

Chytrý, M. [Ed.] (2007): Vegetace České republiky. 1. Travinná a keříčková vegetace [Vegetation of the Czech Republic. 1. Grassland and Heathland Vegetation. In Czech, with English summaries.]

528 pp., Academia, Praha. ISBN 978-80-200-1462-7. 550 CZK.

The monograph presents the modern classification of vegetation of the Czech Republic. The set of 21,794 relevés available in the Czech National Phytosociological Database was used to generate sociological species groups with the Cocktail method. Sociological groups and dominances of selected species were used to generate definitions of associations. Then the associations were grouped into alliances and classes on the basis of the subjective evaluation of their mutual similarity, following the Central European phytosociological tradition. The nomenclature of communities adheres to the rules implemented in the International Code of Phytosociological Nomenclature by Weber et al. (2000). Species composition of associations was compared in synoptic tables, which contain the percentage frequency of the occurrence of species in relevés.

The book is divided into several chapters. The first chapter contains the main facts from the history of the Czech phytosociological studies in the period from 1922 to 2005, the technical procedure of defining vegetation units and practical application of the present system of vegetation. This part of the book is written in Czech and English and contains a bilingual glossary of basic key words, which makes this monograph accessible for people not fluent in Czech.

The next part of the book describes the diversity of vegetation in Czech Republic, its determinants and history and contains some maps with the basic geological formations, mean annual temperature, phytogeographical regions and main potential natural vegetation types. The major part of the book (406 pp., 12 chapters) presents descriptions of 12 classes and 111 associations. They are presented in the following order: alpine heathlands, alpine grasslands on base-poor soils and base-rich soils, subalpine tall-forb and deciduous-shrub vegetation, vegetation of annual graminoids in saline habitats, vegetation of annual succulent halophytes, saline grasslands, meadows and mesic pastures, nardus grasslands and heathlands, pioneer vegetation of sandy and shallow soils, sandy steppes and dry grasslands. Also contained in this part of the book are the synoptic tables for all classes. The description of each association includes diagnostic species, habitats, dynamics, distribution, variants, economic importance and endangerment, and is finished with an English summary. Those descriptions

are enriched with maps showing the distribution of the associations as well as pictures of the phytocoenoses.

The strongest point of this monograph is the complete and critical way in which the plant associations are shown. It documents the advances in the knowledge about grassland vegetation diversity in Czech Republic and contains contributions by many accomplished botanists. That is why this work is a valuable and practical tool for the identification of plant communities across Czech Republic. It can also be a source of knowledge for researchers from other regions. Thanks to the contained phytosociological tables and detailed introductions and summaries of the informations concerning each of the associations written in English, this book can be helpful even to a reader with no knowledge of the Czech language. The last thing I would like to bring attention to is the the book's interesting graphic design and the very logical way it was edited.

References

Weber, H. E., Moravec, J., Theurillat, J.-P. (2000): International Code of Phytosociological Nomenclature. 3rd edition. – J. Veg. Sci. 11: 739–768, Uppsala.

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