, that in a reference book of this kind the index occupies almost one-fifth as many pages as the body of the text, even though it is printed in small type and a condensed format.

It is clear that the book has its good and bad features. As the bad ones are so immediately obvious to the user, it may be well to mention them first. For such a large volume, the binding is poorly done; the cover on the review copy before me has already begun to tear loose from the body of the work. For such an expensive book it seems a pity to have to add the cost of a new binding before one can use the *Guide* for daily reference. Another drawback, from the user's standpoint, is the complexity of the index. Because of the many cross-references, subentries and sub-subentries, it would have been a great improvement if the editors could have managed to insert a guide word at the head of each of the four columns on each page, not merely at the head of the left-hand column. It is disconcerting, for example, in the SU-SY part of the alphabet, to find the entry "pre-Linnaean works" at the head of the third column. Looking back to the preceding column, one finds this is a part of the subentry "Mexico, plants of, in pre-Linnaean works," and this in turn goes back to "Systematic works, pre-Linnaean," which is in the proper place in the alphabetic sequence. The third-column heading "Systematic works — continued" would at once have resolved the difficulty for the user, made clear to him his place in the alphabet, and saved him the time of retracing his steps to the main entry before he could intelligently interpret the subordinate entries.

Individual words, especially names of genera, are hard to find quickly in the index. It is often quickest to turn the pages to an entry alphabetically later than the desired one, then turn back to find the latter. For example, to

find the genus *Persea*, we encounter first a cross-reference to the family Lauraceae. On page 935 the left-hand column is headed "Labiatae—continued." Quickly turning the page, past the right-hand column headed "GUTIERREZ HIDALGO, E.," we find the first entry on page 936, "Lauraceae—continued" and then as a subentry, "Phoebe . . . ." We turn back, to find that the entire fourth column, and a part of the third on p. 935, are devoted to *Persea*. Part of the difficulty stems from the fact that although the subordinate entries are indented, they are not differentiated typographically from the main entries, and when an entire column is devoted to subentries the eye cannot detect the slight indentation that identifies it. Aside from these mechanical difficulties I have nothing but praise for the index: I am sure that casual browsing in its pages will be as worthwhile for the user of the *Guide* as any browsing in the body of the work. Looking under "naranja" for example, the Spanish word for orange tree, we are referred to *Citrus aurantium*. This duly located in its proper place under Rutaceae, we find an astonishing selection of works on the orange, including some 25 on the culture of the tree alone. Indeed I think it likely that one of the most interesting features of the *Guide* will prove to be in its coverage of areas allied to botany but not really botany *per se*. Under "travel works," for example, the reader is referred to more than 75 individual authors of such works, and also to descriptive regional accounts, e.g., to "Mexico, travel account," which last entry occupies more than half a page of the index and includes cross-references to hundreds of titles. There are extensive lists of works on medicinal plants, fish poisons, and other plants of economical importance; there are many geographical works; and works on botanical collectors; there is an astonishingly large number of vocabularies of native languages.

This leads me naturally to the question of just what all is included in the *Guide*. As Mrs. Langman says in her introduction, her first intention was to put the emphasis on literature dealing with identification, classification and distribution of plants in Mexico. I think it fair to say that even after many additions, the final emphasis is not very different. The work will be of major importance to every taxonomist and plant-geographer who has even a remote interest in tropical American plants. The compiler has included not only books and papers dealing primarily with Mexico, but also all similar papers mentioning even a single Mexican plant among many others. This means in effect that the *Selected Guide* will be invaluable as a ready work of reference to most of the important taxonomic work on American plants. Most of the early work on the family Campanulaceae, for example, was done in Europe, and dealt with Mexican plants to a small extent only. Listed in the *Guide*, however, are A. DeCandolle's *Monographie des Campanulites* (1830), included because it mentions one genus, *Specularia*, from Mexico; Presl's (1836) *Prodromus monographiae Lobeliacearum*; and more recent general works like those of Wimmer. In some plant-families coverage is good because of the inclusion of many general papers by prolific authors; more than 60 papers by H. N. Moldenk are listed, for example, but not a single one of these mentions Mexico or Mexican plants in its title. Often papers are listed in the *Guide* because they deal with plants of Mexican origin, or plants that might be of interest to Mexicophiles; "if [the compiler] felt the material might be of use to someone interested in any of the varied aspects of Mexican plant life, it was included." As a result of this liberal policy we find a treatment of the genus *Penstemon* in New Mexico (Nubet & Jackson, 1960); a USDA farm bulletin on cassava (S. M. Tracy, 1903), and an article by Nemeč (1935) stating that maize plants raised in west Slovakia showed recovery of .001 gr. of gold from a kilo of kernels.

