

The next CITES Cactaceae Checklist and other collaborative projects

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It is 25 years since the IOS Cactaceae Working Party, later known as the International Cactaceae Systematics Group, first convened at the 18th IOS Congress at the Palmengarten, Frankfurt, in June 1984. Three years later, when the Working Party held a meeting at the IOS Inter-Congress meeting in California, it was attended by Dr Bruce MacBryde (US Department of Agriculture Fish & Wildlife Service). He was officially involved in the implementation of the CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and suggested that IOS should be contracted to produce a much needed Checklist of the family for the use of the CITES authorities internationally. With USDA and Kew support, this was eventually agreed, and with the help of numerous advisers and collaborators, I compiled the first edition of the checklist, published in 1992. It was followed by a second edition in 1999 and the CITES Plants Committee has now asked me to do a third edition for publication in 2010.

I have been asked to follow the generic classification adopted in the New Cactus Lexicon (NCL) so the re-classification of the opuntoids will be the main change from the previous edition. Additions and amendments to the species-list for individual genera will however be possible and I shall be circulating the draft lists and the lists by country for review by those on the updated list of advisers.

NCL Supplement. As earlier mentioned by Dr Lowry, the preparation of a supplemental volume to NCL is also under way. It is planned to include distribution maps of all genera, revised treatments of some genera, identification keys and more illustrations. Potential changes to the generic classification will be discussed, mainly on the basis of the various molecular studies that have been made or become available since the classification adopted in NCL was agreed about five years ago.

Phylogeny of the Andean Opuntioideae. Various relevant taxa were not available to Wallace & Dickie when they did their pioneer cpDNA study of the Opuntioideae a decade and more ago, and several of us have been hoping a more comprehensive survey would help to clarify their inter-relationships. Earlier this year I asked Dr Christiane Ritz if she would be interested to take on this study. Since then a new paper by Griffith & Porter has been published covering some of the taxa we had in mind and providing more molecular evidence, but it omits several of the relevant taxa and some of the results raise doubts about the sources and identification of their material. At a meeting here with Dr Ritz yesterday evening, agreement in principle was reached to proceed with our original plans.

'Ritter in Colour'. The fourth and final collaborative project to be mentioned takes us back to Friedrich Ritter and could be described as a continuation of the so-called 'Ritter project' that IOS helped to initiate 20 years ago, resulting in the invaluable catalogue of his collections researched and compiled by Urs Egli and Beat Leuenberger. An extensive set of Ritter's colour photos, which are believed to include the originals of many of the pictures in his magnum opus *Kakteen in Südamerika*, came into the possession of Mr K.W. Beisel when he acquired the library and slide collection of the late Mrs Else Gödde shortly before she died. Mr Beisel has entrusted these slides to me with a view to getting them scanned for possible publication, since they are mostly of good quality and much more informative in colour than in black and white. Paul Hoxey and I hope to complete the scanning by the end of this year.