INTRODUCTION. EVOLUTION, BIOGEOGRAPHY AND SYSTEMATICS OF THE APIALES (ARALIACEAE AND APIACEAE)

M. F. WATSON a1, G. M. PLUNKETT a2, S. R. DOWNIE a3 and P. P. LOWRY II a4

a1 Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh EH3 5LR, UK
a2 Department of Biology, Virginia Commonwealth University, PO Box 842012, Richmond, VA 23284, USA
a3 Department of Plant Biology, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801, USA
a4 Laboratoire de Phanérogamie, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, 16 rue Buffon, 75005 Paris, France

Abstract

The family Apiaceae (Umbelliferae) can be credited with two major landmarks in botanical history: the first systematic monographic treatment of any plant group (Morison, 1672), and the first international symposium dedicated to systematic research on a plant family (Heywood, 1971). The 1970 symposium on the Biology and Chemistry of the Umbelliferae held at the University of Reading, UK, resulted from the large body of research interest in the family around the world at that time, and helped to stimulate further work on the Apiaceae. It also provided a model for similar symposia on major plant groups in the years to follow, including Asteraceae (Heywood et al., 1977), Brassicaceae (Vaughan et al., 1976), Lamiaceae (Harley & Reynolds, 1992), Solanaceae (Hawkes et al., 1979), and Fabaceae (Summerfield & Bunting, 1980; Polhill & Raven, 1981). Growing interest in umbellifers soon resulted in a second international symposium on the family held at the Centre Universitaire de Perpignan, France, in 1977 (Cauwet-Marc & Carbonnier, 1982). Although a large role of this second symposium was to review progress on a major co-operative research programme focused mainly on the tribe Caucalideae, participants with other interests were also involved, and wider developments in the systematics of the family were discussed.