

BOOK REVIEW

KAY YATSKIEVYCH. 2002. **Field Guide to Indiana Wild Flowers**. (ISBN 0-253-21420-3, pbk.). Indiana University Press, 601 North Morton Street, Bloomington, IN 47404-3797, U.S.A. (Orders: iupress.indiana.edu, 800-842-6796, 812-855-4203, 812-855-8507 fax). \$17.95, 372 pp, 640 color photos, line drawings, 5 1/2" × 8 1/2".

How should a book review be done about a subject (Wild Flower Field Guides) that has seen a great revival during the past few decades? It seems to me that the importance of field guides goes far beyond their immediate practical usefulness of identifying a species of plant that might attract ones interest for a short moment. Here are some of my feelings about the significance of wild flowers and Kay Yatskievych's book.

Having seen springtime come and go for nearly thirty years in Indiana, and having contemplated that these springtimes have been rhythmically undergoing their ever-changing complex phenomena for at least 10,000 years in the glaciated parts of Indiana, I personally know that the places on earth where these flashes of springtime brilliance that I have witnessed in the virgin beech-maple and oak-hickory forests in some of the State parks and State forests of Indiana are quickly vanishing.

What if an unexpected, terrible disaster such as a tornado, earthquake, fire, explosion, or even a terrorist act destroyed one of the fine buildings on the campus of Indiana University or Purdue University? By using the blueprints that were used to build the original structure, highly sophisticated, well-trained Indiana architects, engineers, and other scientists could draw up plans to replace the destroyed building exactly as it was, even to the minutest detail, such as the determination of the physical/chemical properties of the materials needed for the reproduction. Soil scientists and geologists could determine in great depth the physical/chemical conditions of the ground where the building stood.

But what if human population and social explosions such as urban sprawl, industrial development, cancerous shopping mall expansion, or even university campus development destroyed nearby pristine eco-habitats of beech-maple and oak-hickory forests? Where could the dynamic structural details of these rapidly vanishing, primeval treasures be found?

Where are the brilliant, highly sophisticated, well-trained architects, engineers, and other scientists, with great library and internet resources, who could draw up the plans for a virgin beech-maple forest that would be exactly like it was, even to the minutest detail of the myriads of unseen structural features represented by the millions of microscopic living creatures, before it was carelessly destroyed?

Kay Yatskievych has produced a field guide to 1,564 pieces (wild flower species) that might fit into the dynamic structure of these lost masterpieces. Just as the architects and engineers have their technical vocabularies to name and describe the pieces that go into their structures, Kay Yatskievych has provided us in 374 pages an easy to carry, detailed, and easy to use guide for naming and talking about many traits of these 1,564 species. Because of the excellent "flower finder" and other line drawings, color photos of examples of all genera, and clear word descriptions of important traits of each species, her guide will help plant lovers of all kinds know these "pieces of the puzzel of the forest" in much greater detail. Hopefully, some of the younger users of this book will be inspired to dig much deeper into the forests and uncover more of the interconnecting webs that help tie the dynamic structure together.—Joe F. Hennen, Resident Research Associate, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4060, U.S.A.



Hennen, Joe F. 2001. "Book Review." *SIDA, contributions to botany* 19, 512–512.

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