Perhaps the most valuable feature of the *Guide* — aside from the fact of having such a bibliography in the first place — lies in the capsule comments by the compiler that accompany each entry. A bibliography listing titles and page numbers is a useful index to literature, but the same list of entries fortified by intelligent descriptions, comments and digests, becomes in one great step an indispensable work of reference; I think the word *Guide* is a most appropriate one. Obviously the work of the compiler was increased manifold by the inclusion of this original material; not only was it necessary for her to read (or skim) each item, but to extract from it the botanical meat, if any. For example, an article by Kerber, entitled merely "Ein Ausflug in Mejiico," is explained: "Trip from Colima to San Antonio with a considerable number of references to plants, by common and scientific names"; a paper by La Llave, entitled "Sobre el huaco," is said to pertain to four new species of *Mikania*, and a translation by B. Seemann, with comments by Seemann and by Hooker, is noted. Of Link's "Abietinae Horti Regii Botanici Berolinensis cultae," the *Guide* says merely "Mexican plants are included," but for other items more extensive comments, sometimes running to two or three paragraphs, are frequent. Especially valuable are the comments on manuscript materials, and on the early *relaciones* describing colonial Mexico. Almost equally valuable are the translations of Spanish and other vernacular names used in the titles of articles. Users of the *Guide* who have special interests in pure or applied botany will find that a significant part of the work of selection and sorting has already been done for them.

Certainly Mrs. Langman's book should be on the shelf of everyone seriously interested in the plants of tropical America. As to its completeness and accuracy — two essentials of any bibliography and especially such a pretentious one as this — one can do no more than sample and browse. After several days I have not thought of any additional items that might have been included. Doubtless any specialist can find some obscure publication that was overlooked, but it is evident that the coverage in the *Guide* is very good indeed. This of course is especially true in taxonomy and the related disciplines, and most especially for the holdings of Mexican libraries, many of which possess unique or nearly unique theses and other published or manuscript materials that were never widely circulated.

There are inevitably minor errors in citation and in fact, and typographical slips, perhaps introduced in the Chinese manner to feed the vanity of reviewers, but the errors and omissions scarcely detract from a book that will provide invaluable aid as a general reference work for a long time to come. — ROGERS McVAUGH, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

& 1201. 1949; Moldenke, *Phytologia* 3: 291. 1950; E. J. Salieb., *Ind. Kew. Suppl.* 11: 138. 1953; Moldenke, *Résumé* 133, 135, 136, & 461. 1959.

Herbaceous (?); branches very slender, stramineous, subterete, striate, rather obscurely strigillose; nodes annulate; principal internodes elongate, 5-13 cm. long; leaves ternate or in 4's.

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BOOK REVIEW

Alma L. Moldenke

"A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico", by Ida Kaplan Langman, 1015 pp. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1964. \$25.00

Back in 1948, when my husband and I were visiting Mexico's Instituto de Biología, we first met Mrs. Langman as she was industriously starting this useful bibliographic contribution to botanical literature. The idea for this work started its gestation in 1941 when Mrs. Langman first visited Mexico and turned to the libraries there for reference material about its plant life. She has been working diligently ever since in the leading libraries of Mexico and the United States, and so has been able to produce this magnificent compilation of the literature on Mexican flowering plants, their description, their taxonomy, their phytogeography, their economic importance, their mention in books of travel, their indigenous names in various local languages, and their role in the history of botany — surveying a tremendous field of printed and manuscript information over a long period of time.

We have pointed out a few errors to the author, and she has directed our attention to a few more. They seem virtually impossible to avoid in a work encompassing so many details from so many different sources. Since the publisher has offered to print a list of errata soon for distribution with the book there is no point in listing them here. I use the word "author" advisedly because this book is much more than a mere compilation; there are thousands of succinct, valuable comments on the inclusions.

Both reading and hunting in this work are easy because the print is clear and of a suitable size and format. The index alone covers 157 pages of four columns each.

So many present and future botanists and other researchers referring to this book will be ever so much in the author's debt because of all the sources made so readily available here, all the new vistas opened, and all the time subsequently saved.

