

BOOK REVIEW

ALFRED RICHARDSON AND KEN KING. 2011. **Plants of Deep South Texas: A Field Guide to the Woody and Flowering Species.** (ISBN-13: 978-1-60344-144-5, pbk.). Texas A&M University Press, John H. Lindsey Building, Lewis Street, 4354 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-4354, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.tamupress.com, 800-826-8911). \$30.00, 448 pp., 28 line drawings, 1,026 color photos, 7" × 10".

Plants of Deep South Texas is an essential field-guide to the botany of Cameron, Hidalgo, Willacy, and Starr counties (collectively known as the Lower Rio Grande Valley). The book covers more than three million acres of southernmost Texas and represents subtropic, temperate, coastal, and desert habitats comprising eleven distinct biotic communities. Over 800 species (excluding grasses) are described, accounting for about 77 percent of all species reported for this area. Perhaps, the most comprehensive photo-illustrated flora of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the book also includes undescribed species, newly described species, the first published photographs of many species, and range extensions of many species, using the latest available taxonomy.

The book begins with a short introduction to the region and an illustrated guide to leaf shapes and flower parts. These sections are followed by the book's individual species accounts that cover common and scientific names, habit, leaves, flowers, fruit, blooming period, and distribution. The plant species accounts are divided into algae, ferns, gymnosperms, monocots, and dicots. Also included for each species is the etymology of the scientific name, the use of the plant by larval butterflies, and species value from a human perspective. For each species there is at least one photo, and for some, two or three photos. The book ends with a glossary of terms, an index to butterfly and moth species mentioned in the text, a bibliography and a general index.

This book does not contain a key to families or species; rather it is designed to be a field reference for the plants of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. While the book is thick and heavy, the information contained within more than makes up for lugging it around in your backpack. Amateur naturalists, farmers, ranchers, and professional botanists alike will find this book quite useful for identifying the plants of southernmost Texas. I recommend this book to anyone working in South Texas.—Kevin Janni, *SWCA Environmental Consultants, 3901 Arlington Highlands Blvd, Suite 200, Arlington, TX 76018, kjanni@swca.com* and *Research Associate, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 1700 University Drive, Fort Worth, Texas 76107-3400, U.S.A.*