

## Abstract

In this new publication from Oxford University Press, Stephen Freer, a retired classicist, provides the first full English translation of Linnaeus' *Philosophia Botanica*. The Introduction, dedicated to the memory of Professor W.T. Stearn, has been written by Professor Paul Cox of the National Tropical Botanical Gardens, Hawaii.

Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) was a Swedish botanist, physician, and zoologist, who laid the foundations of modern biological systematics and nomenclature. Inspired by the work of his predecessors and contemporaries, Linnaeus was the first scientist to develop a coherent system for describing, classifying and naming organisms. The method he developed, known as binominal nomenclature, is the classification system still used in botany and zoology today. *Philosophia Botanica* was first published in 1751. Its publication followed that of several earlier works written by Linnaeus such as his *Systema Naturae* (1735) and *Fundamenta Botanica* (1736). *Philosophia Botanica* is an expanded version of *Fundamenta Botanica* with added commentary, and represents a critical stage in the evolution of Linnaeus' ideas and the development of his binominal nomenclature applied to plants.

In this new translation of *Philosophia Botanica*, example pages from Linnaeus' original Latin text are presented alongside Stephen Freer's English translation of the complete text. The book contains images of all eleven of the original plates, which illustrate the shapes of leaves and other plant structures and forms. Also included are Linnaeus' explanations of the effects of soil and climatic conditions on plant growth, plus six short memoranda that describe Linnaeus' botanical excursions, his ideas for garden lay-out and herbarium construction, and his thoughts on what was required of a botanist and his pupils.

This beautifully presented translation of *Philosophia Botanica*, is a valuable resource to botanists, taxonomists, historians and all interested individuals, who will gain greater access to, and new insights into, the work of Carl Lin-

naeus, the father of modern systematics.