The University of Pennsylvania Press is to be congratulated upon choosing to make this work available to readers, and the author for her persevering dedication.

May 1965

## MEXICAN BOTANICAL LITERATURE

LANGMAN, IDA KAPLAN — *A selected guide to the literature on the flowering plants of Mexico*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press s.d., 3729 Spruce street, Philadelphia Pa. 19104. 1015 pages, published December 1964, quarto, cloth. Price US \$ 25.-.

Now that Mrs Langman's book is before us, it is clear why there were "long periods when it looked as if this work might never obtain a publisher" (p. 9). The sheer size of the work is staggering. It is sufficient to say that in the course of its preparation Mrs Langman (in my estimate) consulted many thousands of books and pamphlets, as well as about 2300 journals or other serial publications, resulting in a "guide to the literature" which contains over 20,000 entries. When one is not primarily interested in Mexican botany, one may be amazed at first sight by this number. After all, this is a "selected" guide to the literature on the flowering plants of Mexico only. Coverage is most complete in taxonomy and plant-geography, as well as in botanical books and articles published in Mexico itself. A great many items on horticulture, agriculture, forestry, medical uses of plants, folklore and linguistics are included. The most important aspect of this bibliography is, however, that it was prepared with the needs of scientific botany in mind. Mrs Langman did not include simply all publications coming from Mexico itself and those from outside Mexico showing the Mexican element in the title; she has also taken great care to include — especially for plant taxonomy — all those general works that have a bearing on Mexican botany. Monographs, revisions, articles or books on Mexican plants cultivated abroad, glossaries, vocabularies and indexes are all treated if there is a link with Mexican botany. For the great majority of entries a short abstract is provided outlining the main contents of the work and its relevance to botany in Mexico.

In her introduction the author very cleverly disarms all critics by referring to a detailed series of mottos presented as "Random thoughts on bibliographies". Among these thoughts there are some very intriguing ones. Most well-known is perhaps the reflection on the rôle of typographical errors which are said to have been made intentionally by Chinese printers in order to provide the discerning reader with a feeling of superiority. Very attractive also is Lawrence Clark Powell's dictum that "Every wise man knows that reference

books are the best of all books for desert island reading, whether that island be San Juan Fernández or Manhattan". I found Powell's remark to be very appropriate for this bibliography. The desert island reading that I did on this book not only provided me with the great satisfaction of seeing what my friends had written on Mexican botany, but with its broad approach the book comes very near to giving a very representative picture of European and American botany. It is astonishing to see how many authors have in one way or another dealt with Mexican flowering plants.

In her notes to the entries Mrs Langman often refers to commentaries on the relevant publication, to reprints, abstracts and translations. The cross-indexing has been done with care, not only to the main entries themselves and to the commentaries and notes, but also to the various ways in which the sometimes rather intricate Latin American names can be listed.

The random thoughts on bibliographies do not allow me to make any remarks on typographical errors: nobody will expect that it is possible to escape from them in a work like this, and the author will perhaps not have made them intentionally after all. A slightly disturbing typographical practice is the decapitalization of German nouns.

Completeness cannot be achieved and is also excluded by the word "selected" in the title. It must be said, however, that within the field as outlined above, the completeness is remarkable. Apart from a certain incompleteness in the listing of various editions of pre-Linnaean works (which may after all be a question of policy), it is difficult to find obvious gaps. This is a great compliment to the thoroughness with which Mrs Langman has combed the literature. On the whole the coverage of the literature from Germany, Scandinavia and Holland is perhaps somewhat less thorough than the rest. This may be due also to language difficulties, for this is the area where the "Chinese" printer has been most active in providing food for the critic.

The index to the work is an achievement by itself. Suffice it to say that it consists of 70,000 lines and that consultation shows it to be very reliable and extremely useful.

One of the main results of the compilatory work done by Mrs Langman is that the study of the history of botany and of botanists in Mexico will be greatly facilitated by this

work. However, not only will the historian of botany benefit: all taxonomists working on Mexican plants will. Maybe the rather exceptional situation that the country now has a good botanical bibliography before it has a general flora will stimulate the speedy preparation of a modern flora of Mexico. The book also shows clearly how enormous the botanical literature on a relatively small area can be, and with what kind of information-retrieval problems a botanist can be confronted. At least one other regional botanical bibliography has appeared in the last few years which has missed completely the point Mrs Langman saw so clearly: that the publications of the botany of one particular country are spread through the whole of scientific literature, and that it is an enormous undertaking to bring them together. Mrs Langman has done just this, and everybody working on the botany of the Americas will be glad with her that her outside bibliography has found a publisher. The book will be extremely useful. F. A. S.

