

BOOK REVIEW 2006 - #3

Horn, Dennis and Tavia Cathcart. *Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley, and the Southern Appalachians*. 2005. 496 pages; flower color key; selected dichotomous keys; colored photographs; line drawings; descriptions; illustrated glossary; references; index of Latin and common names. Lone Pine Publishing, Auburn, Washington. Soft Cover. 5½ x 8½ inches. ISBN 1-55105-428-0. Price: US \$22.95. Available from Lone Pine Publishing, 1808 B Street NW, Suite 140, Auburn, WA 98001

Dennis Horn and Tavia Cathcart with contributions from Thomas Hemmerly and David Duhl, developed a splendid and well-designed wildflower guide. It begins with 300 flower-images, arranged by color, to help the reader to initially identify species. From here, the user is directed to more information about the species within its genus and family. Next, an introduction explains the guide, outlines the natural regions of Tennessee, and discusses the indigenous people, ethnobotany, and conservation activities within the state.

The bulk of the book covers more than 1200 species; over 800 are described and illustrated. These are arranged in groupings of related genera or families, separated by color banding along the top of each page. Lilies and other monocots are near the end of the guide, including a few distinctive sedges and grasses. The book ends with a glossary, references and an index.

The individual descriptions (two per page) are clearly organized with bold-faced sections. Habitat, range, and short statements regarding similar species are provided. The notes often include unusual features of the plants, the origin of their names, and information regarding their usefulness to Native Americans and early settlers. Descriptions are accompanied by photographs, and these are uniformly excellent. Whether close-ups of flowers and inflorescences, or more distant views of the entire plant, the color photographs provide the reader clear and informative images. Line drawings supplement keys to genera within larger families, and accompany the glossary. All told, this is a richly informative guide.

Though centered on Tennessee, the guide covers a large area ranging from southwestern Pennsylvania, western Virginia and the Carolinas to the northern parts of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, and westward to northeastern Arkansas and southeastern Missouri. The southern two-thirds of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio are also covered, making the guide useful for exploring much of our own state.

By having small images arranged by flower color in the front, with descriptions and larger photographs arranged by family groupings, this guide is useful to both beginners and to those already acquainted with plant families. An excellent glossary and the informative notes are important elements of the book. Considering the quality of the photographs and the wealth of information, this guide is a real bargain for anyone visiting the southern Appalachians and surrounding areas.

Reviewer: William Burger, Curator Emeritus, Department of Botany, The Field Museum, 1400 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60605