

Book Review

DOI: 10.21570/EDGG.PG.52.108-108

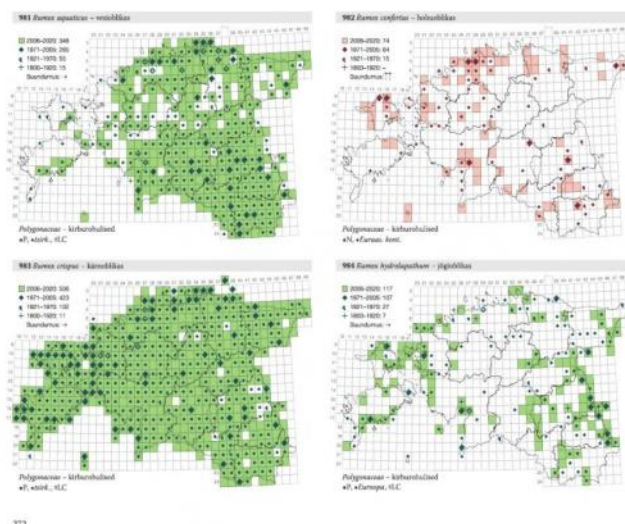
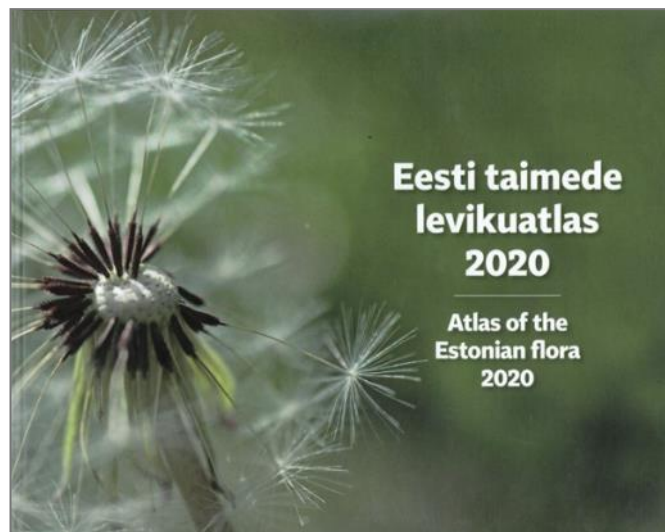
Kuuk, T., Kull, T., Luuk, O., Mesipuu, M. & Saar, P. 2020. Eesti taimede levikuatlas 2020 – Atlas of the Estonian flora 2020 – pp. 643, Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences of the Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tartu. ISBN: 978-9916-4-0258-6 (Hardback print): 47.99€

With the increasing demand on regionally collected plant trait data it became a vital request to have up-to-date plant distribution data from many regions. A very good example of providing distribution data is the very recently published atlas of the distribution data of the Estonian vascular flora. The data background of the atlas is very solid, it is based on more than 2,100,000 data points collected in the last two centuries. The most interesting feature of the atlas is that it displays four temporal “layers”. Floristic records from 2006–2020 (records accumulated from the first published distribution atlas of Estonia), 1971–2005, 1921–1970 and data from the pre-1920 period can be distinguished. Thus, some temporal patterns of species distribution including increases or decreases can be followed with the displayed distribution data. This is most valuable in the case of invasive species, where the expansion of the distribution area can be followed by this temporal patterns of records. However, it has to be noted that the last temporal period was supplied with data collected by more than 1900 amateur and professional botanists. It is also a remarkable point that during the compilation of this atlas, most collected and publicly available herbarium specimens with known and exact locations were also considered in the preparation of distribution maps.

The book is attractive and easy to use. It starts with the introduction of the general principles of data collection for the atlas, and also the source of data is properly enumerated here. After these sections there is a section with more than 400 pages, with 1664 distribution maps. The second largest section deals with brief information for each species with some additional data including habitat characteristics, population size, historical records and some ethnobotanical information e.g. on the use of edible/medical plants. It is very important to mention that the whole atlas is bilingual (all descriptions and information is available both in Estonian and English).

To sum up, the book is a very important work for those who are interested professionally or just for fun in the Estonian flora. It provides a very nice example for those groups and countries where such a work is still in progress.

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272