#### THE ORIGIN OF ADAPTATIONS

VERNE GRANT — *The origin of adaptations*, Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1963, cloth, 606 pp., 102 figures. Price \$ 12.50.

It may seem to be pretentious of an author of a textbook published more than hundred years after Darwin when thousands of papers have discussed all phases of the laws of evolution, to write a book on evolution as a whole, including also modern explanations of all kinds of adaptations of all kinds of organisms. Despite of the difficulty to grasp all the wide field such a venture requires, Professor Grant has succeeded in writing a text that is likely to affect the thinking in this field for decades to come and also to be regarded by students as one of the most informative texts on the subject ever written. This is also just what could be expected of the author, who is known as one of the best contributors to biosystematic theory. The book is written with the same clarity as has made his many scientific papers so widely appreciated, at the same time as it is literally packed with facts on plant and animal evolution not easily available to many readers.

If one were to be fair to this remarkable text, several pages would hardly suffice to summarize its major parts. These are titled Introduction, Organisms and environment, Evolution within populations, Evolution of species, and Evolution of major groups. Each

of these chapters is subdivided to make it possible to discuss the various aspects the author wants to evaluate, and a reasonably good bibliography and sufficient author and subject indices conclude the work.

Naturally, a good deal of controversial discussions are included in the book, but they are all at such a level that they stimulate more critical thinking about subjects one may long have taken for granted. Personally, I appreciated especially the reading of the chapters on mutations and selection, but also on population systems and isolation mechanisms, although I do feel that the author has included among the latter some mechanisms that are of doubtful significance for speciation. It would have added to the clarity to discuss the internal isolation mechanisms separately because they are likely to affect what I would like to call speciation *sensu stricto*. After this spatial and other isolations could have been discussed which certainly affect subspeciation but of which the effect on speciation seems to have been highly overrated since Darwin. But I may be mistaken. It is probably also caused by my predilection for polyploidy that I feel that this subject has been stemptootherly treated. However, the author has a good excuse in the circumstance that other equally important subjects have had to be treated shortly for the simple reason that 600 pages do not allow longer discussions.

Although the book discusses all kinds of biota, from microorganisms to man, many of its best examples are from the plant kingdom, the field of the author. It is a book for all students of advanced biology, a treasure chest for graduate students, and just the volume many taxonomists and most biosystematists have been waiting for, although it is not a textbook of biosystematics.

Many good volumes on evolution have recently been published, some of them excellent. I am, however, convinced, that even their authors agree that Verne Grant has succeeded in writing a text that none of these fine volumes can cast a shadow upon. It is an unusual accomplishment for which biologists of all leanings have all reasons to be grateful.

ÅSKELL LÖVE

#### LINEAGICS

HAMILTON P. TRAUB — *Lineagics*, The American Plant Life Society, La Jolla, California, 1964, paperback 183 pp. Price \$ 5.00 postpaid.

Of the many books on taxonomy which have been published in recent years, this small one

## Book Review

A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico. Ida K. Langman. 1015 pp. Univ. of Pennsylvania Press. A Morris Arboretum Monograph. 1964. \$25.00.

From time to time over the last several years mention has been made in these pages of a Bibliography of the Mexican Flora which was in preparation and which, when published, would appear as a Morris Arboretum Monograph. That day has now dawned and Mrs. Ida K. Langman's thousand page volume is at last in our hands. It is beautifully bound and printed with a highly evocative dust jacket, incredibly light for its thickness (nearly three inches), impressive in its coverage of a vast literature and extremely easy to use if one will take the trouble to follow the ground rules which the author has provided.

Stimulated by a visit to Mexico in 1940, Ida Langman became interested in the rich flora of that fascinating country and soon realized that there existed no adequate guide to its extensive botanical literature. Thus began a search which has consumed a quarter of a century, has entailed many trips to Mexico, has required visits to countless libraries, and has culminated in the present volume with its 20,000 entries, its list of journal titles and its highly useful subject index.

