

Introduction

This Flora aims to bring up-to-date knowledge of the vascular flora of the central fjord region of east Greenland. This is here understood to include the whole area from Scoresby Sund 70°N to Dove Bugt 77°N. It is the largest such system in the Arctic and the head of its longest fjord, Nordvestfjord in Scoresby Sund, is some 170 km from the sea.

The only previous comprehensive floristic accounts are those of Sørensen (1933), Gelting (1934) and Seidenfaden & Sørensen (1937). The first of these covered an area from the south side of Kong Oscar Fjord and north Liverpool and to Vega Sund, *c* 73°N and the second continues northwards to Bessel Fjord, *c* 76°N. The third covers the area from Kuhn Ø *c* 75° to 79°N, overlapping with Gelting's area and finishing far to the north of our area. The area covered by Bay (1992) in his phytogeographical analysis of the flora of northern Greenland overlaps in part with the present work but his account, and similar ones by Fredskild (1996) on central west Greenland and Feilburg (1984) on southern Greenland, are not Floras.. Nevertheless, all four accounts provide a comprehensive picture of the current distribution of vascular plants throughout Greenland with the exception of the south-east which is currently the subject of a study by Bay.

Following my first two expeditions, in 1961 and 1962, I considered simply updating the area covered by Sørensen's account. However, subsequent opportunities to visit Scoresby Sund and areas as far north as Bessel Fjord inevitably, if somewhat reluctantly, persuaded me to take on the task of covering the whole of the central fjord region.



Plate 1. Bjørneøer, Scoresby Sund, looking towards Milne Land and Renland