

BOTANY

Plants of Southern Ontario, Trees, Shrubs, Wildflowers, Grasses, Ferns and Aquatic Plants

By Richard Dickinson, and France Royer. 2014. Lone Pine Publishing, 87 Pender Street East, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6A 1S9. 527 pages, 29.95 CDN and USD, Paper.

Lone Pine has produced 33 botanical guides mostly covering North America. Five of these specifically cover Ontario: "Trees of Ontario", "Wetland plants of Ontario", "Ontario Wildflowers", "Forest plants of central Ontario", and "Forest plants of northeastern Ontario". There is also the ROM field to wildflowers (Dickinson *et al.* 2004), partly authored by Richard Dickinson. Thus, there are plant groups and regions that are covered more completely in earlier guides by the same publisher and by one of the same authors. For example, Linda Kershaw's "Trees of Ontario" covers 213 species and the guide considered here covers 90. There are also many other guides that cover the various groups in this new book more completely, but it is sometimes convenient to start with a book that has a little of everything. Because it is incomplete however, it does not provide an accurate identification much of the time, although the user may get near to the correct identification and then use more complete books to go further.

The area covered by this guide includes two large ecoregions of southern Ontario, the Southern Deciduous Forest (also known as the Carolinian Zone) and the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Forest. The plants covered are vascular plants, but although it is implied that they are wild plants, some plants only found in gardens are included such as the Maidenhair Tree (*Ginkgo biloba*). When a guide is incomplete, the choice of what to include becomes a challenge. It seems best to include what people are most likely to encounter. In this guide the choices have not always been the best. For exam-

ple, Black Pine, which is not included, is more often seen in plantings and as an escape than Douglas-fir, which is included. The less frequent escape *Euonymus europaeus* is included while the more common, conspicuous, and native *Celastrus scandens* (in the same family) is not.

It is also helpful in an incomplete guide to mention related species that are not covered in depth and there are many places in this guide where that could have been done. On p. 245 under the text on Sundew Family, there is ample space to say that "four species occur in Ontario, one with round leaves, one with linear leaves (both shown here) and two with spoon-shaped leaves one of which has smooth leaf stalks (*D. intermedia*), the other with more or less glandular hairy leaf stalks (*D. anglica*). Likewise for Claytonia there is ample space to refer to the more northern Carolina Spring Beauty (*Claytonia caroliniana*) which has leaves less than eight times as long as broad compared to the Eastern Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) which has leaves more than eight times as long as broad.

It is not clear what the authority is for the scientific and common names, but for the scientific names at least it appears to be ITIS (Integrated Taxonomic Information System as noted on page 8). For both kinds of names, VASCAN (<http://data.canadensys.net/vascan/taxon/6949?lang=en>) may be the best choice. Here current scientific names are available and an attempt is made to standardize common names. For example *Spiranthes romazoffiana* is "Hooded Ladies'-tresses"

rather than just "Ladies'-tresses". "*Zigadenus elegans*" is "*Anticlea elegans*". "*Carex eburnea*" is "Bristle-leaved Sedge" rather than "Bristle-leaf Sedge". "Black-grass Rush" should be "Black-grass Rush". The "Dwarf Lake Primrose" should be the "Mistassini Primrose". "Pale Coralroot" should be "Early Coralroot", and etc.

The misidentified photos are disappointing in an identification guide. Following is a list of those I found (in the pre-distribution copy) including page numbers with incorrect name of photo followed by the correct name: 180 right, *Coeloglossum viride* is *Platanthera hyperborea*; 187, *Platanthera hyperborea* is *Platanthera dilatata*; 421, *Elodea canadensis* is *Najas guadalupensis*; 455, *Carex aurea* is *Carex garberi*; 459, *Carex lasiocarpa* is *Carex aquatilis* or *C. stricta*; 475, *Juncus gerardii* is *Juncus secundus*; 486, *Selaginella rupestris* is *Selaginella eclipses*; and 488, *Botrychium multifidum* is *Botrychium lanceolatum*.

There are also mistakes in the descriptions. For example the flowers of *Cypripedium* orchids have three stamens, one of which is sterile and two of which are reduced but fertile. This guide describes three of them as having a single stamen.

Although this book cannot be recommended without some reservation, and does not come close to the remarkably high standard of quality in the Lone Pine guides for BC produced by Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon, it is still a substantial achievement. It includes 528 pages, 760 species, and many impressive photographs (although some are dark). It also provides a useful overview of the wild flora of southern Ontario which includes approx. 3000 species. It is field guide size and stitch-bound with good quality paper. It will stand up well to outdoor use and is good value for the price.

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