

BOOK REVIEW

A GUIDE TO THE VASCULAR PLANTS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, by Richard P. Wunderlin, Univ. of South Florida Press, Tampa, Florida, 1982. 472 pp. \$25.00.

In a letter to the Editor (*Palmetto*, May, 1983), Elliott Brown mentioned that Small's **Manual of the Southeastern Flora** (1933) is out of print. As a general reference book for Central Florida flora (excluding ferns and allies), Small's **Manual** has been our most comprehensive test for identification.

Besides this loss, many floristic and taxonomic changes have occurred over the last 50 years since Small wrote his book. Even though I am a landscape architect and an amateur botanist, identification of plants found along roadsides and in romps to the woods has proved difficult and

often frustrating without a picture, or referencing several texts. Usually by the time I go through the full process, the specimen has wilted and dried beyond recognition.

The Guide to the Vascular Plants of Central Florida fills the void and bridges the gap for serious amateur botanists and students alike.

In the text, the complete flora (native and naturalized) of thirty counties, from Levy, Marion, and Volusia in the north to Lee, Hendry, and Broward in the south, is keyed and listed by plant families with genus and species listed alphabetically. Plant descriptions are omitted, and the brief botanical nomenclature used in simple descriptive keys are defined in the glossary. This comprehensive reference book contains two indices, including scientific and applicable common

names. I find this very useful for those plants for which I recall only a common name or genus.

Additionally, a brief description of habitat, statement of general distribution in Central Florida, region of activity, whether exotic, season of sexual reproduction, and pertinent synonymy follows each species listing.

Mr. Wunderlin's **Guide** should prove valuable to the advancement of native plant awareness and understanding species diversity through simplified identification. A one-stop reference manual, light enough for use as a field guide, listing **all** the flowering and non-flowering plants of Central Florida, has finally arrived and is a joy to use. It's my guess a guide for North Florida is next, Mr. Wunderlin?

• David Drylie