CLASSIFICATION

In this compilation, the author has largely followed Dring's (1973) system of classification which is based on the developmental features. Most of the families and genera included in the present work have been treated in a more or less traditional manner, nevertheless author has tried to follow the modern generic concepts, wherever possible.

This work includes the keys to the orders and families known from India, whereas keys to all the genera and species of Gasteromycetes from Eastern Himalayas and adjoining hills have been given. The taxa, not included in the present work are marked by asteric (*). The keys to the species which have been included here, are primarily based on author's observations of Eastern Himalayan collections. However, in some cases where the material was not available for study, the keys are based on the earlier descriptions of the Indian specimens.

Dring (1973) divided the class Gasteromycetes into 9 orders, which can be separated by the following key:

KEY TO ORDERS OF GASTEROMYCETES

1. Hymenium present. Basidia maturing more or less simultaneously. Spores often less than 10 µm, seldom reticulate. .... 2

1'. Hymenium absent. Basidia borne singly or in groups scattered through the gleba, often maturing in several generations, not all of which are fertile. Spores often larger than 10 µm, often reticulate. ....... 6
2(1). Development pileate or multipileate. .. 3

2'. Development otherwise. .... 4

3(2). Gleba powdery at maturity. Fruit-body pileate, truly stipitate, of coprinoid facies, spores dark, distinctly agaricoid. ... Podaxales*

3'. Gleba fleshy or mucid at maturity, Fruit-body never with a true stipe. Spores hyaline and bacillloid or pale brown, ovoid. .... 1. Phallales

4(2'). Development forate or modification thereof. .... 5


5'. Gleba cartilaginous; spores ellipsoid, longitudinally ribbed. Peridium often absent. .... 4. Gautieriales

6(1'). Fruit-body sessile or occasionally with pseudostem of modified glebal tissue or rooting strands. .... 7

6'. Fruit-body truly stipitate. ... 5. Tulostomatales

7(6). Gleba organised into peridioles (sometimes a single peridiole). Fruit-body not exceeding 1 cm in diameter. Spores smooth, hyaline, often large. .... 6. Nidulariales

7'. Gleba not so organised. Fruit-body diameter usually greater than 1 cm. .. 8

8(7'). Gleba fleshy at maturity. ..... 7. Melanogastrales

8'. Gleba powdery at maturity. ..... 8. Sclerodermatales

*Not recorded from the Eastern Himalayas and adjoining hills.