

habitats, reduces water flow to others, and alters weather patterns and the reproduction patterns of some species. In this course, the rare and endangered plant species certainly stand in the breach.

Since the rare and endangered plant species in the Three Gorges Dam area are facing the danger of extinction, the protection and rescue of these species in situ or ex situ is becoming more and more imperative. To do this work more effectively, knowledge of these species is needed. The publication of the book *The Rare and Endangered Plant Species in the Area of Three Gorges Dam* is timely and meets the current and urgent demands. The book reflects the consciousness of responsibility of Chinese scientists in raising public awareness, providing information for presentations, and suggesting effective countermeasures for dealing with the problem of the rare and endangered plant species in the area.

The book is based on original data obtained from field surveys. The book includes accounts of 350 plant species in the Three Gorges Dam area, of which 288 were state-approved rare and endangered plant species, and 62 were recommended rare and endangered plant species. All these species are briefly introduced in terms of their biological and ecological characteristics, but with focus on a selection of 200 species. Chinese name, Latin name, geographical distribution area, morphological characteristics, habitat characteristics, modes of reproduction, category or status of rareness and endangeredness, value of protection, and the extent that they are affected by the Three Gorges Dam project, are detailed. Then appropriate protection measures are proposed. The book contains a total of 413 color photos of these plants including, for each species, 1 to 5 color photos taken at different growth periods. Some of these plant species are pteridophytes, belonging to the families such as Psilotaceae, Ophioglossaceae, Dicksoniaceae, Cyatheaceae and

Adiantaceae. Some are gymnosperm, belonging to the families such as Cycadaceae, Ginkgoaceae, Pinaceae, Taxodiaceae, Cupressaceae, Cephalotaxaceae and Taxaceae. Some are angiosperm, belonging to the families such as Saururaceae, Chloranthaceae, Juglandaceae, Betulaceae, Fagaceae, Ulmaceae, Moraceae, Aristolochiaceae, Polygonaceae, Caryophyllaceae, Nymphaeaceae, Eupteleaceae, Cercidiphyllaceae, Ranunculaceae, Berberidaceae, Magnoliaceae, Calycanthaceae, Lauraceae, Papaveraceae, Cruciferae, Bretschneideraceae, Saxifragaceae, Hamamelidaceae, Eucommiaceae, Rosaceae, Leguminosae, Rutaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Buxaceae, Aquifoliaceae, Celastraceae, Staphyleaceae, Aceraceae, Hippocastanaceae, Sapindaceae, Balsaminaceae, Rhamnaceae, Actinidiaceae, Theaceae, Tamaricaceae, Flacourtiaceae, Begoniaceae, Nyssaceae, Theligonaceae, Araliaceae, Umbelliferae, Primulaceae, Nyctaginaceae, Oleaceae, Scrophulariaceae, Plantaginaceae, Rubiaceae, Caprifoliaceae, Cucurbitaceae, Araceae, Liliaceae, Dioscoreaceae, Iridaceae and Orchidaceae. At the end of the book, the detailed list of the rare and endangered plant species in the Three Gorges Dam area which are listed in the Red List of China Species is attached.

The book was well written and there are few errors. Abundant illustrations help readers to easily understand the explanations. The book is suitable for professionals engaged in botany, forestry, geography and environmental resources and other related fields, as well as professional teachers, students and so on.

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Common Wetland Plants in China

By Zhang Shuren. 2009. Beijing Science and Technology Press, 16, Xizhimen South Street, Beijing, China 100035, 286 pages. 75.00 CNY

As we all know, wetland is an area of land whose soil is saturated with moisture either permanently or seasonally, including all areas whose water depth does not exceed six metres. Wetlands are described as ecotones, providing a transition between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, making them inherently different from each, yet highly dependent on both. The quantity of water present and the timing of its presence in part determine the functions of a wetland and its role in the environment. Wetlands provide values that no other ecosystem can, including natural water quality improvement, flood protection, shoreline erosion control, opportunities for recreation and aesthetic appreciation, and natural products for human use at no cost. Wet-

lands were regarded as the "kidneys of the world". Thus, protecting wetlands in turn can protect human safety and welfare.

Wetlands are considered the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems, or the "biological supermarkets". Wetlands support species ranging from obligate aquatic to obligate terrestrial, and also provide food and/or shelter for a large and diverse range of animals and microbes. In general, wetland can be classified as four categories; i.e., marshes, swamps, bogs, and fens. In each type of wetland, the number of species, the abundance and structure of each population and community are different, which is determined at least in part by the physical and chemical features of wetland.

Although vegetation is by no means the only element of a wetland, plant life reflects the water regime and water quality faithfully, and it influences the wetland type and function. Wetland plants hold the soil in place with their roots, absorb the energy of waves, and break up the flow of stream or river currents. Trees, root mats, and other wetland vegetation also slow the speed of flood waters and distribute them more slowly over the floodplain. Plants or vegetation provide the base of the food web of wetland ecosystem, thus, recognition of the plants or vegetation in a specific wetland is usually the first step in understanding the ecosystem of the wetland as a whole.

