

# Book Reviews

THE FOLIAGE GARDEN: TAPESTRIES OF COLOR, SHAPE, AND TEXTURE. Becke Davis. 1998. Friedman/Fairfax Publishers, 15 West 26th Street, New York, NY 10010. <http://www.metro-books.com> 128 p. \$24.95, hardcover. ISBN 1-56799-365-6.

This book hit my desk just as I began to think about the spring gardening season. *The Foliage Garden: Tapestries of Color, Shape, and Texture* is definitely a feast for winter-weary eyes. It is richly illustrated with full-color photographs of the brilliance and subtleties found in landscape plant materials. It challenges the imagination. While we are accustomed to looking at woody plants with their fall color in mind, Davis reminds us that many of the herbaceous plants used in gardens provide texture, color and shape. She reminds us of the leaf and plant form, the ornamental value of bark and berries, and the winter interest of many plants. She challenges the reader to look beyond flower color and form. This is a book for those gardeners and practitioners who are looking for concepts beyond the mass of flower color.

The book is divided into nine chapters: A close-up look at leaves (basic leaf morphology), Bud break: The leaves of spring (an examination of the texture and appearance of new young growth and how to take advantage of it), Stars of summer (contrasts of texture and color in herbaceous and woody ornamental plants including ornamental grasses and bulbs), Foliage in autumn (the contrasts of autumn colors with bark and evergreens), A winter wonderland (a lesson in bark, berries and other persistent fruits, winter flowers and garden hardscape elements), Conifers as ornamentals (blues, gold-tones and structure), Variegated foliage (reds, pinks, yellows, creams, greens and the

play of sunlight on foliage), Foliage plants with a purpose (co-mingling of culinary herbs and ornate vegetables in the landscape, use of fragrance from flowers and foliage, and foliage plants in the water garden), and Weird and wonderful (succulents, carnivorous plants, ferns and topiaries). In each chapter, Davis provides plant lists appropriate to the topic and some simple garden plans (complete with planting lists).

Typical of many gardening books, there are recommendations on plant selection that are not appropriate to different regions of the North American Continent. While the author's gardening experience is limited to colder northern climates (Chicago and Cincinnati), the horticultural practitioner and/or advanced gardener can easily adapt the concepts and plant lists for other regions of the United States. While she might make a recommendation of placing a plant under full sun conditions in Chicago, the experienced gardener would need to put their experience to work and place that plant in afternoon shade in Atlanta. But then, that's fairly common when using other books and resources.

MARY LEWNES ALBRECHT  
Univ of Tennessee Institute of  
Agriculture  
Knoxville

WEEDS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. 1998. Southern Weed Science Society, 1508 West University Ave., Champaign, IL 61821-3313. \$120, CD-ROM for Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT or higher.

*Weeds of the United States and Canada* is an excellent reference and weed identification guide. It offers

several features such as a interesting taxonomy tutorial and a presentation feature that are not readily available in other CD-ROMs or books. The CD-ROM is easy to start—just place it in your CD drive. It does not have to be installed on your hard drive. Even through it is running from a CD drive, its response is still very fast. The only limitation was that the CD-ROM requires specific monitor settings, which eliminates using some monitors or cause the picture not to fill the screen of others.

*Weeds of the United States and Canada* is logically organized and easy to follow. It provides a brief overview and a tutorial if your knowledge of taxonomy needs to be improved. The other choices of the CD-ROM's menu include a glossary, species listings, and a presentation section. The species covered are extensive, including most common weeds found in North America. The species listings can be searched using characteristics of an unknown weed, or by plant family, scientific and common names. The glossary and articles from the *Intriguing World of Weeds* provide interesting information about many of the weeds.

The tutorial is fun and interesting, although it is probably most useful for undergraduate students, horticulturists, crop consultants, and extension advisors without an extensive background in weed science. Parts of the tutorial are good reviews of common vegetative and reproductive structures important in identifying unknown plants. I only had a few minor complaints with the tutorial. The information on weed habitats (urban, aquatic, desert, etc.) is too simplistic. It should include information on niches and species adaptation to specific environments. Why are the same species not found throughout a particular habitat? There should be multiple examples of weeds within each habitat and more pictures (instead of drawings) of plants that have particular structures important for identification. All pictures used in the tutorial or glossary need labeling and arrows pointing out the structure. The tutorial contains quizzes and exams, which are excellent learning tools but should be linked to areas where the answer to the question was discussed.

