

RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS

feeding fresh slices of coconut petiole dipped in semipurified PIBs suspension. The treated grubs were reared individually in widemouthed glass bottles provided with untreated petioles. The behaviour of the infected grubs and the development of disease symptoms in the laboratory were similar to those observed in field. The mortality commenced from the fourth day, (with 100% mortality in 10 days) while the grubs in control emerged as adults. This is the first investigation report on a viral disease (CPV) of redpalm weevil recorded.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Observations on Medico-Botany of Andaman-Nicobar Islands. Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi. 1988. 94 pp. Rs. 58.

Vegetable drugs play a dominant role in Ayurveda and there exist numerous folk traditions of local health care in tribal as well as other rural areas. Many of these local traditional herbal remedies need to be revitalized and evaluated in the light of indigenous health sciences like Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani in order to achieve the national goal of 'Health for all by 2000 AD'.

The present publication is the outcome of two surveys conducted during 1975-80 and aims at fulfilling such an objective. The book provides an account of the herbal potential of the chain of islands, along with relevant information on the local tribes, their socio-hygenic aspects, general vegetation, and as many as 42 herbal remedies following ethnobotanical studies. Of the 306 plant species collected from the islands 223 species are reported to have medicinal properties and 141 species are found to be useful in the Ayurvedic system of medicine. The book also provides useful information on 80 Ayurvedic drugs selected out of the actual collections made by the authors and another 29 on the basis of earlier reports. The information includes

the accepted botanical source, Andaman and Nicobar source, therapeutic properties, important Ayurvedic preparations, and the major diseases in which the preparations can be used. Twenty black-and-white colour photographs of medicinal plants and tribals are provided, the production of which could have been better. Botanical names in the enumeration of Ayurvedic drugs should have been in italics or bold face. Illustrations of important medicinal plants would have added to the utility of the book. Considering the enormous biodiversity and medico-botanical potential of the islands, the study could have been much more exhaustive. Although the production and get-up of the book is satisfactory, the size and price of the book may not be liked by all users.

On the whole, the book is a successful venture, useful to workers in the field of Ayurveda and various allied disciplines on the one hand and ethnobiologists on the other.

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*Botanical Survey of India
Dehra Dun.*

Environmental Analysis: Water, Soil and Air. Second edition. M. M. Saxena. Agro Botanical Publishers (India). 1990. 186 pp. Rs. 200, US \$ 400

This is a comprehensive book dealing

with sampling and analytical techniques for a wide array of water, soil and air environments. It is a useful manual for individuals and laboratories engaged in the field of environmental investigations, including those concerned with ecology, pollution, agriculture, fisheries, water supply, sanitation, and health and hygiene. The book also contains at the end appendices containing equivalents, conversion factors, national standards, etc.

The book will prove to be still more useful if a list of suppliers, with addresses, of instruments mentioned in the book is also included in the appendix. Also it is necessary to include simple methods, where available, instead of those involving expensive instruments. For instance, on page 108, bacterial colonies are recommended to be counted by a Quebec colony counter. For those who cannot afford this counter, manual counting is an acceptable procedure.

The only criticism I have of the book is its high cost which would discourage individuals from purchasing it.

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