

Arnoldia Reviews

Color In The Sky. Flowering Trees In Our Landscape. Edwin A. Menninger. Stuart, Florida: Horticultural Books, Inc. 1975. 260 pp., illustrated. \$14.95.

This book is deceptive in title and as a result may be disappointing to the unwary. The subtitle might have read more properly, "Flowering Trees In A Florida Landscape." There are 211 numbered black and white photographs, many of poor quality, and but six colored plates to document the title. Within the first seven illustrations are *Aesculus*, *Eucryphia* and *Magnolia*, not otherwise mentioned in the text and species not grown in Florida. All others are of tropical or subtropical plants. With the exception of the foreword written in 1971 by George Lawrence and the acknowledgements, prologue, and possibly the single page on *Barklya*, the material has been published previously and in this volume reproduced by offset, retaining the original one- or two-column format.

Dr. Menninger's contributions have been enjoyable and worthwhile, descriptive and, often provocative, reading. This might be considered an anthology of many of his articles issued between 1951 and 1974. If so, it is regrettable that an effort was not made to correct the errors in nomenclature perpetuated here. *Canangium*, for example, is not correct in spite of the impression one derives from a forceful footnote, for *Cananga* (A. DC) Hooker & Thompson, is a conserved name. *Stenolobium stans* cannot be used since *Bignonia stans* L. is the type of *Tecoma juss.* and of *Tecoma stans* (L) Juss. as indicated in all recent tropical floras. *Peltophorum pterocarpum* (DC) Heyne is the correct name for *P. inerme*. Woody species of *Datura* are now generally recognized in the genus *Brugsmannia*. Plates 146 and 147 are used twice, while the plates and text of many of the *Bauhinia* species are not in agreement, etc. The author states the chapters "are printed here just as they originally appeared, including many inconsistencies. Botanical nomenclature has undergone radical changes, word forms and compounds and even meanings have shifted in that time, but no matter." It does matter to many of us. This might have been a useful volume.

RICHARD A. HOWARD

Handbook of Wild Flower Cultivation. Kathryn S. Taylor and Stephen F. Hamblin. New York: Collier Books. 1976. 307 pp., illustrated. \$4.95.

First published in hard cover in 1963, this handbook has been an invaluable aid to all who are interested in wild flowers and their propagation. It is a pleasure to see it now in paperback, thus hopefully reaching an even wider audience.

Another review would be redundant, as this book over the years has been such a well-known and essential guide to every aspect of wild flower cultivation.

The excellent presentation, useful appendices on cultural requirements and bibliography, the comprehensive glossary and the lovely, delicate drawings by Catherine R. Hammond are still a delight to the reader.

CORA L. WARREN

Rhododendrons in America. Ted Van Veen. Portland, Ore.: Sweeney, Krist and Dimm, Inc. 1969. 176 pp., illustrated. \$20.00.

This marvelously illustrated volume addresses itself to *Rhododendron* enthusiasts in every climate, whether they be homeowners, landscape designers, or nurserymen. It contains a comprehensive discussion of choosing, planting, and maintaining the plants, with a moderate position in respect to the chemical fertilizer/organic amendment controversy.

The heart of the work is, however, the presentation of more than two hundred color photographs judged by the reviewer to be of the highest quality. For example, the chromatic difference between *Rhododendron elegans* and *R. superbum* is accurately shown. There is a table of selected species and hybrids listing ancestry, plant height, month of bloom, and minimum temperature endured.

The presentation pays attention to the new dwarfs, so useful for foundation planting in the West Coast where the grower-author carries on his work; also considerable space is devoted to the rock garden use of *Rhododendrons*. This up-to-date treatment even includes material on greenhouse forcing of *Rhododendrons*, their display indoors, and the use of chemical growth regulators.

ELINORE B. TROWBRIDGE

Wild and Old Garden Roses. Gordon Edwards. New York: Hafner Press, Macmillan Publishing Co. 1975. 162 pp., 31 color plates, 38 drawings. \$9.95.

An "American edition" of a successful British publication by the same name. The author has grown 130 of the 240 roses described and reports with pleasing personal impressions. An appendix lists where to see wild and old roses in botanical gardens in the United States. The colored plates are excellent. Regrettably no sources are given for the varieties, and a check of several specialty catalogues failed to list any of the plants sought.

RICHARD A. HOWARD

The Alaska-Yukon Wild Flowers Guide. Helen A. White, editor. Anchorage: Northwest Publishing Co. 1974. viii + 218 pp., illustrated. \$7.95.

