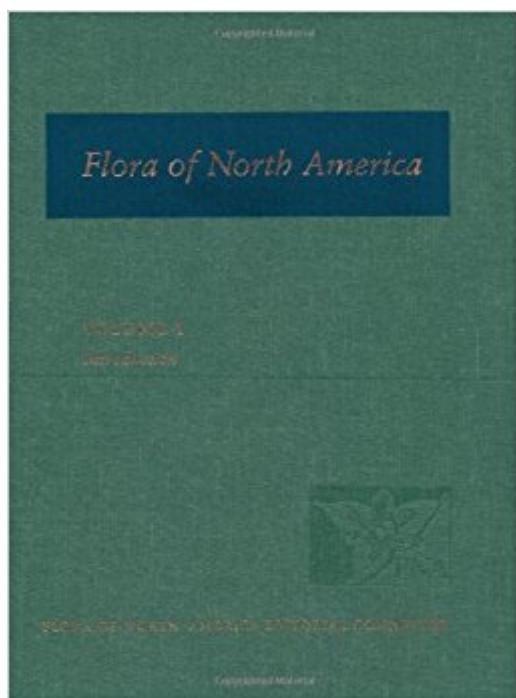


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Flora Of North America: North Of Mexico; Volume 1: Introduction



Synopsis

To be published in 14 volumes over the next 12 years, this long-awaited synoptic compendium represents the first and only comprehensive taxonomic guide to the extraordinary diversity of plant life blanketing our continent north of Mexico--including Greenland and the St. Pierre and Miquelon islands. The collaborative effort of more than 30 major U.S. and Canadian botanical institutions, it revises and synthesizes literally thousands of floristic monographs and regional floras published over the last three centuries. But more than that, it distills the original herbarium, laboratory, and field work of hundreds of contributors--all of them leading botanists and taxonomic authorities who have joined forces to develop this century's premier tool for identifying, understanding, and conserving North America's priceless floristic heritage. Concise, easy to use, and beautifully bound and illustrated, *Flora of North America* is an indispensable working resource for botanists, conservationists, ecologists, agronomists, foresters, range and land managers, horticulturists,--anyone with a serious interest in the distribution, habitat, morphology, and survival of the wide-ranging plant life around us. Each of its taxonomic volumes brings together the full spectrum of critical botanical data, from basic descriptions to chromosome numbers. The entries also correct erroneous information, qualify misapplied variant names, and note known hybridizations. Findings derived from recent experimental work and from numerical taxonomy are incorporated, and to assure accuracy, these data have been extensively reviewed and tested by cooperating taxonomic specialists. Volume 1 consists of a series of introductory essays by nearly two dozen noted botanical authorities. Among the topics covered are the transformation of North American plant life since the end of the Mesozoic era some 70 million years ago; the influence of geographic, climatic, and soil factors; the impact of human cultivation; great naturalists and their contributions to botany and floristics since the age of Columbus; and approaches to plant classification, with particular attention to the evolutionarily unique pteridophytes and gymnosperms that are covered in Volume 2.

Book Information

Series: *Flora of North America*

Hardcover: 400 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (November 4, 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195057139

ISBN-13: 978-0195057133

Product Dimensions: 11.2 x 1.1 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: Be the first to review this item

Best Sellers Rank: #1,745,243 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #75 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Taxonomic Classification #1060 in Books > Textbooks > Science & Mathematics > Biology & Life Sciences > Botany #1865 in Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Psychology > Cognitive Psychology

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A massive ten-year effort, coordinated by the Missouri Botanical Gardens and involving the collaboration of American and Canadian botanical taxonomists and institutions, finally bears fruit with the simultaneous publication of the first two volumes of a projected 14-volume catalog of the vascular flora and bryophytes a phylum of nonvascular plants of the United States, Canada, and Greenland. Written by leading botanical authorities, the introductory essays of Volume 1 cover climate, geography, the history of vegetation from late Cretaceous times, the major vegetation formations recognized today, and the impact of humankind on the natural flora. An overview of the history of botanical exploration in North America and a discussion of classification systems relevant to vascular plants rounds out this impressive tome. Volume 2 covers the classification and description of ferns and gymnosperms. Each taxonomic key and description of a family, genus, or species was written by a leading authority responsible for an exhaustive examination and consolidation of information contained throughout herbaria and the botanical literature. Each species description includes morphology, habitat, a distribution map, synonymies, chromosome numbers, and other pertinent biological informatin. Although regional field guides and floras with local range maps and photographs will continue to flourish, these handsomely bound and typeset volumes identifying and detailing the complete continental flora north of Mexico will be the definitive work well into the next century. For large public and academic libraries. --Teresa Elberson, Lafayette P.L., La. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"A massive ten-year effort, coordinated by the Missouri Botanical Gardens and involving the collaboration of American and Canadian botanical taxonomists and institutions, finally bears fruit with the simultaneous publication of the first two volumes of a projected 14-volume catalog....Although regional field guides and floras with local range maps and photographs will continue to flourish, these handsomely bound and typeset volumes identifying and detailing the

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