It may perhaps be expected that in a work so monumental certain errors and omissions will

be detected. The author seems to have anticipated this, for in an introductory section entitled "Random Thoughts on Bibliographies" she has practically disarmed her critics by citing a number of comments by and about bibliographers. The words of the late W. L. Jepson merit quotation here: "It's to be sure," he wrote, "disconcerting enough to have such errors, but after all the main thing is, has the book got matter in it? Is it meaty? Not is it faultless. A faultless book is impossible."

Mrs. Langman's book is so replete with matter that one can only marvel at the prodigious industry and attention to detail which its preparation involved. Its coverage is broad and includes not only taxonomic and phytogeographic literature, but works in such related fields as the history of botany in Mexico, botanical exploration, and the economic uses of plants in agriculture, horticulture, medicine, pharmacology and industry. Also included are vocabularies of indigenous languages spoken in Mexico which contain references to plant names. The volume is thus one which should be not only in every botanical library in Mexico but in every institution which is concerned with the problems relating to plant-life in the temperate and tropical regions of the New World.

J. M. F., Jr.

Page 6

Morris Arboretum Bulletin  
March 1965

## MEXICAN BOTANICAL LITERATURE

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A Selected Guide to the Literature on the  
Flowering Plants of Mexico

By IDA KAPLAN LANGMAN

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### A Selected Guide to the Literature on the Flowering Plants of Mexico

By *Ida Kaplan Langman*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 1015 pages. \$25.

A tremendous amount of work by a dedicated bibliographer has produced this massive, impressive, and valuable book at a most opportune time. As more and more botanists follow their research interests south of the Rio Grande across artificial political boundaries, they often soon encounter a boundary—no, a barrier—that slows further progress to a discouraging pace. This barrier is the "resources barrier," and it is automatically reached in taxonomic work when the search for an appropriate monograph, article, or other reference takes twice as long as does the identification once the reference is discovered.

With this excellent annotated bibliography, containing some 22,000 rather thoroughly cross-indexed references, the identification and classification of Mexican plants will be a much quicker and more enjoyable task. And through proper use of the various cross listings in the index, the *Guide* also functions as an interesting source of information on the history, agriculture, ethnobotany, drug plants, Indians, plant collectors, and botanists of Mexico. In the 28 pages of "Journal Titles Cited" are given the full title of each periodical and a valuable note as to where some of the more obscure of these publications may be found.

From an *Errata* sheet (kindly supplied by the author) and from my personal perusal of the book, it seems to be about 99% perfect. Although an

occasional typographical error in a date (such as "1950" for "1960") may cause a temporary question in the mind of a research worker, other "errors" are only relative. Considering the problems of transliteration and of orthographic variants involved with many Aztec and Mexican common names, the change of "Citzotzel" to "ci-tzotzil" (on page 894, in the index) and the change from "Amarillo" to "Amarilla" (on page 864, in the index) are certainly of no consequence except to those who seek perfection, over utility, for perfection's sake alone.

More books such as this, that add significantly to our research resources on tropical botany, are sorely needed. Perhaps now that the way has been shown others may follow.

—C. RITCHIE BELL  
Department of Botany  
University of North Carolina

### The World of the Raccoon

By *Leonard Lee Rue III*. J. B. Lippincott Co., East Washington Sq., Philadelphia, Pa. 19105. \$4.95.

The natural history books of Philadelphia's respected publishing house of Lippincott are consistently superior. Its "Living World Books," which pass through the hands of editor John K. Terres, currently reveal the high standards. Joseph Wharton Lippincott, former company president, is a naturalist of repute and the author of a number of animal stories that endure. He is a member of the Academy and a patron of the Philadelphia Zoo. He has written for *Frontiers* and has contributed specimens to the Museum, notably tree snails.

*The World of the Raccoon* is the latest addition to

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LANGMAN, IDA KAPLAN. / A selected guide to the literature on the flowering plants of Mexico. / 1015 p. University of Pennsylvania Press. 1964. <sup>Pr.</sup> \$25.--

This is a guide to literature dealing primarily with the identification, classification, and distribution of flowering plants (including gymnosperms) in Mexico. References have also been included for many related fields: the history of botany in Mexico (including biographical material of many who have made contributions to the subject); travel and descriptive works; vocabularies of indigenous Mexican languages which list plant names; and works on the economic importance of the plants - in agriculture, horticulture, ethnobotany, medicine, pharmacology, and industry. The period covered begins with the discovery, conquest, and exploration of Mexico and continues into the 1960's. Full coverage (almost impossible to achieve in any case) was the goal only through the early 1950's. Coverage after that is admittedly spotty. The work contains over 20,000 entries, a list of the libraries used in preparation of the guide, a list of the bibliographic works consulted, and a lengthy and detailed subject index. The bibliographic entries themselves are cited in alphabetical arrangement, according to the name of the author, and chronologically after that. I. K. Langman.

