Preface

Despite major advances in ethnobiology, there is still a lack of textbooks that can serve as references for its teaching worldwide. There is no doubt that in recent years, many books have appeared to fill gaps in ethnobiology teaching and research. In this sense, this book is aimed at subsidizing initial ethnobiology teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The aim was to produce short chapters that introduce the reader to the major themes that have been or can be addressed in ethnobiological research. Obviously, given the complexity of ethnobiology, it was not possible to present all views on and approaches to this subject. Therefore, this book is a brief introduction to the topic, taking into account the academic and investigative interest biases of its organizers.

This book is divided into five parts, each covering the aspects of ethnobiology that were considered relevant for the ease of reading and learning. In the first part, the aim was to explain most historical and conceptual aspects of ethnobiology. Some chapters address relatively new or little debated approaches, which will interest even the most experienced readers in the field of ethnobiology.

The appropriation of nature, in various forms, may be perceived by mankind in certain ways. Thus, the second part of the book specifically addresses this initial stage of the relationship between humans and nature. Also, the second part, addresses the classic debate and the major theoretical contributions regarding how humanity classifies the nature.

In the third part of the book, one of the most discussed aspects in ethnobiology will be addressed: the use of natural resources.[1] This topic was chosen to address only the resources that are most often studied by ethnobiologists as a very simple and direct introduction to each of these resources. The fourth part is configured as a natural extension of this approach, addressing the consequences of a utilitarian relationship with nature. Thus, this fifth section focused on the extractivism of forest products and plant and animal domestication.

[1] The term "natural resources" is used several times by the authors in this book as a synonym for biota. Thus, it does not necessarily have an economic or utilitarian connotation.

Finally, the fifth part is a synthesis of which variables affect local biological knowledge (LBK). Although not every influencing factor will be addressed, a set of information that undoubtedly serves as an approach to the subject will be offered to the reader.

Thus, we believe that this book will help ethnobiology teachers and students with its relatively benign approach to the subject. The reference list in each chapter and a small dictionary of ethnobiology terms and related areas complement the book, allowing readers to gain a deeper understanding of the covered topics.

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