

# Turkish Journal of Botany

Turkish Journal

Mycota of South-West Asia

of

Stephan HELFER

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR Scotland - UK

Botany

 [Keywords](#)  
[Authors](#)



[bot@tubitak.gov.tr](mailto:bot@tubitak.gov.tr)

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**Abstract:** Fungi are indispensable components of the biota of any region. Their presence and distribution are of paramount importance to flora and fauna, and their ecological function may be responsible for the presence or absence of many other species, particularly plants. Database records on fungi from South-West Asia were consulted to estimate the completeness of mycological exploration of the region. Unsurprisingly, some groups are well represented in certain areas, whereas others are lacking from SW Asian data altogether. In this paper an attempt is made to prioritise both taxonomic and geographical focal points in order to maximise the use of resources for the exploration of SW Asian mycota. Ecologically significant fungi are illustrated. At the same time, a plea is sent to botanists and other natural history professionals to take note of the fungi near or on (or in) the specimens they are collecting. Another plea is sent to mycologists to overcome regional isolation and to seek collaboration and regular exchange of experiences and progress with as many local and regional peers as possible.

**Key Words:** Symbiosis, mutualism, saprophytism, parasitism, diversity, lichen desert

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Turk. J. Bot., **32**, (2008), 481-484.

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