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(Please type or print your name at the end of the abstract)

The author, like many botanists, <sup>who</sup> had the opportunity to collect plants in Mexico ~~and~~, on attempting to identify them, found herself seriously hindered by the lack of a comprehensive flora. But she drew a positive conclusion from this and set about preparing the necessary compilation of the literature. In 24 years, she completed the work and this alone, ~~for its~~ <sup>care</sup> ~~value~~, <sup>has</sup> commands attention. Beyond the original goal of covering systematic and floristic works, also included were works on anatomy, embryology, cytology, genetics, useful plants, native plant names, exploration and travel, etc.

The work is arranged in the practical manner for which works from the U. S. A. are often admired. On the technical decisions, which the author must make, an explanation is given in the introduction. Her guiding thought was always the usefulness for the botanist. Some partly facetious remarks of other bibliographers precede the historical introduction. The objective advantage of the work rests on the short statements <sup>about</sup> the contents of the works (cited). The author has, with technical knowledge, ~~herself gone through~~ everything available. But she has <sup>made</sup> ~~made~~ the <sup>work</sup> ~~work~~ <sup>even</sup> ~~even~~ <sup>farther</sup>: ~~the~~ enumeration, alphabetically by authors, supplements in 156 quarto pages in fine print, a subject index modestly designated an index, which contains the botanical and native plant names, place and personal names and subject cue words from the various fields of botany.

*examined  
usefulness even  
greater*

I believe that no user of the work will have any basis for using a sentence from the preliminary remarks: "The specialist tends rather to criticize than to praise", but rather will be generally ~~be~~ received with appreciation.

Langmann, Ida Kaplan: A selected guide to the literature on the flowering plants of Mexico. — Philadelphia (Univ. Pennsylvania Press) 1964. 1015. S. 4<sup>o</sup>. Preis 25 \$.

Der Verfasserin ist es gegangen wie vielen Botanikern, die in Mexiko Pflanzen sammeln und bei dem Versuch, sie zu bestimmen, durch das Fehlen einer zusammenfassenden Flora empfindlich behindert wurden. Sie hat daraus aber eine positive Folgerung gezogen und die notwendige Zusammenstellung der Literatur in Angriff genommen. In 24 Jahren hat sie dieses Werk vollendet, das allein schon durch seinen Umfang Achtung gebietet. Über das ursprüngliche Ziel hinaus sind außer systematischen und floristischen Arbeiten auch solche über Anatomie, Embryologie, Zytologie, Genetik, über Nutzpflanzen, einheimische Pflanzennamen, Forschungsreisen u. a. aufgenommen worden.

Das Werk ist in der praktischen Weise angelegt, die man oft an Arbeiten aus den USA bewundert. Über die technischen Entscheidungen, die die Verfasserin dabei treffen mußte, legt sie in der Einleitung Rechenschaft ab. Ihr leitender Gedanke war dabei immer die Benutzbarkeit für Botaniker. Einige zum Teil scherzhafte Bemerkungen anderer Bibliographen werden der historischen Einleitung vorangestellt.

Der sachliche Vorzug des Werkes besteht in den kurzen Angaben über den Inhalt der Arbeiten. Die Verfasserin hat mit Fachkenntnis alles Erreichbare selbst durchgesehen. Sie hat die Auswertung aber noch weiter getrieben: die Aufzählung, alphabetisch nach Autoren, ergänzt auf 156 Seiten Quart in Kleindruck ein bescheidenes als Index bezeichnetes Sachregister, das botanische und einheimische Pflanzennamen, Orts- und Personennamen und sachliche Stichworte aus den verschiedenen Gebieten der Botanik enthält.

Ich glaube, daß kein Benutzer des Werkes Grund hat, einen Satz der Vorbemerkungen anzuwenden: "The specialist tends rather to criticize than to praise", sondern daß es allgemein mit Dankbarkeit aufgenommen werden wird.

Botanischer Garten → F. MARKGRAF, Zurich. 39

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