

It was with great sadness to learn the passing of the botanical giant, Academician WANG Wencai of the Institute of Botany, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, in Beijing. The Plant Systematics World has lost a gentle giant of botany from China.

I have admired Professor Wang throughout my career and learned so much from so many botanical publications from Professor Wang. I entered the botanical world with the help of his botanical classic: *the Iconographia Cormophytorum Sinicorum* (1972 ~ 1982) (i.e. *the Illustrated Flora of Chinese Higher Plants*). I used the series of the *Illustrated Flora* throughout my college days to learn the plants from Hubei province. I have the series handy in my office in the United States National Herbarium and I have been consulting it regularly throughout my botanical career.

Besides his well known contributions to the taxonomy of Ranunculaceae, Urticaceae, Boraginaceae and Gesneriaceae, Professor Wang had been instrumental and truly a genius collections-based taxonomist on describing the diversity and classifying the Vitaceae of China since the late 1970's. His great work set the foundation for the treatment of Vitaceae in Flora of China in both Chinese and English versions.

His insightful work on the biogeography of eastern Asian plants and the migration patterns set the foundation for understanding eastern Asian biogeography! The migration routes of plants he proposed were great hypotheses for biogeographers today.

Professor Wang's edited volumes on *Vascular Plants of the Hengduan Mountains* in the 1990's set the floristic foundation for systematic, biogeographic and conservation work in the vast evolutionary hotspot in Asia.

Professor Wang also served as the Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Phytotaxonomica Sinica* (now *Journal of Systematics and Evolution*) for a number of years.

Professor Wang was a remarkable gentle soul and an inspirational humble giant.
I will miss his kindness and of course his botanical contributions!

With immense sadness,

Wen Jun

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