REVIEWS

Fast growing trees and nitrogen fixing trees. D. Werner and P. Müller (eds.), xvi + 396 pp., illus., 1990. Gustav Fischer Verlag, Stuttgart, New York. ISBN 3-437-30623-5. Price: US\$ 44.00 (special offer if ordered directly from D. Werner, Fachbereich Biologie der Philipps-Universität, Karl-von-Frisch-Strasse, D-3550 Marburg, Germany).

This book contains the proceedings of an international conference held in Marburg, October 8–12, 1989. There are not less than 101 contributions grouped under 6 themes: forestry and ecology, trees and growth, cell and tree physiology, nitrogen fixation and N-metabolism, mycorrhizas and other symbioses, and production and applications.

Many of the papers are abstracts of low information content, but there are a number of balanced and valuable papers, e.g. by Leaky on domestication of tropical forest trees by cloning, by Dhanda on the fate of Eucalypt plantations in the Punjab (India), by Nagl on genome size and organisation in fast and slow growing species, by Savidge on phytohormonal regulation of cambial growth, and by Hillis on fast growing *Eucalyptus* species.

The main value of this book, which is now offered at a bargain price, is in the great number of early case histories on a topic that receives ever increasing global attention. Fast growing plantation trees, preferably from a wide range of species, and including indigen-

ous ones resistant to local pests wherever possible, must surely be part of the answer to the immense problem of deforestation in tropical and other regions. [P. B.]

Clava para la identificacion microscopica de 150 maderas Cubanas. R. Carrera Rivery & R. Dechamps, 30 pp., 1991. Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, B 3080 Tervuren, Belgium. Price unknown.

This booklet contains an identification key to the indigenous and naturalised timbers of Cuba. At first sight it may surprise some wood anatomists to see that the authors have made frequent use of such variable characters as ray height and width, vessel diameter and frequency, and never of better structural characters such as diameter of intervacular pits or relative size of vessel-ray pits. However, the authors are aware of the variability of the characters used. Some species which cannot be discriminated well with the characters used end up in several places in the key.

In fact the key is a useful tool for the identification of very small samples. Reliable characters are often difficult to observe in minute or wrongly oriented samples. In such cases the use of some secondary anatomical characters as profusely used in this key may be required to arrive at one or two candidates for identification. Pierre Détienne