

Mediterranean Botany: plant sciences for the Mediterranean biomes

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Introduction

We are honored to announce *Mediterranean Botany* as the new era of the botanical journal *Lazaroa*. Starting with this issue (39-1), the Complutense University of Madrid is re-launching the journal to provide a wider international forum for plant studies on Mediterranean regions worldwide. *Mediterranean Botany* is published in OPEN ACCESS (Creative Commons license), as an effort of the publishing service *Ediciones Complutenses* to publish for everybody, i.e. without any cost for authors and readers. The new format and the improvement of the peer-review process should also increase the quality of published papers and the impact of the journal in the scientific community.



Figure 1. Mediterranean biomes of the world encompassing the Mediterranean Forests, Woodlands, and Scrub terrestrial ecoregions defined by the WWF (www.worldwildlife.org). Map uses Eckert IV projection. Latitudinal lines are placed at 45 degrees above and below the equator.

Thanks to 40 years of *Lazaroa*

Lazaroa was founded by Salvador Rivas-Martínez in 1978 to publish papers dealing with botany in a broad sense. In 1979, the Department of Plant Biology of Complutense University (Faculty of Pharmacy) launched the first issue of *Lazaroa*. Rivas-Martínez and many others from the Editorial Board and the Editorial Office made a great effort in spreading the results of Iberian botanical studies but also those of nearby countries of Europe and North Africa. We want to thank all of them for the work that has been done in the last 40 years, resulting in the inclusion of *Lazaroa* in the Journal Citation Reports in 2017 (2016) with a first impact factor of 0.407. We also want to thank all authors and referees that served the journal during those years, making it possible to establish a reference journal for plant sciences in Europe.

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Key features of *Mediterranean Botany*

Scope of the Journal

Although the scope of the journal has been always broad and covers all scientific areas traditionally related to Botany, *Lazaroa* mainly focused on plant systematics and vegetation ecology of vascular plants. While preserving these topics as the main value of the journal, we also want to extent the scope of the journal to related disciplines such as biogeography, evolutionary biology, ecophysiology, community ecology, ethnobotany and conservation biology, also incorporating studies on algae, mosses and lichens, and also on related fungal and microbial biology.

We think that our role in a super-diversified research community is to provide a forum for the understanding of plant diversity in Mediterranean biomes worldwide. Thus, *Mediterranean Botany* is focused on plant diversity of regions influenced by Mediterranean-like climatic areas: Eastern Mediterranean Basin, South Africa, Western Australia, West of North America and South America (see Figure 1). However, we will accept papers for areas interacting with the Mediterranean biomes in a broad sense. This approach follows the example of other botanical journals focused on specific biomes or regions, such as *Alpine Botany* (focused on mountain regions worldwide) or *Preslia* (with a geographic focus on central Europe).

Journal sections

The standard sections of the journal are 'ARTICLES', 'REVIEWS' and 'RESEARCH NOTES'. New insights bring us to open another section called 'BOTANICAL CHECKLISTS' for the contribution of comprehensive lists of flora and vegetation types. We have already published some papers related to this subject: Meddour & al., 2017: *Lazaroa* 38(2): 127-163 for vegetation and Pérez-García & al., 2018: *Mediterranean Botany* 39(1): 35-49 for flora. Following the tradition of *Lazaroa* as a repository plant and vegetation classification, 'Notes on plant and vegetation classification' will publish consistent updates of nomenclature.

Mediterranean Botany will promote the publication of 'SPECIAL ISSUES'. At the moment we have two special features that will be published in 2018: 'Mediterranean Plant Biology Conservation' as a participation in the SEBICOP (Spanish association for Plant Biology Conservation) meeting held in Madrid in 2017; and 'Diversity patterns across communities in the frame of global change: conservation challenges', for the 26th European Vegetation Survey meeting held in Bilbao in 2017. Other features can be faced in future attending the suggestions of editors or authors.

Fast peer-review and on-line publication

To face this new phase and the broader scope of the journal we have enlarged the editorial board to create an international and multidisciplinary group of editors. We welcome the new members that will help the journal to achieve new challenges in the following years, with the general aim of reaching a permanent position in the JCR journals indexed in Plant Sciences.

Submissions for *Mediterranean Botany* can be made in the Open Journal System (OJS), an online Manuscript Submission, Review and Tracking System to make submissions, reviewing and editing. One of central aims of the editorial board will be to guarantee short times in the review process, with a maximum of six weeks between first submission and first decision.

Mediterranean Botany is a full on-line publication that will reduce the time between acceptance and publishing. With a minimum of two issues per year, the editorial process will be optimized to publish the papers regularly within each year. This guarantees a maximum of eight months between final acceptance and on-line publication with DOI and final page numbers.