

The Systematics Association Special Volume Series 72

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# Reconstructing the Tree of Life

## Taxonomy and Systematics of Species Rich Taxa

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# Preface

The twenty chapters of this book are based on the theme of the plenary session of the Fourth Biennial Conference of the Systematics Association, held at Trinity College Dublin (TCD), Ireland, in August 2003, namely the systematics of species rich taxa. During the five-day conference, there were stimulating presentations, posters and discussions, covering a broad sample of the 'tree of life'; these also influenced the shape and content of this volume. Papers were contributed by a number of conference delegates and by others subsequently invited to broaden the book's scope or address particular theoretical issues.

Consideration of the book's theme and content began at a conference planning meeting at TCD in early 2003 with the local conference organiser, Steve Waldren of TCD, and Gordon Curry, the honorary treasurer of the Systematics Association. These were refined further in discussions with Alan Warren, the Systematics Association special volumes series editor, and Chris Humphries, the president of the Systematics Association. We are grateful to all of them for their input and encouragement, particularly our colleague, Steve. Two anonymous book proposal reviewers also provided valuable content guidance. We are particularly grateful for the manuscript preparation input of Sandra Velthuis of Whitebarn Consulting, who has worked long and hard to proofread chapters and standardise their format, and to the production team, especially Gail Renard, Pat Roberson and John Sulzycki, at CRC Press, who have been highly supportive and professional. We also thank Diccon Alexander for the superb cover artwork. Finally we thank all 51 contributing authors to the book, many of whom also peer reviewed other chapters. We encourage all readers to support the activities of the Systematics Association ([www.systass.org](http://www.systass.org)).

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