Travelers to Alaska (and residents of the state) interested in identifying the region's beautiful wildflowers either have had to consult one of the floras that really were compiled for use by trained botanists, or had to try

one of the guide books for the Pacific Northwest or the Rocky Mountains that are not very applicable to Alaska. This book from *Alaska* magazine is designed to fill this void. For each of over 160 species there is a color photograph (more than one in a few cases), a line drawing, and a paragraph of text. At the end of the book is a short article on "Wild flowers in your garden" (throughout this section, it is emphasized that rare and endangered species are not to be molested), a glossary of botanical and ecological terms, a bibliography, and indices of the plants by family name, by botanical name, and by common name. The actual extent of involvement of E. Hultén, S. L. Welsh, and L. A. Viereck with this book is not clear, but if these three authorities on Alaskan plants approved the text and checked the identification of the photographs, then we may be sure that the material presented is accurate.

From a magazine such as *Alaska*, one would expect fine photographs, and, in general, those in the book are very good. The quality of printing is first-rate, and the color balance of most of the plates is tolerably accurate. A few photographs are out of focus and/or overexposed. For some reason, compilers of picture flowers books select the worst possible photographs for double-page spreads, and that certainly is the case with this book, particularly pages 50-51 and 138-139.

The simple line drawings are pleasing, accurate, and appear to have been drawn from living plants. Features not shown in the photographs, such as habit, underground parts, leaves, and fruits, are often depicted in the drawings. This combination of a colored photograph and a line drawing of each species enhances the usefulness of the book.

The paragraph of text associated with the photographs gives the height of the plant (a description is not given), the habitat, the geographical distribution of the species in Alaska and elsewhere, and other useful and interesting bits of information. Particularly noteworthy is the attention given to poisonous plants. Special boxes under *Astragalus*, *Oxytropis*, *Castilleja*, and *Pedicularis* point out the taxonomic complexities of these genera.

KENNETH R. ROBERTSON

Fern Growers Manual. Barbara Joe Hoshizaki. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1975. 256 pp., illustrated. \$15.

It has been said with reverence and admiration that if the Lord created all plants, then ferns were made to show what could be done with a leaf. This excellent volume displays in text and photographs the range of variation in a significant section of the plant kingdom and the attractiveness and usefulness of non-flowering plants.

Ferns vary in size from a few millimeters to many meters in length and height. They may be floating aquatic plants, epiphytes, climbers or terrestrial in habit. Although most attractive for the variations in texture and division of the leaf, they may have color in pubescence on the stems, in the iridescence of mature fronds. Reproduction is generally by the production of spores in sporangia, or cases interestingly grouped on the backs of the fronds, or only on special fronds. From the spores develops a free living sexual generation. Asexual or vegetative reproduction occurs naturally with the production of "buds" on the leaf surface or at the tip. Several ferns meet the general name of "walking fern" when the arching leaf tip is capable of developing roots and a new plant.

The hardiness of the Boston fern, perhaps the most popular Victorian house plant, contrasts with the tenderness of the thin-leaved ferns often grown in bottle gardens. Pots of maiden hair ferns once decorated private banquet tables, and homes had fern rooms. This volume may return the fern to its rightful place in American horticulture.

Mrs. Hoshizaki writes for horticulture under the name of Barbara Joe. The bibliography clearly indicates her experience. Instructions are complete regarding the nature of ferns, their collection, introduction, maintenance and propagation. Genera of the cultivated ferns are treated in alphabetical order with useful species listed, and in summary form data are presented on height, form, and requirements for temperature, light, soil and water. One of the valuable appendices is a classification of ferns and fern allies. The index is excellent. Perhaps all that is missing is reference to botanical gardens that maintain collections of hardy outdoor ferns (e.g. Foster Botanical Garden, Garden in the Woods) or tender ferns in special display houses (e.g. Como Park, Kew, Longwood, Morris Arboretum).

RICHARD A. HOWARD

The Description and Classification of Vegetation. David W. Shimwell. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1972. 322 pp., 70 figures. \$10.50

A technical reference volume that reviews the methods used by ecologists and phytosociologists of North America and Europe to describe and classify the vegetation on the earth. An excellent historical review of a special field of botany.

RICHARD A. HOWARD

DIVIDEND PLANTS

During spring of 1976 many members received a plant of *Syringa nancieana* 'Rutilant'. Because of a shortage of plant material, some of you had nothing but an empty mail box. The propagation department is busy rooting cuttings and, barring a crop failure, these will be mailed out during spring 1977 to all members who missed out on this year's mailing.



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