

Book review

C. Booth: *Fusarium*, Laboratory guide to the identification of the major species. Commonwealth Mycological Institute, Kew, Surrey, England, 1977. 58 pp., illustrated. Price £ 3.00, \$ 5.40. Obtainable from Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, Central Sales Branch, Farnham Royal, Slough SL2 3BN.

This book is an extract from Booth's monograph 'The genus *Fusarium*' 1971 (reviewed in Neth. J. Pl. Path. 78 (1972): 121) and is meant as a first introduction to the identification of the most common, particularly plant-pathogenic, species (excluding those occurring on insects and Sphaeriaceous fungi). It contains a dichotomous key and a five-page text on methods and media (where the term 'growth rate', which is essential to the key, is explained). No taxonomic sections are distinguished, so facilitating the use of the key. Each of 29 taxa is treated with a short technical description, followed by an indication of diagnostic characters and illustrated with photographs ($\times 800$) and drawings ($\times 1800$); the former are not ideal and the latter would have been more attractive if smaller in size.

The taxonomy is almost identical to that in the monograph. Some errors are perpetuated: *Micronectriella* Höhn. (= *Sphaerulina* Sacc.) is a genus of bitunicate ascomycetes, whereas the perfect state of *F. tabacinum* has been known for a long time in *Plectosphaerella* Kleb., and that of *F. nivale* has been transferred to *Monographella* Petr. by E. Müller (1977). Some author citations are still incorrect. The recent monograph of the section *Liseola* by Nirenberg (1976) is cited but has not been taken into account. The main features of this booklet are the illustrations which do not equal the beauty of Toussoun and Nelson's 'Pictorial Guide' (1968) of the Snyder and Hansen system, and will soon be superseded by a forthcoming publication by W. Gerlach (Berlin). The key seems to be workable although the couplets are usually too short to be precise. The differentiation between *F. fusarioides* (should be *F. chlamydosporum*) with polyblastic and *F. moniliforme* var. *subglutinans* with polyphialidic conidiogenous cells is not correct and these terms are not explained. The emphasis placed on the polyphialides ('polyblastic conidiogenous cells'?) in young colonies of *F. avenaceum* is of little help in identification, other characters being more suited to recognition of this species.

For those who own Booth's monograph this 'Guide' will be of little additional value, but for newcomers it may serve as a first step to species determination in agreement with a widely accepted system.

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