

## Medicinal Plant Biology: A new era for medicinal plant research

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Plants are amazing chemical factories, and medicinal plants provide a myriad of pharmaceutically active compounds that have been commonly used as traditional medicines for thousands of years. The practice of traditional medicine in China dates back at least 4,500 years. The Shen Nong Ben Cao Jing ("Shen Nong's Herbal Classic" in 770–475 BC) has been considered the oldest list of medicinal plants. Recent rapid economic development has enabled China to invest substantially in science and technology research. In many ethnic groups worldwide, herbal medicines are, in the same way as traditional Chinese medicines, still commonly used today. A wide array of plant-extract health supplements has become increasingly popular in Western societies. Numerous drugs derived from a broad range of plant species have been discovered, such as taxol and artemisinin and their derivatives. Investigations of the chemotaxonomy, molecular phylogeny, and pharmacology of these diverse plants and derived compounds through molecular biology and omics-based techniques have led to a new frontier of medicinal plant research, i.e., Medicinal Plant Biology. For example, improvements in sequencing technology—with drastically reduced costs—have offered unprecedented access to genomic, transcriptomic, proteomic and metabolomic information for large numbers of medicinal plants. The massive amount of new data will surely lead to new discoveries in plant-derived medicine. This has been witnessed by a substantial increase in MPB-related research papers. The time is clearly right to initiate an international journal with focus on the biology of these specific groups of plants, and it is our great honor to announce the launch of *Medicinal Plant Biology* (MPB) with the aims of filling the gap and meeting the need for publications of the highest standards in this field. We aim to build MPB into a flagship journal, publishing leading research, which will have a profound impact on the field of

medicinal plants, not only in the advance of science but also in providing a venue for international scholarly exchange. To ensure that MPB attracts high-quality publications, the journal will be guided by a distinguished Advisory Board consisting of preeminent, world-class scholars in the field and will be edited by a distinguished international Editorial Board comprised of outstanding front-line researchers. All papers will be subjected to rigorous peer review, and accepted papers will be published online immediately with free access and global dissemination. We sincerely hope that you will help the journal excel by submitting your excellent research and review articles, by serving as reviewers, and by becoming frequent readers of MPB.

On behalf of the journal's distinguished Editorial Board and the publisher, Maximum Academic Press, we warmly welcome you to visit the MPB webpage ([www.maxapress.com/mpb](http://www.maxapress.com/mpb)) and read the incoming articles of high quality and impact.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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