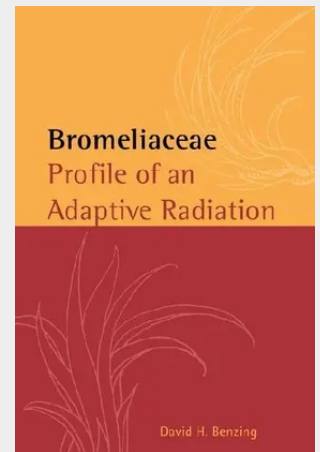


Bromeliaceae

Profile of an Adaptive Radiation

This book presents a synthesis of the extensive information available on the biology of Bromeliaceae, a largely neotropical family of about 2700 described species. Reproductive and vegetative structure and related physiology, ecology and evolution are emphasized, rather than floristics and taxonomy. Guiding questions include: why is this family inordinately successful in arboreal (epiphytic) and other typically stressful habitats and also so important to extensive fauna beyond pollinators and frugivores in the forest canopy? Extraordinary and sometimes novel mechanisms that mediate water balance, tolerance for high and low exposures, and mutualisms with ants have received much study and allow interesting comparisons among plant taxa and help explain why members of this taxon exhibit more adaptive and ecological variety than most other families of flowering plants. This volume concentrates on function and underlying mechanisms, thus will round out a literature that otherwise mostly ignores basic biology in favour of taxonomy and horticulture.

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