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Book Reviews

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Not only Ohioans but plant lovers everywhere will welcome this eminently useful manual written by one of America's foremost botanists and plant ecologists, and jointly sponsored by The Ohio Academy of Science and the National Science Foundation. Undertaken as "a contribution toward the vascular flora of Ohio", it catalogs and describes the trees, shrubs and woody climbers native, naturalized, or escaped, as meticulously as did the late C. C. Deam in his admirable Trees of Indiana and Shrubs of Indiana published in 1932.

Of immeasurable value are Dr. Braun's state-county maps showing the known distribution of Ohio's indigenous species, each carefully verified by herbarium specimens and with its name printed in boldface type. Approximately 50 of the species are sufficiently rare to inhabit but one county, or even but one locality, because here they exist on or near the margins of their respective ranges. Within the text, too, one notes the names of almost 100 adventives (exotics) spelled out in small caps.

Included are some 90 full-page line drawings illustrating the native woody flora under year-round conditions. Beautifully executed and with fidelity to details, they depict the most salient features stressed in the keys. Characteristics of leaves, fruits and winter twigs, pertinent to the field identification of a plant, receive emphasis. Often on one plate appear 2 to 8 different species—a quite helpful means of comparison.

Dr. Braun has prepared excellent summer and winter keys to Ohio's woody plant genera, and over 90 different keys to species. Her meaningful synopsis of these keys, plus an index to genera in the keys, greatly facilitates the identity of an unknown specimen. Technical descriptions are reduced to a minimum, for rarely do distinguishing features from the keys reappear under species discussions.

With few exceptions, the nomenclature accords with that in Gray's Manual of Botany, eighth edition (Pernald, 1950). Latin synonyms are frequently introduced. Accepted common names are those of popular usage.

There is a preface by Dr. Braun followed by an introduction devoted to records, Ohio herbaria, floras or checklists previously published, nomenclature, and scientific and common names. Next comes a 10-page section (with 4 plates) on Descriptive Terms carefully done and giving over 150 examples (references to genera, species, chapter plates, or page numbers).

A 14-page analysis (with 10 maps) of the Vegetation of Ohio and Correlation with Environment is an engrossing discussion of Ohio's indigenous forest types. It explores each local environmental factor (climatic, geologic, physiographic, edaphic, biotic) influencing forest distribution, thereby reflecting the author's intensive ecological studies throughout the past 30 years, the summation of which is her well-known Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America published in 1950.

Keys to Genera, plus an Index to Genera in the Keys, occupy 25 pages. The Systematic Text itself, arranged phylogenetically and including a wealth of botanical lore, totals 275 pages. In all, 55 families, 338 native species, 43 hybrids, and some 200 recognized varieties and forms are dealt with. Afterwards comes a Glossary, a List of Abbreviations of Authors, Literature Cited, a General Index, and a complete cross-referenced Index to Plant Names.

A scholarly presentation printed on excellent quality paper and painstakingly proofread, The Woody Plants of Ohio gives the reader not only accurate and complete taxonomic descriptions but distribution patterns of all woody perennials in the Buckeye State. It is 734 inches by 1034 inches, attractively bound in forest green cloth, and displays on its cover a gold etching of the state tree, Ohio Buckeye. The reviewer considers it one of the very best of the many woody plant identification manuals.

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