

the author are primarily those medicinal plants that have been subjected to extensive scientific research and are recognized as possessing therapeutic effects, and, in most cases, approved as natural medicines by the German Office of Health.

There is an informative section on what you need to know about medicinal plants and includes a topical section on - how do medicinal plants act? and - medicinal plants and the substances they contain. Information is given about how to store medicinal plants correctly, weighing, mixing, and measuring plant substances, collecting medicinal plants yourself, and how to grow plants under the section compendium of medicinal plants. About half of the book deals with self-help treatments organized as units that focus on complaints or ailments. Rheumatism and gout will serve as an example of these units. There is a section that defines these metabolic diseases and the help given from healing plants. The healing plants used to provide relief and efficacy and the preparation procedures before application or use are described in great detail. The plant preparations are based on specific recipes and dosages. The directions and instructions for using plant preparations appear detailed and specific.

The last half of the book is a Compendium of Medicinal Plants arranged alphabetically by common name. Each plant or distinctive plant part is illustrated in color as a quarter or half page photograph. The color reproduction is of outstanding quality. The scientific name is given for each plant, requirements for cultivation, uses of the plant in general and in folk medicine and in some cases interesting facts pertaining to historical accounts of the plant.

The appendix contains a section on using healing plants properly and instructions for preparing and applying teas. There is an index that has common and scientific names and subject words that facilitates finding information. A brief glossary of 74 terms, mostly botanical, helps the lay reader to understand the botanical descriptions. There is a section on sources of herbs, sources of herb seeds, and sources of information that gives names and addresses. There is a section for further reading that has a list of 11 books and four addresses for journal publications.

This book will appeal to readers with a general interest in natural medicines, to gardeners who may wish to grow these plants, and botanists who wish to collect medicinal plants for purely botanical reasons.—*Harold W. Keller, Research Associate, BRIT.*

ARVIGO, ROSITA and MICHAEL BALICK. 1993. **Rainforest Remedies, One Hundred Healing Herbs of Belize.** (ISBN 0-914955-13-6, pbk.). Lotus Press, Box 325, Twin Lakes, Wisconsin 53181 \$9.95. 219 pp, 100 black and white line drawings (text illustrations by Laura Evans), size 5 1/4" × 8 1/2".

This book chronicles the work of The Belize Ethnobotany Project initiated in 1987 that has recorded the author's findings about plants used as medicines, foods, fiber, in construction and agriculture, during religious ceremonies, and as part of spiritual beliefs. This project has resulted in the creation of The Ix Chel Tropical Research Foundation, dedicated to traditional medicine, ethnobotanical studies, Belizean culture, and rainforest conservation.

The introductory pages describe the country of Belize under the topical heading background. The methodology and purpose, scope of book, and organization of text and illustrations explain the formatting of the descriptions and illustrations of plants that follow.

The English *common name* is given in bold and capital typeface at the top of each page and used as the primary means of identification. The plants are arranged alphabetically according to these names. Fortunately the *scientific name and author* are also given for each plant to eliminate confusion. The plant *family name* is given according to the classification system of the late Arthur Cronquist. Under the heading *description* appears a brief field description of the plant giving the habit, type of leaves, inflorescence and fruits. The *habitat* represents the most common areas where the plant is found either in the wild or in cultivation. *Traditional uses* represents a compilation of information from healers and personal observations of plant use in Belize. *Research results* are the results of laboratory research with appropriate references cited. *Illustrations* are full page black and white line drawings which illustrate one or more key features useful in the field identification of the plant. There is a glossary of medical and botanical terms that is helpful to better understand the plant descriptions and uses.

There is a 12-page list of references mostly from the last 15 years. A number of the journals cited are published in South and Latin America and this adds to the utility of the book, especially for many in the United States. There is an index of scientific and common names.

The authors have made a valuable contribution to preserve the traditions and customs of the indigenous peoples of Belize. The authors have donated the proceeds from the sale of this book to support the native traditional healers and ecosystem preservation in Central American rainforests. The sensitivity, concern, and goodwill shown by Rosita Arvigo and Michael Balick for native peoples represents a model for others to emulate.—*Harold W. Keller, Research Associate, BRIT.*



Keller, Harold W. 1995. "Rainforest Remedies, One Hundred Healing Herbs of Belize by Rosita Arvigo, Michael Balick, Laura Evans." *SIDA, contributions to botany* 16, 607–608.

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