

Stefan Stanev & Petur Zhelev. 2006.
Boris Stefanov – Biobibliography

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The book is devoted to Academician Boris Stefanov (1894–1979), one of the most eminent Bulgarian botanists. He started his scientific carrier in 1921, as herbarium curator at the Botany Department of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the Sofia University and soon expressed his formidable scientific capacity. In 1924–1925 Stefanov specialized at some leading botanical research centers in Europe: the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin-Dahlem, Vienna University, and Natural History Museum in Vienna. This left a positive and profound imprint on his further scientific work. Together with N. Stojanov, he wrote the first Bulgarian Flora prepared by Bulgarian authors and the first one comprising identification keys for all wild-growing vascular plants known for the country at that time. He was among the pioneers who laid down the foundations of forestry in Bulgaria, wrote several university textbooks and taught several generations of foresters. He was the first Rector of the Forestry University and Director of the Institute of Botany at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. His inexhaustible energy and passion for plants and scientific work left a deep trace in science. As author, or co-author, he wrote 263 scientific and popular works (amounting to about 15900 pages!) in the field of floristics and taxonomy, phytocoenology, phytogeography and plant ecology, plant morphology and anatomy, forestry, paleobotany and applied botany!

The book dedicated to Boris Stefanov is written with deep deference for him and his heritage and makes a good reading. It comprises 3 major chapters.

The authors have devoted the first chapter to the life and work of Boris Stefanov and to assessment of his achievements in the fields of botany and forestry. They present many little-known and intriguing facts



about B. Stefanov's career, mostly extracted from his personal archives and from personal meetings and conversations with him of the first author of the book. In addition to a summary of the major achievements of B. Stefanov, they explain his views on plant speciation, evolution and genesis of the Bulgarian and the Balkan floras, which greatly facilitates the reading and understanding of B. Stefanov's publications.

The second chapter comprises an annotated bibliography of Boris Stefanov. The works are divided into several groups: 1. Scientific publications; 2. Paper reviews, reports, speeches, book and conference introductions; 3. Critical paper reviews, scholarly essays; 4. University textbooks and handbooks; 5. Popular-science publications; 6. Interviews, discussions, lectures. Especially helpful are the lists of the new for science taxa described by Boris Stefanov and of the taxa reported for the first time for Bulgaria. However, one should bear in mind that not all names of taxa have been validly published and, unfortunately, the authors have not indicated this in any respect.

The third chapter comprises several indexes: Alphabetical index of B. Stefanov's publications; Thematic index of B. Stefanov's publications; Index of personal names used in the book; Index of the geographic names used in the book.

Finally, the book is provided with a list of all reference sources used for its preparation, as well as a list of the abbreviations used in it.

The first author, Prof. Stefan Stanev, is well known to Bulgarian readers from a number of books devoted to the history of botany in Bulgaria: *Prominent Bulgarian Botanists*, *History of Botanical Science in Bulgaria*, *Stars Sinking in the Mountain*, *The Green World of Plovdiv*, etc.

The book is of value to all interested in B. Stefanov's scientific heritage and in the history of botany in Bulgaria and the Balkan Peninsula, as well as to taxonomists working on a number of plant groups

(e.g. *Conifers*, *Centaurea s.l.*, *Colchicum*, *Hypericum*, *Quercus*, etc.).

Although of interest not only to Bulgarians, the book (with the exception of the lists of plant taxa and publications in English, German or French) is beyond the grasp of foreigners without command of the Bulgarian language. Therefore, it would be advisable for the authors to consider translating the most important parts of the book in English in a future edition.

Peter Veen & Ivan Raev (eds). 2006. *Virgin Forests in Bulgaria*

Royal Dutch Society for Nature Protection and Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Waters. 129 p., figs., tables, annex, photos (text in Bulgarian and English).

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The authors are Bulgarian and Dutch experts who participated in the Project PIN/MATRA (2002–2005) dealing with sustainable conservation and management of virgin forests in Bulgaria. The database of these forests is indicated on digital maps. Virgin forests are defined in the book as forest ecosystems produced by natural evolution, as well as ecosystems with partial exogenic influences of anthropogenic character that have retained their structure and the relationship between biocoenoses and the environment.

Special criteria were used for the selection and assessment of virgin forests. Such forests have been identified exclusively in mountain areas. A total of 103 356.1 ha of forest areas were considered virgin forests, or 2.9% of the afforested area of Bulgaria. Most virgin forests are distributed between 1000–1600 m a.s.l., with *Fagus sylvatica* as a predominant species, and between 2000–2400 m a.s.l. where the formation of *Pinus*

mugo (20,8%) is very well represented. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the area (in ha) of all investigated forests and virgin forests in the Bulgarian mountains and their altitudinal distribution. The status of virgin forests in Bulgaria is presented in Figure 4. A substantial part of the virgin forests lies within the boundaries of the national parks and 42.81% of them have survived because of their inclusion in strict biosphere or maintained reserves. A very important part of the book deals with the strategy for conservation of these forests in Bulgaria. The authors discuss the importance and function of virgin forests, their conservational significance for the biodiversity and especially their regulatory role for local hydrology and microclimate. Beyond doubt, this valuable book will be used by foresters and scientists interested in the practical and fundamental aspects of the future sustainable management of forests in Bulgaria.

