

BOOK NOTICE

W.R. SYKES. 2016. **Flora of the Cook Islands**. (ISBN-13: 978-0-915809-07-3, hbk). National Tropical Botanical Garden, 3530 Papalina Road, Kalaheo, Hawaii 96741, U.S.A. (**Orders:** http://botany.si.edu/cook_Island.htm; www.amazon.com/Flora-Cook-Islands-W-Sykes). \$95.00, 950 pp., 185 color images, 256 b/w drawings, 7" × 10".

From the publisher: *Flora of the Cook Islands* is a complete account of plants found wild in the Cook Islands and plants common in cultivation. Descriptions and keys are provided for 108 fern species and 567 flowering plant species. Of these, 104 ferns and 187 flowering plant species are indigenous. The remainder are either naturalized or are found in cultivation. Of the native plants described, 26 species are found only in the Cook Islands. The remainder of the native species are shared mainly with the rest of East Polynesia or have a wider distribution. This Flora will be useful throughout Polynesia.

- 950 pages
- 185 color images with an emphasis on the colorful garden flora
- 256 black and white drawings placed alongside descriptions
- Uses of plants, especially traditional medicinal uses
- Introduction history for many naturalized and important crop species like coconut and bananas
- Cook Island names of plants provided, often several for a plant species

Bill Sykes is a retired botanist living in Christchurch, New Zealand. He was formerly a botanist at the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) Botany Division at Lincoln (now the Allan Herbarium, Landcare Research). Bill previously published floras of Niue (1970) and the Kermadec Islands (1977). He was a co-author of the 1988 *Flora of New Zealand* series volume on naturalized plants of New Zealand and contributed the section on bamboos to the New Zealand grass Flora in 2000. Bill first visited the Cook Islands in 1974, followed by eight later visits to research the Cook Islands flora. *Flora of the Cook Islands* has taken Bill 20 years to write.

Bill Sykes did a fantastic job with his new *Flora of the Cook Islands* (981 pp.). The excellent introduction is packed with important and useful information: Geography, Human presence in the Cook Islands, History of botanical work in the Cook Islands, Flora relationships, Flora statistics, Endemic plants, Flora history, Composition of this Flora, Excluded plants, Flora format, Family arrangement, Keys, Notes below species and genus descriptions, Abbreviations and their position, and Acknowledgments. Immediately after the introduction are 26 pages of full color photos (185 taxa) of the Cook Islands' flora. The full flora treatment follows with keys, descriptions, and the occasional black and white line drawing of select taxa. The layout is nice with recognized or described taxa in a **bold** and easy to see font. Superscript symbols are given before the name of each species or subspecific taxon treated/described. With the use of three symbols, ^a = adventive, ^c = cultivated, and ⁱ = indigenous, you have an instant picture of the origin of the described plant. The flora is made up of some familiar Texas plants with several introduced species and some Texas natives including *Cuscuta campestris*, *Eclipta prostrata*, *Gaillardia pulchella*, *Lantana camara*, *Lepidium virginicum*, *Lonicera japonica*, *Paspalum dilatatum*, *Sonchus oleraceus*, *Sympyotrichum subulatum*, *Taraxacum officinale*, *Xanthium strumarium*, and the list goes on. A Glossary, References, and Index finish out the book.—Barney Lipscomb, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.