

### Alaska Trees and Shrubs

By Leslie A. Viereck and Elbert L. Little. Agriculture Handbook No. 410, Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Washington, D.C. 1972. 265 p. \$3.25.

This book represents a considerable improvement over the small 63 page *Pocket Guide to Alaska Trees* (by R. E. Taylor and E. L. Little, 1950) which it replaces. Both trees and shrubs are covered, including subshrubs. Following the introduction is a review of Alaskan vegetation types. Both summer and winter keys to the Alaskan trees and shrubs are included, emphasizing vegetative characteristics for easier identifications. The greater part of the book is devoted to the descriptions of 133 species of trees and shrubs. Key words placed in bold-face type enhance the readability of the descriptions and increase their usefulness for identification purposes. Comments on economic value and on native or pioneer usage of the plants

enliven the descriptions. Line drawings, often shaded, and general Alaskan distribution maps are included for most species. The format is made convenient for the reader with the placement of the species descriptions, range maps, and illustrations all on the same page. A valuable contribution is the new, folded, colored vegetation map of Alaska compiled from various previous maps and the author's own field experience.

The book attains a high level of scholarship and production. The taxonomy is of high standard, although one may not necessarily agree with the author's dispensations of such groups as *Salix*, *Betula*, and *Alnus*. The book is highly recommended to anyone interested in the woody flora of Alaska or adjacent northwestern Canada. It is well worth the modest price.

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### Rocky Mountain Flora

By William A. Weber. Colorado Associated University Press, Boulder, Colo. 1972. 438 p. \$7.95.

This is the fourth edition of a book, which in the first two editions published in 1953 and 1961, was called "Handbook of Plants of the Colorado Front Range." The 1967 edition, which embodied many changes, was reviewed in this Journal by D. B. O. Savile (1968, Canadian Field-Naturalist 82: 61).

The main body of the text of the present edition does not appear to have been changed from that of the third edition. There are however several great improvements: the text is printed on a thinner, glossy paper, the pages are  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch shorter and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch narrower although the printed area is still the same size, and the cover is slightly thinner and thus more pliable. Even the addition of eight pages of colored plates following page 20

has still left this new edition a full 8 ounces lighter than the third edition. It can thus be more readily packed in the field than its predecessor.

This flora is indeed an excursion flora, which is designed for the use of the advanced amateur. The nomenclature appears to be up to date, so it can serve as a ready reference for the professional botanist as well. The text is in the form of an expanded key. Of the 1575 species treated, approximately one quarter are illustrated by line drawings which were contributed by Dr. Charles F. Yokum.

*Rocky Mountain Flora* is highly recommended for use in, and adjacent to, the Front Range in Colorado, for which it was intended, but not as the title suggests, for the whole of the Rocky Mountain chain.

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