
Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America. *E. Lucy Braun* The Blakiston Co., Philadelphia. 1950. xiv+596 pp. \$10.00.

This publication, an outstanding contribution to plant geography, is certain to be a widely cited reference in plant ecology and related fields for many years. In the first place, no other book of its kind is available and, secondly, the material on which it is based (the primeval vegetation of Eastern United States) is rapidly becoming decimated.

The author's concept of the deciduous forests of eastern North America embraces the whole forested area south of the Boreal Forest, sometimes sub-divided into the Hemlock-Hardwood, Southeastern Evergreen, and Deciduous Forest formations. The three major objectives expressed in the text are as follows: to describe the primeval forests; to give data on floristic composition and aspects; and to trace the pattern of forest vegetation through its geological history. When one contemplates the vastness of the problem area and the great age of some of the communities, it may be said that the writer has been eminently successful, even though the sample quadrat analyses seem somewhat inadequate.

Treatment of the forests is descriptive and from the physiographic point of view, the boundaries of the forest regions coincide almost perfectly with Fenneman's physical divisions of Eastern North America. The descriptions are augmented by 97 excellent illustrations and 91 tables; in addition there is a large map of the forest regions inserted in the back. Factors other than historical are not discussed. The part given to vegetational history is presented in a dynamic fashion. There may be some who disagree with the Braun viewpoints, but no one has ever before put the story together. No matter what phase of research the forest ecologist may approach, the book will form a broad beginning base from which to start.

The work is based on 25 years of personal field work, and the author has drawn freely from literature, citing more than 600 titles. The publication will be a useful reference to others than plant ecologists, especially to foresters, conservationists, geographers, and animal ecologists. For those unfamiliar with botanical nomenclature, an index of scientific and common names has been included; and there is also a subject index.

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