

## ARNOLDIA REVIEWS

**Woodland Ecology.** Leon S. Minckler. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 229 pages, illustrated. \$9.95.

Of all the potentially productive forest land in this country, 59 percent — 300 million acres — is under private, non-industrial ownership. In the eastern part of the country the figure is as high as 73 percent. This book addresses itself to these woodland owners, who number 4.5 million, emphasizing their responsibilities and privileges. Having worked for many years with the U.S. Forest Service at forest experimental stations and being now Adjunct Professor at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse, the author knows his subject and his readership. He provides detailed information on the forces that bear on their woodlands and on techniques of channelling these forces towards economic and esthetic goals.

The book, which deals exclusively with the eastern U.S., begins with a concise description of forestry and silviculture. Then follows a systematic presentation of the seven types of eastern forests, the five classes of tree for timber production, the five methods of timber cutting and the seven principles of planting. An important chapter focuses on the relation of woodland management to wildlife and fish habitat.

Modern dilemmas are laid out on the table: "Wildlife and fish belong to the people, their harvest is controlled by the state, but the land where the wildlife lives and the shores of the streams are controlled by the landowner." Professor Minckler does not have the answer, but it is refreshing to see clear-sighted definitions of this and similar problems. He is a straight shooter. For example, pond management in his view is relatively simply stated: "The only way to have an attractive and useful pond is to have it properly constructed in the first place and then to prevent pollution."

The three appendices contain addresses of agencies and book references to which the woodland owner can turn for advice and actual help. It is stimulating to find a book on ecology that does not devote itself to crying havoc, but provides a well-written set of practical and philosophical guidelines for the future management of our forests.

RICHARD WARREN

**Ten-Minute Field Trips.** Helen Ross Russell. Chicago: J. G. Ferguson Publishing Co. 172 pages, illustrated. \$6.95 paperback.

The author has lifelong experience teaching children, and judging from the warm enthusiasm throughout her book, she must have been a marvelous inspiration to countless youngsters. Geared toward use by grade school teachers, the book presents a series of investigative "lessons" designed to teach the principles of nature study. As a source of ideas and information, it is equally valuable to parents, camp counselors and teachers of older children.

The institutional method makes full use of outdoor materials at hand, encouraging students to observe and investigate. A lesson on the dandelion brings together a multitude of disciplines. Counting individual flowerets and estimating reproductive possibilities teaches statistics and demography; etymology comes to the fore when one explains the deriva-



tion of the name from the French "dents-de-lion" and notices the supposed resemblance of the flowers to lion's teeth; in learning that the greens are edible, students are introduced to cultural and culinary practices of other people in other times.

*Ten Minute Field Trips* is a "learn and do" manual of exceptionally high quality. It deserves a position of prominence in classrooms throughout the country.

ELINORE B. TROWBRIDGE

**Gardens Without Soil.** Jack Kramer. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 127 pages, illustrated. \$8.95.

The sprouted carrot top, sweet potato or avocado growing in a container of water has long adorned the kitchen window in many homes. This attractive, expensive, illustrated volume elaborates on the method of soilless culture, proposing that commercial or experimental methods of hydroponics can be used in the home or greenhouse. The point is stretched considerably with the suggestion that cauliflower, cabbage and squash can be so produced.

RICHARD A. HOWARD

**Gardening With Perennials Month by Month.** Joseph Hudak. New York: Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co. 398 pages, illustrated. \$12.50.

There are many books on "how," but too few that emphasize the "when." Mr. Hudak's new book is of value to the amateur gardener whose interest has been limited to the evanescent world of annuals, and it also will assist the professional in plant selection. Each chapter represents a month of the growing season and is preceded by a listing of the color values of various perennials selected for hardiness and growth characteristics. This information on time, color, and site should mitigate the concern of those who wish to plant perennials but are afraid that their mistakes will confront them for many seasons.

The descriptive material is clearly written, and the pictures are good. Although the selection of plants for a book of this size admittedly cannot be encyclopedic, it is eminently practical and satisfies the writer's criteria of endurance, growth habits, and flowering traits. A pleasant bonus is an alphabetically arranged descriptive list of hardy ferns and an addendum of plants for specific conditions such as perennials with a blooming period of eight weeks or more, perennials having the bonus of foliage effects with or after blooming, etc.

While the book's emphasis is on useful practicality, it is also enjoyable reading and can be recommended without reservation.

BARBARA O. EPSTEIN

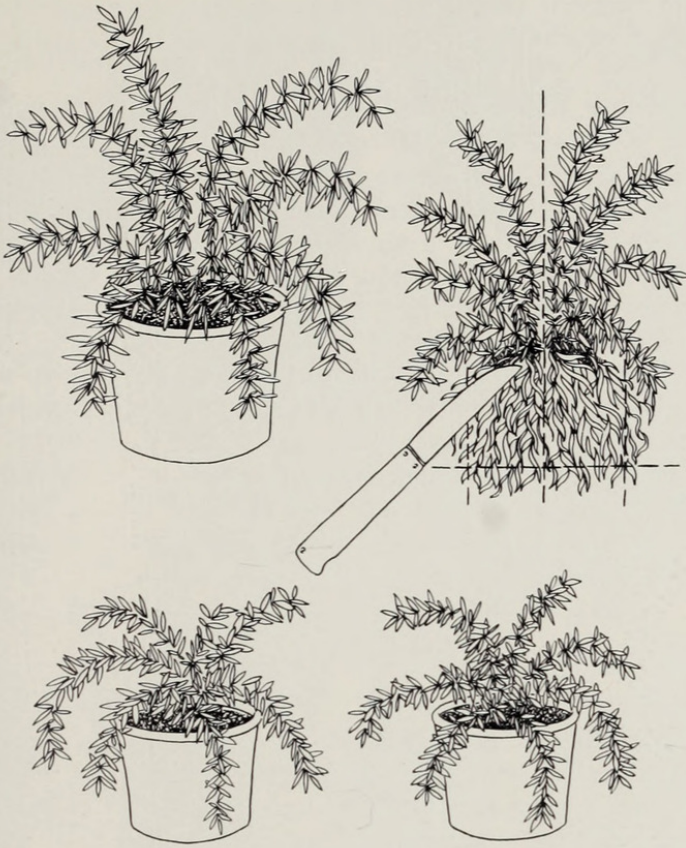
**New Plants From Old.** Charles M. Evans. New York: Random House. 116 pages, illustrated. \$3.95, paperback.