China is one of the countries with the richest wetland resources in the world, as is shown by its 65.94 million hectares of wetland area (not including rivers and ponds) accounting for 10% of the world's total, and ranking the first in Asia and the fourth in the world in terms of area. However, the areas of China's wetlands were for a time endangered by rapid agricultural growth. Almost 30% of China's natural wetlands vanished between 1990 and 2000. Decades of cultivation reduced China's lake coverage by 1.3 million hectares. The frequent floods, droughts, red tides and sandstorms afflicting China in recent years were regarded as closely related to the shrinkage of natural wetlands, which can store excess water to control floods and purify water and soil. Waking up to the disastrous consequences, in 2000 the Chinese government implemented an action plan, called a "grain for water" program, to protect China's wetlands. Hopefully the program is not too late to mend this damaged ecosystem.

The reasons why the wetlands have long been regarded as useless, waste, or even only disease-ridden places, and listed as reserved resources for agricultural reclamation in China, may account for the absence of the basic knowledge of wetland sciences, and hence ignorance of the importance of wetlands in environmental protection. The recognition of the plant species or vegetation in detail is of first importance for the wise protection and use of wetland ecosystem. The timely publication of the book *Common Wetland Plants in China* meets such a demand.

The book was written based on the investigation data from the first national survey of wetland resources in China and the related literature. The book details 592 common wetland vascular plant species, 4 sub-species, 35 varieties, and one form, in terms of the Chinese and Latin names, main morphological character-

istics, geographical distribution, habitat and usage. These plants belong to Isotaceae, Equisetaceae, Osmundaceae, Davalliaceae, Hypolepidaceae, Parkeriaceae, Athyriaceae, Thelypteridaceae, Onocleaceae, Blechnaceae, Dryopteridaceae, Marsileaceae, Salviniaceae, Azollaceae, Taxodiaceae, Saururaceae, Chloranthaceae, Salicaceae, Betulaceae, Juglandaceae, Moraceae, Cannabaceae, Urticaceae, Santalaceae, Aristolochiaceae, Polygonaceae, Chenopodiaceae, Amaranthaceae, Sonneratiaceae, Caryophyllaceae, Nymphaeaceae, Ceratophyllaceae, Hypericaceae, Ranunculaceae, Papaveraceae, Cruciferae, Droseraceae, Saxifragaceae, Rosaceae, Leguminosae, Oxalidaceae, Zygophyllaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Callitrichaceae, Balsaminaceae, Malvaceae, Elatinaceae, Tamaricaceae, Violaceae, Lythraceae, Melastomataceae, Trapaceae, Onagraceae, Haloragidaceae, Hippuridaceae, Umbelliferae, Ericaceae, Primulaceae, Plumbaginaceae, Loganiaceae, Gentianaceae, Apocynaceae, Verbenaceae, Labiatae, Scrophulariaceae, Pedaliaceae, Lentibulariaceae, Acanthaceae, Plantaginaceae, Rubiaceae, Cucurbitaceae, Campanulaceae, Compositae, Typhaceae, Sparganiaceae, Potamogetonaceae, Ruppiaceae, Juncaginaceae, Zosteraceae, Najadaceae, Aponogetonaceae, Alismataceae, Butomaceae, Hydrocharitaceae, Gramineae, Cyperaceae, Araceae, Lemnaceae, Eriocaulaceae, Commelinaceae, Pontederiaceae, Juncaceae, Liliaceae, Amaryllidaceae, Dioscoreaceae, Taccaceae, Iridaceae, Zingiberaceae, Burmanniaceae and Orchidaceae, which reflects the diversity of wetland plants in China. The majority of these plants mentioned above have an illustration showing the morphology and some have color photographs, which are very helpful in aiding readers to easily understand the explanations.

The book can serve as a handbook for identification of the common vascular wetland plant species in China. Hopefully, the book would become a good reference for persons engaged in botany, ecology, limnology and wetland science, as well as teachers and students who major in the relevant fields of wetland science, or any other persons who are interested in this field.

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Erratum The Canadian Field-Naturalist 126(4)

In response to the review of *Contributions to the History of Herpetology*. CFN 126(3): 344-345, the book's editor Kraig Adler pointed out (personal communication to FRC 12 May 2013): "Only one small correction. Mrs. Martof used a kitchen knife, not a gun. She told the police she slipped while cutting some pizza. But Bernie was stabbed up under his rib cage several times!"

Erratum The Canadian Field-Naturalist

It has come to our attention that sections of many of the book reviews by Li Dezhi and Qin Aili were copied from sources without attribution. The journal and the authors apologize for this oversight.