Arnoldia Reviews

Ximenia americana. From A Flora of Tropical Florida.


John Kunkel Small's work on the vegetation of the southeastern United States culminated in the publication in 1933 of his Manual of the Southeastern Flora, an impressive volume of 1576 pages. Small was regarded as a "splitter" since he emphasized minor variations in form, structure or distribution as the basis for describing new genera and species. In the genus Chamaesyce Small recognized thirty species, seventeen of which he described.
He divided the wood-sorrel, Oxalis, creating three new genera and describing as new ten of the nineteen species.

The burden of proof that such splitting is not biologically sound unfortunately rests on the succeeding botanists who combined the taxa. Work at the generic level has been conducted at the Arnold Arboretum by Dr. Carroll Wood and collaborators, among whom was Dr. Long, senior author of the present volume.

To the student of the vegetation of southern peninsular Florida a new manual was needed presenting insofar as possible a modern treatment both of the taxonomy and the nomenclature of the plants. Long and Lakela’s volume of 980 pages is physically as large as Small’s and is not designed to be carried easily in the field. Included are treatments of 1647 species of ferns and their allies, gymnosperms and flowering plants. Many of the commonly cultivated plants or those escaped from cultivation are included.

A special introduction on the history of botanical collecting in southern Florida was contributed by Joseph Evan. The authors review the geology and the plant communities of the area which has its northern limit at the latitude of Lake Okeechobee and includes the Florida Keys. A useable key to families is supplied along with keys to genera and species. The 125 illustrations in general adequately represent the plants. There are some technical errors of fact and of nomenclature which other reviews have noted, but these are very few and can always be corrected in the next edition. The authors are to be commended for completing and publishing a useful volume for an interesting and much visited area of the United States.

Richard A. Howard


This volume is fundamentally the 24 papers presented during a conference on horticulture and field botany scheduled by the Royal Horticultural Society and the Botanical Society of the British Isles. The papers represent the interests and talents of the several speakers and form an extremely valuable compendium highly recommended for personal and professional libraries. The lead article titled “And never the twain shall
meet: Horticulture and Botany — allies not enemies” appropriately sets the stage for discussions of conservation; the roles of nurseries, private gardens and botanic gardens; the principles of botanical nomenclature and of horticultural nomenclatural problems; the relevance of genetics and the development of garden plants from wild plants; the value of the herbarium; the literature of plants and special treatments of such genera as *Alchemilla*, *Aceana*, *Hypericum*, “Mesembryanthemums,” Mints, *Hebe*, Arums, Dandelions and others. The editor apologizes that the colored slides used to illustrate the talks could not be included.

The symposium is an idea that should, and certainly will, be copied by other horticultural societies. The reviewer only regrets that he could not have been present for the Conference, for each article, excellently written, deserves the presence of its author. Copies of this volume are available from the Botanical Society of the British Isles, c/o Department of Botany, British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Rd., London, S.W. 7.

**Richard A. Howard**


This is the third edition and is by a new publisher (the former having allowed the publication to go out of print). Corrections and additions are minor in the current edition, and it is handsome with 16 color and 99 black and white illustrations of more than 125 edible and poisonous wild or, occasionally, cultivated plants of Florida.

If not used for actual survival, the volume would be extremely useful to the casual visitor for the identification and lore of many of the common plants.

**Richard A. Howard**
The identification of plants in winter condition has always been a challenge to the professional as well as the amateur botanist. Nevertheless there are characteristics in the twigs and buds that enable one to name the plant to genus and occasionally to species.

The present volume, although in title limited to the state of Maine, will have a wider application, and has proven to be a pleasure to use. Dichotomous — two-choice — keys are supplied; the first enabling a determination to genus, and the second to species within the larger genera. Reference is made to the excellent plates that illustrate the critical portions, even to the appearance of the cut end of the stem. The drawings are alive and certainly among the best available for this purpose. A good glossary and an index combining common and scientific
names is supplied with reference both to plates and to the occurrence of the name in the keys.

I particularly appreciate the dedication of this volume to Professor Merritt L. Fernald who, I am sure, would have "humphed" his approval and appreciation.

Copies are available from the Secretary, Department of Botany, Deering Hall, University of Maine, Orono, Maine 04473. The book is highly recommended for enjoyable use on winter days.

RICHARD A. HOWARD


Although truly a beginner's book, this large (8½ × 11-inch) volume has exceptionally good photographs and drawings, a clarity of text and printing to enhance its basic information, and good suggestions. Chapters are devoted to planning; plant selection, culture and sources; lists of perennials, trees, shrubs and ground covers; suggested reading; and public gardens worth visiting. This would be an excellent guide for the new home owner or a fine housewarming gift.

RICHARD A. HOWARD


This work by an English author, dealing obviously with British gardening, arouses mixed feelings in the American reader. There is gratitude for a good deal of material that is useful even in a New England setting; yet there is envy that we cannot utilize all the good things here in the United States.

The concept of ground-cover embraces certain plants, mainly perennials and shrubs, that cover the ground. The height of the plants described ranges from a few inches to several feet. There are many pages of descriptive lists on site, micro-climate, native habitat, season, growth habit, as well as characteristics
of blossom, fruit, and leaf. Few of the cultivars cited are available at U.S. nurseries.

There is an interesting section on planting public areas such as highway slopes, but no reference to cushioning plants for softening the impact of ejected motorists. The discussion of cemetery planting makes sense. A very useful appendix, applicable here as well as in England, deals with the extermination of certain ground-covers that the author considers to be vicious weeds. Americans will endorse his opinion. In summary, a most useful book with the English orientation taken into consideration.

Elinore B. Trowbridge


The title of this work, now in its third printing, aroused expectations of coyness in this jaded reviewer Examination quite erased the prejudice. This pleasant, readable, humorous account of sprouting and growing avocado pits, grapefruit, papaya, mango, kiwi and other seeds in an apartment is presented as the experience of a novice. The author is actually as knowledgeable as most people get to be in a lifetime. He teaches not only techniques of indoor gardening for a beginner, but the underlying generalizations about plant needs which usually are omitted from such books.

Material on containers, soil mixes, drainage, domestic hazards to furniture and marital harmony are included. Langer arouses the reader's interest in botany by his example of watching the potted mango seed and discovering grass blades. Although most of the experiments described involve seeds or cuttings of tropical plants, he also deals with others such as Jerusalem artichokes and sunflowers. No nicer gift than this little book can be imagined for the person just developing some curiosity about plants.

Elinore B. Trowbridge