Cook books and manuals on growing house plants continue to proliferate. This simple, clear and instructive book on house plant pruning and propagation will certainly be of great assistance to the beginner. If it is read with care, the pleasures of plant propagation should be within the grasp of the rankest amateur.

An index of plants, listed both botanically and by their common names, and stating how they are best propagated, should be of much value to anyone who wishes to increase his house plant collection.

The format of the book is most attractive and the illustrations by Lauren Jarrett are both clear and charming.





*From New Plants From Old.*

**Apples.** Peter Wynne. New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc. 280 pages, illustrated. \$12.50.

Apples are ancient, delicious, mythological, medicinal, sexually symbolic and beautiful in flower and fruit. A book on their multiple aspects and assets should be welcome; but unfortunately, this book is not adequate.

It attempts to cover the apple's history, culture and folklore, with a hundred pages of recipes as a final chapter. But the history is too brief, the culture written in an over-simplistic and patronizing style (surely we do not have to be told that "each blossom has five petals"), and the folklore is too long and too speculative. The recipes are mainly adapted from Victorian cook books, and consist of such standard fare as "Brown Betty" and apple pie.

CORA L. WARREN

**The Gardener's Catalogue.** New York: William Morrow and Co. 320 pages, illustrated. \$6.95.

This 14½" x 10½" paperback compendium, copiously illustrated with line drawings in the Victorian manner, is nothing more than a product of the scissors and the photocopier. In general, *The Gardener's Catalogue* consists of brief articles, lists and garden catalogue excerpts grouped under various topics. There are extensive lists of plant societies, plant sources, etc., some of them including England and Australia, so the editors obviously aspire to some sort of international market. Although there is a three-page index at the back, it is by no means complete.



For serious reference work, this book has many inaccuracies. A novice gardener will surely end up with horticultural indigestion. Because of its emphasis on the current popularity of nostalgia, however, it probably will sell well — only to grace many a white elephant table next year.

**A Naturalist in Costa Rica.** Alexander F. Skutch. Gainesville: University of Florida Press. 378 pages, illustrated. \$12.50.

For more than thirty-five years, Alexander Skutch made a living in Costa Rica by providing herbarium specimens for institutions. He lived among the natives, acquiring a knowledge of their ornithology, horticulture, religion and economy. Despite the inexorable march of civilization and the resultant deforestation, vandalism and ecological upset, the author's joy in his surroundings is clearly felt. Skutch philosophizes on the myth that the tropical environment is one of easy bounty and explains how the "slash and burn" horticulture of the Mayans produced the present day nomadic population.

This work has the charm of the journals of Fairchild, Wilson and Teale. It is recommended to botanists travelling to Central America, to field naturalists in training, to armchair naturalists, and to those with a love of nature. I endorse it highly!

ELINORE B. TROWBRIDGE

**Modern Potting Composts.** A. C. Bunt. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 277 pages, illustrated. £8.00.

The author introduces the need for changing to loamless potting compost by a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of both loam and loamless based composts. An informative description of most available alternative compost components is followed by an analysis of the physical aspects of compost formulation, the principles of nutrition, and the procedures involved in compost preparation, fertilization and irrigation.

The manual, being written for the professional horticulturist, student and scientific hobbyist, includes many graphs, tables and figures which demonstrate the interactions between the potting compost, the plant material, and the cultural practices. The technical information, which is based on studies made in England, U.S.A. and several European countries, and the appendices, which contain important conversion tables and chemical constants, constitute a valuable reference manual for anyone intending to prepare composts for pot plants.

KENNETH D. SHAW

**House Plants Indoors/Outdoors.** San Francisco: Ortho Book Division, Chevron Chemical Co. 97 pages, illustrated. \$3.98.

Over 350 color photographs make this an attractive volume to glance through at leisure, but pictures are definitely not its only attributes. A clear, well-written text explains everything from air layering *Dracaenas* to *Zebrina* propagation. Many excellent photographs illustrate such processes as repotting, pinching and watering. These visual aids should delight the beginning gardener, and in this case, a single clear photograph is worth a thousand words.

In addition to the usual sections on artificial lights, pests and diseases, bulbs and individual house plants, there is an interesting calendar that tells you what you should be doing with certain of your plants month by month. A source list gives some of the retail outlets for common and not-so-common house plants.

A book such as this certainly ought to recruit legions of indoor plant fanciers. In addition, with its reasonable cost and lucid presentation, it ought to find its way onto many experienced gardeners' shelves as well.

MARGO W. REYNOLDS



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