

BOOK REVIEW



GUIDE TO THE VASCULAR PLANTS OF THE FLORIDA PANHANDLE

Eagerly awaited and long overdue, Dr. Andre F. Clewell's field guide for the vascular flora of the Florida Panhandle is finally available. The text covers Pteridophytes (true ferns and fern allies); Gymnosperms (pines, cypress, cedar, yew, *Torreya*, and coontie); Monocots; and Dicots of the region from Escambia County east to the Suwannee River.

The species included in the text are those for which specimens are housed in the FSU and UF Herbaria. Many species, particularly the aquatics, are under-collected, giving the illusion of a more highly restricted range than actually occurs

in nature, but this is a common problem which cannot be avoided.

One of the greatest attributes of the field guide is the alphabetical arrangement of families within the four major groups, and genera and species within families—a treatment greatly facilitating the ease and speed of locating information in the guide. Another outstanding feature is the excellent collection of line drawings illustrating the various types of leaf, flower, and fruit structure and arrangement. Unfortunately, the manual contains virtually no illustrations of the actual species. Another drawback is the use of two separate indices; one for common names and one for scientific names. However, these aspects are outweighed by the many positive features of the text.

Additional pluses of Clewell's guide include an ample glossary of botanical terms located in the front of the text where it is readily accessible; a metric ruler located in the back of the text; a discussion of physiography and habitat found in the Florida

panhandle; and information on common names, distribution, reproductive seasons, and exotic plants. By far the most valuable aspect of this text is the superb collection of keys; many of which are original and were designed to guide even the novice plant enthusiast to a positive identification of their mystery plant. Many of these keys were polished through use in field botany courses taught by Clewell and others at FSU. Particular acclaim is due to the keys of Ericaceae (blueberry family), Gramineae (grass family), Juncaceae (rush family), and Cyperaceae (sedge family).

Guide to the Vascular Plants of the Florida Panhandle is available as a hardbound text from the University Presses of Florida, 15 NW 15th Street, Gainesville, Florida 32603 (904/392-1351) for \$30 + \$1.75 postage + \$1.50 sales tax for Florida residents.

This text is a *must* for anyone with a serious or even curious interest in the Panhandle's 2359 species of vascular flora.

● Sydney Brinson