The heart of the *Weeds of the United States and Canada* is the sec-

tion on weed species. Overall the picture quality is very good and the identifying characteristics of the weeds are easy to see. The only place where I had problems with picture quality were with the seed pictures. Sometimes it was hard to make out details of the seed because of background. Generally seed characteristics are not important for weed identification. The CD-Rom emphasizes emerging and seedling stages which are important for identification of annual weeds in agricultural settings. For the perennial weeds more pictures of plants emerging from underground structures should be shown. The descriptions of individual species are good but standard. The maps indicating species range are much too general. They should indicate where the weed is most commonly found not just where it might occur.

I was happy that this CD-ROM included a glossary and Larry Mitch's *Intriguing World of Weeds* series of articles from *Weed Technology*. You can go directly to the *Intriguing World of Weeds* articles or access them from the page of an individual species. There also should be a link from an *Intriguing World of Weeds* article to pictures of the specific weeds. The second important source of additional information is the glossary. Overall the definitions are clear and easy to understand. The links between terms within the glossary and from other parts of the CD-ROM to the glossary save time and are a definite advantage over competing books such as the *Weeds of the Northeast* or *Weeds of the West*.

*Weeds of the United States and Canada* is a welcome addition to the libraries or reference shelves of many horticulturists, especially those with an interest in botany or weed science. Its price, requirement for licenses for each computer it is used on, and emphasis on weed identification might limit its use as a textbook. But we have come a long way from the line drawings of the USDA's *Selected Weeds of the United States*

JOHN MASIUNAS  
University of Illinois  
Urbana

JAPANESE FLOWERING CHERRIES. Wybe Kuitert with Arie Peterse, and Foreword by Roy Lancaster. 1999. Timber Press, Inc.; 133 S.W. Second Avenue; Suite 450; Portland, OR 97204-3527. 395 p.; 118 color photos; 29 color illustrations; 41 b/w illustrations; hardcover \$39.95 plus shipping. ISBN 0-88192-468-7.

If you are seeking a quality and specialized book packed with information about Japanese flowering cherries, this may be the one. The price is reasonable for a book with so much information. I like the book because it is comprehensive; including the natural and cultural history, and the cultivation, propagation, observation, and classification of the Japanese flowering cherries. In addition, there are extensive and detailed chapters on the Japanese Wild Cherries and the Garden Cherries. The information is arranged in a logical manner for me; that of general to specific.

The Preface addresses the complex and sometimes confusing cherry nomenclature; an issue which resurfaces in other sections of the book. The author provides resource tools in the appendices including a metric system table with conversions, cherry names in Japanese showing the Roman, Phonetic, and Japanese Characters; a glossary of standard terms and a bibliography. Most species and cultivars are illustrated with high quality color photographs which, when used with the observation characters and the classification key, help an individual identify one of the cherries. Although the key is not exhaustive, many of the more common species and cultivars are included. Interesting and helpful illustrations from woodblock prints, drawings, catalog offerings, and maps of Japan showing plant distribution are sprinkled throughout the book.

I enjoyed the author's occasional different (than I would choose) choice of words to describe a situation. For example, in discussing cherries in the hot and humid Japanese summers, the author writes, "Infestations of plant lice, caterpillars, and bugs shave many cherry trees in this season."

This specialized book should be most useful to horticulturists focusing on woody plants, small flowering trees, and landscape design. I think college faculty who teach plant identification

and the use of woody plants should place this book on supplemental reading or resource lists for their students. The book is a must for anyone with a collection of cherries and especially for libraries of arboreta and other public horticultural institutions. The one thing which I would like to have seen in the book is a list of public gardens which have special collections of Japanese flowering cherries.

I am pleased to have this high quality book in my library. I recommend you take a look at it.

JAMES E. SWASEY  
The Longwood Graduate Program  
University of Delaware  
Newark

THE FIELD GUIDE TO PHOTOGRAPHING GARDENS. Allen Rokach and Anne Millman. 1998. Amphoto Books, A Division of BPI Communications, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. 128 p. 150 color photographs. \$16.95 Softcover. ISBN 0-8174-3876-9.

This handy little guide covers the different aspects of capturing gardens on film. The authors have many useful suggestions for creating stunning photos. The text is written in active and nontechnical voice, making it an easy-to-read how-to book for students, growers, and scientists. This inexpensive book has many breathtaking photographs, offers some very creative ways of looking at ornamentals, and is small enough to tuck into a camera bag.

The book is divided into sections on equipment, lighting, composition, and color. The photos illustrate several famous gardens, including many of international fame. Situations encountered by tourists or weekend photographers, from catching the dramatic flair of Holland's Keukenhof Garden to capturing the essence of individual garden flowers. The authors' coverage of composition is particularly excellent and provides simple and clear instruction on how and what was accomplished in the photos. Additionally, all photos are labeled with geographic location, camera, lens, and exposure used. This book most likely will appeal to the ornamental horticulturist, although all camera enthusi-