Arnoldia Reviews


This work represents the collaboration of two biologist-naturalists who have taught, lectured, and published. The volume is part of a series designed to acquaint residents and visitors to the Cascade Mountains region of the West Coast with the flora and fauna of the area.

Habitats and their ecology are fully outlined. There are botanical descriptions of the plant families represented in the various plant zones. Animals are treated in a similar fashion. The drawings and colored prints are of excellent quality.

Some prior reader knowledge of botany and zoology is implied throughout the work. The impression of this publication is that it is a required field guide for students. It is not, however, a traditional guide with keys; on the contrary, it consists of a series of descriptive paragraphs concerning various plants and animals of the Cascade region. It is therefore recommended for students in the Cascade area and in general for adults with an interest in nature and/or ecology.

Elinore B. Trowbridge


John Evelyn was born in 1620 and died in 1706. From the time of the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 he appears to have been a person of consequence in the government. What this book does do is to give a view of Evelyn and his social milieu — what it does not do is give any real background to explain Evelyn the forester and author of “Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest-Trees, and the Propagation of Timber . . .” a work which went through four editions in Evelyn’s lifetime. Neither does it
explain Evelyn the translator of “The French Gardiner: Instructing how to cultivate all sorts of fruit trees, and herbs for the garden . . .” 1658 — (3rd ed. 1676). Nor does it explain Evelyn the author of “Kalendrium Hortense . . .” 1664, 10th edition 1706, which seems to be the original for all subsequent gardeners calendars.

The Evelyn portrayed is a very human person and one for whom it is easy to feel sympathy. The book is well worth reading for its perspective on the life and times of 17th century England.

GORDON P. DEWOLF, JR.

This book must be seen to be believed, for no review can do justice to the encyclopedic coverage, the beauty of the illustrations, the charm of the text. It is, by far, the best single volume on trees ever published.

The author admits he is not a botanist, nor a forester, nor even a gardener, but a writer who has found in trees "a new point of contact with creation, a source of wonder and satisfaction," and he has presented a personal account that, as he states, has made his former awareness of trees seem quite shameful. With the cooperation of many people, he has assembled a tremendous amount of information on trees. The opening chapters, 30 in number and each two pages long, cover topics from how a tree grows, to pruning and other arts. They are delightful essays and reviews at first botanical, then historical; all skim the subject, yet are profusely and appropriately illustrated. It is impossible to stop reading this book because of its content, but one does because of the small type, only to pick it up again and again.

The bulk of the volume comprises illustrated, short articles on groups of trees. Chapters such as The Pines of Asia, The Plum Yews and Podocarps, The Chestnuts, The Hawthornes, Empress Trees and Indian Beans, The Elders, cover the best known genera and range from their wild habitat to their appearance and diversification as cultivated plants.

A reference section and index completes the book, with charts and graphs covering the seasons of flowering, rates of growth (tree outlines superimposed on photographs of buildings depicting ten to one hundred years), insect pests and a guide to choosing the proper plant according to the site, characteristics of the plant or the environmental problem.

A book costing this much is often considered a display item for homes or libraries, but this is a readable, useful, attractive volume, highly recommended. Anyone interested in trees should have a personal copy and no single volume would be more useful to the botany or horticulture "student" of any age. The International Book of Trees is a remarkable accomplishment.

Richard A. Howard

Viburnum Sieboldii. Photo: P. Bruns.