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Wild Crop Relatives: Genomic and Breeding Resources. Temperate Fruits. Edited by C. Kole. Berlin: Springer (2011), pp. 247, £126.00. ISBN 978-3-642-16057-8.

This book, part of a 10-volume series covering all major crops, is concerned with the potential utility of wild germplasm in temperate fruit crop improvement. It contains 11 chapters written by established researchers across a considerable range of crops, including major species such as apple, grape (two separate chapters for *Euvitis* and muscadine types) and strawberry, but also smaller crops such as quince. There are some surprising inclusions, notably chapters on olive and pistachio, neither of which would meet most people's definition of a temperate fruit, and it is to be hoped that as a result researchers in these crops do not overlook these excellent chapters. The chapters differ in emphasis, but the general layout considers geographical distribution of related species, origins and evolution (some of the most interesting parts of the book), conservation strategies and availability of molecular tools. The summary of genomic resources for each crop is useful, although since the book's publication the genomes for both *Malus* and *Fragaria* have been published, such is the pace of progress in this field.

The use of wild relatives in breeding is an area of great interest and activity for many fruit breeders, especially with the assistance of molecular tools. It is therefore rather depressing to read how many germplasm collections, species and natural habitats are at risk, often due to lack of resources. However, this volume provides an excellent source of information about the relevant species and how they might be utilised by breeders in the future. The production is of a high standard, with an extensive bibliography in each chapter. However, its high price will probably restrict availability to libraries rather than individual purchasers.

Rex Brennan

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Non-Wood Forest Products 10/Rev.1. By D. V. Johnson. Rome, Italy: FAO (2011), pp. 241, US$45.00. ISBN 978-92-5-106742-0.

Palms, together with grasses and legumes, are of major importance to humankind, with products, including food and beverages, building materials, furniture, clothing, medicine, fuel and handicraft materials. The objective of this book is to provide information on exploited palm species, with a target readership of foresters and conservation and development workers. Over 500 species and their uses are listed, grouped geographically, and there are interesting case studies of indigenous tribal use of palms. Of the 500 exploited species nearly 300 are threatened, and 36 are endangered. Over-exploitation and habitat loss are the main threats, and the importance of sustainable harvest planning is emphasised.

For information on domesticated species (coconut, oil palm, date, betel nut, peach palm) specialist texts should be consulted, but anyone interested in lesser known species, including some with clear potential for domestication, could start here. There are useful lists of publications, and addresses (including e-mail) of palm experts, but in some respects the book is disappointing. There is no index, a serious omission, and photograph quality is also poor. There are over 400 references, but only about 25% were published since the first edition in 1998. There are 28 tables giving composition and characteristics of some individual palm products, but only one is from after 1998, and only nine of the 18 species listed as having development potential are included. It will be a useful book, but could have been much better.

(It is possible to download the book free of charge. See http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1590e/i1590e.pdf)

Hereward Corley

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Genetics, Genomics and Breeding of Vegetable Brassicas. Edited by J. Sadowski and C. Kole. Enfield, NH, USA: Science Publishers (2011), pp. 436, £89.00. ISBN 978-1-57808-706-8.