

## PRAIRIE WILDFLOWERS

*Wildflowers Across the Prairies*. F. R. Vance, J. R. Jowsey, and J. S. McLean. 1977. Western Prairie Producers Books, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. 214 pages. \$14.95 (cloth) \$9.95 (paper).

*Wildflowers Across the Prairies* is a welcome addition to the plant identification books of the Northern Great Plains. Although the book is probably most useful to the beginning student and the amateur botanist, it will also be of some assistance to those involved in serious botanical work.

The authors have included photographs, sketches, and brief descriptions of approximately 270 species of vascular plants occurring on the prairies and adjacent forest edges of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Montana, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. Usually, each species is illustrated with a close-up photograph of the flower or inflorescence and a photograph of the entire plant or group of plants. The photographs are generally sharp with accurate color and good composition. Each species is described in an easy-to-understand text which includes information on flower structure and color; fruit type; leaf arrangement, color and shape; growth habit; and habitat. In addition, information on closely related species is frequently included. Many of the descriptions include a detailed line drawing which depicts some aspect of the plant not shown clearly in the photographs.

The plants are arranged in a classical phylogenetic order beginning with the cattail family (Typhaceae) and ending with the composite family (Compositae). Within families the genera are arranged in alphabetic order except for the composite family which has the Liguliflorae (inflorescence consisting of ray flowers only) arranged separately from the other plants in the family. The book has no keys; however, limited identification assistance is provided by the color index which classifies plants according to four main color groups: white, purple-blue, red-pink and greenish-yellow-cream. Indexes to common and scientific names and plant families are provided to assist the user. A glossary and a series of line drawings assist the reader in understanding botanical terms. Although a few of the references listed in the bibliography are relatively current, some of the scientific names are not in agreement with modern usage. However, this problem is minor when compared to the overall quality of the publication. We recommend this book highly and feel that it would be a worthy addition to the library of anyone interested in our native prairie flora.

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