

Chromosome numbers are offered as is the Raunkiaer life form classification. The native status of the taxon in the British Isles is clarified, and its habitat and range (local and worldwide) are succinctly described. The discussion of subspecific taxa (also labelled in bolder type) follows. A large number of species and hybrids that are marginally part of the flora by virtue of their being infrequent and/or local escapes are described in smaller type but are not included in the keys. These constitute a valuable supplement to the data on the well-established plants of the British Isles.

Over 80 pen-and-ink sketches are scattered through the text, representing typical species of large groups or providing illustrations of various morphological features. The sketches are referred to in the appropriate citation in the glossary, increasing the value of both contributions significantly. This excellent glossary would have been better yet had sketch references been to page numbers rather than figure numbers; the reader is left to thumb through many pages of text before finding the desired illustration — an unnecessary annoyance.

The index looks very good (another major flora that includes authorities with the species' names — wonderful!) but is not without flaws. I found several omissions soon after opening the book, the most striking being the failure to list the names for genera *Typha* and *Juncus*. These look like

computer-generated errors and are not significant in their own right (they follow family names that are very similar and all species in the genera are listed). The omission of a species in a complex genus (*Hieracium exotericum*) does little to restore one's confidence in the index, however. How many other "glitches" are there like these?

The book is solidly bound with a glued and stitched binding and is printed on good quality, durable paper, which enhances the readability of the small but clear type. The lay-out is plain, practical and very effective.

To sit down and read a book like this would be daunting indeed and I did not read all of the species accounts for this review. I read many, however, and I worked with the book for several months in the course of regular botanical studies. Even with *Flora Europaea* readily available, I found this book to be a tremendous help by providing an up-to-date and credible reference to many of the cosmopolitan plants and introductions of European origin that we encounter in eastern Canada. This book is a remarkable achievement and is an excellent investment for field and herbarium botanists on both sides of the Atlantic. Now if someone would just do this with *Gray's Manual* . . . !

DANIEL F. BRUNTON

2704 Marie Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2B 7E4

## The Mushroom Manual

By Lorentz C. Pearson. 1987. Naturegraph Publishers, Happy Camp, California. 224 pp., illus. U.S. \$8.95.

A well-written handbook for the beginner, *The Mushroom Manual* concentrates at first on four easily recognized, edible mushrooms, called "the foolproof four". Another chapter entitled "the fatal five" discusses five readily recognized poisonous mushrooms, their toxins, the effect of toxins on the human body, and how to recognize the major groups of poisonous mushrooms. Dr. Pearson's philosophy — learn a few and learn them well before getting involved with the hundreds of different species in the woods — is a good approach for the beginning student.

Subsequent chapters describe additional rather distinctive edible and poisonous species and present some hints on tasting mushrooms and on preparing them for the table. The final 100 pages of

the book are divided among dichotomous or multiple-choice "keys" for identification of several hundred different mushrooms; a synopsis of the principal features of the major groups, i.e. families and genera; and a glossary.

The author's conservative taxonomy, which uses very generally defined genera and families, causes some problems in his circumscription of families and will perplex some students. For example, the species usually placed in *Leccinum* are referred to *Boletus*, and the definition of the family Thelephoraceae as "mostly polypore-like fungi with minute pores and dark colored spores" is quite mistaken.

The principal weakness in the manual lies in the illustrations. The colour plate depicting spore print colors for the dark spored groups is not useful due to the poor quality. Only two mushrooms are pictured in colour: the frontispiece is of *Morchella*



*conica* and the cover is a beautiful photograph of *Suillus spectabilis*. There are about 150 species illustrated in black-and-white line drawings, which are not executed in great detail; thus, some of the illustrated species are not readily recognized. In figure 32 the captions A and D appear to be reversed.

Those mushroom hunters who like to compare their collections with pictures may not be satisfied with this book, simply because the drawings were not meant to be used alone but along with the text. There are a few typographical errors. One worth

correcting is on page 51 where "death cap" should read "death cup". In the index the list of species of *Suillus* is missing.

In summary, this book is a good introduction to the study of mushrooms which emphasizes the "safety-first" approach to collecting, eating and identifying wild mushrooms.

J. GINNS

National Mycological Herbarium, Wm. Saunders Bldg.,  
Agriculture Canada, Ottawa K1A 0C6

## The European Garden Flora. Volume I: Pteridophyta, Gymnospermae, Angiospermae-Monocotyledons (Part I).

Edited by S. M. Walters, A. Brady, C. D. Brickell, J. Cullen, P. S. Green, J. Lewis, V. A. Matthews, D. A. Webb, P. F. Yea, and J. C. M. Alexander. 1986. Cambridge University Press, New York. xv + 430 pp., illus. U.S. \$99.50.

This work is a companion piece to the *Flora Europaea* and deals with the garden and conservatory plants cultivated in Europe. Many of the included treatments are based on recent monographs. It is important to remember that this work is a flora, not a gardening encyclopedia, and so has a somewhat different emphasis. Volume I covers pteridophytes (ferns), gymnosperms (conifers), and some monocots, the major ones being the Liliaceae, Iridaceae, and Amaryllidaceae. Volume 2 (which was published in 1984) also dealt with monocots, particularly bromeliads, palms, gingers, cannas and orchids. In all, six volumes are planned.

Each entry includes the correct species name, synonyms, a description, references (including ones to good illustrations), geographical distribution, hardiness, flowering time, subspecific variants (if a species has many named cultivars only the most common are given, but reference is made to supplemental registration lists), and in some cases notes on culture. Widely grown hybrids

are given the same treatment as full-fledged species. Each taxon is dealt with in a formal (for large genera) or an informal (for small genera) key. The importance of this work in stabilizing the nomenclature of horticultural plants cannot be overemphasized.

The authors have made a great effort to take into consideration the needs of the informed amateur gardener. In species names, authorities are written out in full so as not to confuse the reader with cryptic abbreviations. The same is done with journal references. Standard english place names are used instead of the vernacular ones as was done in the *Flora Europaea* (e.g. Crete not Kriti). The informal keys focus on characters which are found in only a few of the species in a particular genus, thus allowing the reader to quickly reduce the number of possible choices. A generous supply of illustrations (44 plates) and a glossary supplement the keys and descriptions. One minor quibble: the common names of families, genera, and species are nowhere given. This is a very useful reference indeed.

ALINA STAHEVITCH

Biosystematics Research Centre, Agriculture Canada,  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C6

## Red Pines on the Ridge

By Leon E. Pavlick. 1985. Braemer Books, Victoria. 33 pp., illus. \$12.95.

*Red Pines on the Ridge* is the first book in an "On the ridge" series by Leon Pavlick — a series

designed to mesh the interpretation of natural history and simple story telling. The approach used to achieve this is an anthropomorphic one in which the Red Pine is treated in the first person and



Ginns, J. H. 1989. "The Mushroom Manual, by Lorentz C. Pearson [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 103(1), 129–130. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.356096>

.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/106991>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.356096>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/356096>

#### **Holding Institution**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

#### **Sponsored by**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

#### **Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.