

Preface

The 7th International Symposium on Plant Life of South-West Asia (7th PLoSWA) was organised on 25-29 June 2007 at Anadolu University in Eskişehir, Turkey, jointly with the Department of Pharmacognosy of the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Flora Research Society.

The symposium was attended by 188 participants from 16 countries. Nine plenary lectures were presented by prominent scientists along with 21 oral papers and 195 posters.

Two, day-long botanical excursions were organised to two different regions of Eskişehir, namely, Çatacık Forest on the Sündiken Range to the north of Eskişehir and to the south, Türkmen Mountains. During the latter, the tomb of Seyit Battal Gazi, an ancient hero, in Seyitgazi and the ancient city of the Phrygian king Midas, Yazılıkaya, were visited. The excursions gave an opportunity to the participants to appreciate the rich and diverse flora together with the cultural and historical richness of Eskişehir.

An attractive photographic exhibition of the Flowers of Eskişehir was presented by Doç. Dr. Atila Ocak of Osmaniye University. Another unique exhibition comprised hand drawings of plants by Ms. Gülnur Ekşi, Ms. Hülya Korkmaz, and Ms. Işık Güner of the Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanic Garden in İstanbul.

The 7th PLoSWA will be remembered by a memorable event. Prof. Dr. Asuman Baytop, retired from İstanbul University Faculty of Pharmacy, was awarded the Flora of Turkey Medal in Gold. The medal minted in the State Mints (Darphane) contained a nickel part that had been extracted from *Alyssum corsicum*.

The first PLoSWA symposium was organised in 1970 in Edinburgh on the occasion of the tercentenary of the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh. The second symposium was held in 1985, also in Edinburgh. Subsequently, PLoSWA was organised in 1990 in Berlin, in 1995 in İzmir, in 1998 in Tashkent, and finally the 6th PLoSWA was held in 2002 in Van.

PLoSWA series of symposia constitute the most important forum on the flora of our region. Every 5 years, botanists and plant scientists from the countries of South-West Asia present their most recent results and discuss common problems. It gives a golden opportunity to young scientists to meet prominent scientists who continuously contribute to the floras of our region.

We take this opportunity to thank Prof. Dr. Fevzi Sürmeli, the Rector of Anadolu University, members of the Local and International Organising Committees, members of the Scientific Committee for their kind support in the successful organisation of the symposium, and all the participants and contributors for their valuable contributions as oral papers and posters.

This special issue of the Turkish Journal of Botany is devoted to the plenary lectures presented at the symposium.

The 8th PLoSWA will be held again in its birth place Edinburgh in 2012.

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