

# Preface

The use of medicinal plants as recognized therapies in modern health care has been increasing over the past three decades. Treatments that were considered “old wives tales” have been found to have underlying biochemical and even epigenetic foundations for their efficacy. The search for medically useful plants and the means to produce their active principles and ingredients now encompasses large research programs and even entire scientific institutes.

The series “Medicinal Plants of the World”, under the capable and thoughtful leadership of Prof. Dr. Ákos Máthé, is intended to bring the latest research to the attention of the broad range of botanists, ethnopharmacists, biochemists, plant and animal physiologists and others who will benefit from the information gathered therein. Plants know no political boundaries, and bringing specific folklore to general medical awareness can only be for the benefit of all. The current volume brings together chapters on medicinal plants of the Mediterranean region from researchers in Israel, Jordan and Turkey, and covers both wild (non-cultivated) and domestic (cultivated) crops with therapeutic value. Some of these plants are well-known medicinally, such as opium poppy and khat, while others such as *apharsemon* and citron have both ritual and medicinal uses. All have specific and valuable uses in modern society.

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