

A report on the IOPB 1983 Conference held 17-21 July in Montreal

More than 100 scientists from 17 countries met to hear and discuss 40 papers presented as part of the Symposium "Plant Biosystematics: 40 years later" sponsored by the International Organization of Plant Biosystematics. All aspects of modern biosystematics were covered with papers dealing with both historical perspectives and the most recent advances in techniques being presented. All the papers will be published in a book edited by the Chairman of the IOPB executive council Dr. William Grant, who expects the volume to be available by early 1984. The quality of the papers presented was high and the book will be a "must" for all plant biosystematists. Perhaps, most significant (to this cytotaxonomist at least) were the papers dealing with chromosome pairing and evolution of the karyotype. The data indicated that some review of well established ideas about homology must be undertaken. Overall, a combination of techniques and collaboration among several specialists were suggested as the coming necessity in order to solve difficult biosystematic problems. Traditional topics, such as the definition of the term "species", also were considered and these generated some lively debate.

The conference was held on the campus of McGill University and included a tour of the Jardin Botanique de Montreal. Both institutions did an excellent job in providing a suitable setting in which to discuss some very difficult questions.

During the meetings the IOPB council met and determined that it was necessary for the organization to function independently of its parent organization the International Association of Plant Taxonomists. IOPB will maintain its own membership list and will begin publishing a newsletter in the near future. Council member Dr. Krytyna Urbanska will edit the newsletter (Goebtanisches Institut, E.T.H., Zurichbergstrasse, CH-8044, Zurich, Switzerland). It was pointed out to all participants of the conference that technically no one was a member of IOPB and that everyone should request a registration form from Dr. Liv Borgen the secretary/treasurer of the IOPB council (Botanical Garden and Museum, University of Oslo, Trondheimsvn. 23B, Oslo 5, Norway). A membership fee of \$25 US was set to cover newsletter costs, which is a bargain since membership is for the five or more year period from one International Botanical Congress to the next. Dr. Urbanska has offered to host the next IOPB Conference to be held in Zurich in 1987 shortly before or after the International Botanical Congress meets in Berlin. Begin saving for the trip now, since it will be well worth the expense!

All who helped prepare and run the Montreal IOPB 1983 Conference are to be congratulated for a job well done.

John C. Semple,
Member of IOPB Council
University of Waterloo