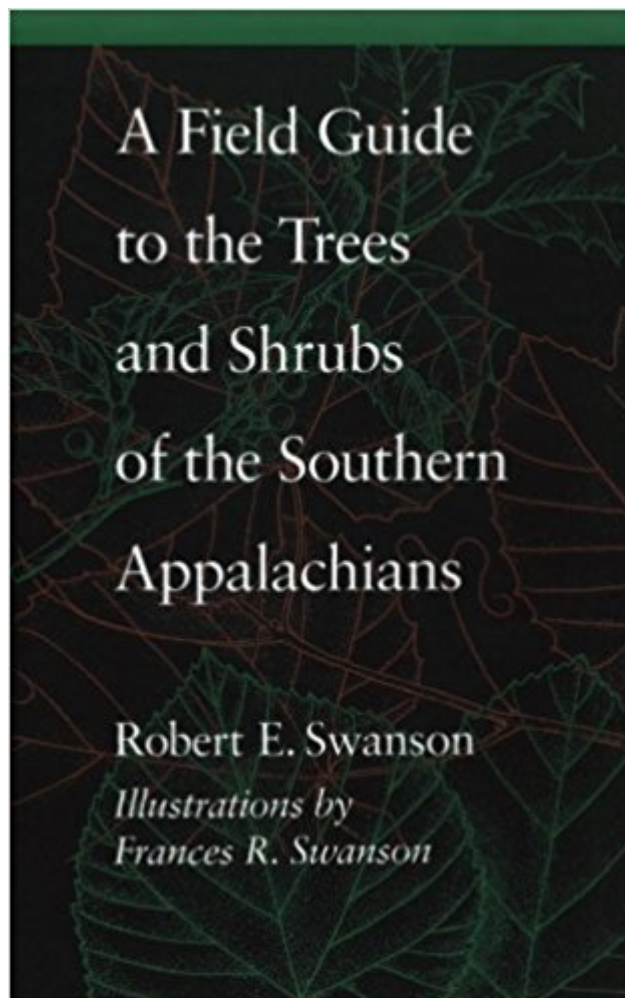




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A Field Guide To The Trees And Shrubs Of The Southern Appalachians



Synopsis

Extending through the Carolinas, Georgia, and eastern Tennessee, the southern Appalachian Mountains are home to a rich diversity of plant life. This field guide contains detailed information on 130 genera and 280 species of trees, shrubs and woody vines - all but the very rarest species - including those found among the popular Blue Ridge Parkway in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Based on more than 5000 plant specimens collected by the authors in a decade of hiking that totalled more than 5400 miles, this guide covers all the common native species, and many of the rare ones, that grow not only in the forests but also in the high-mountain meadows, on heath balds, in long-abandoned fields, and along fence rows and roadsides. In addition to the plant descriptions, the guide contains illustrated keys to both summer and winter traits - that is, twigs, bark, and winter buds, as well as leaves - so that readers can collect and identify specimens at any time of year. From the birch and alder, to the oak and Carolina silverbell, from the mountain-laurel and American holly, to the mountain pepperbush, chokeberry, buffalo nut and yellowroot, the trees, shrubs and woody vines described here include many plants unique to the southern mountains as well as those found elsewhere in eastern North America. This field guide should be of interest to hikers, campers, fishermen, hunters, tourists, and all those who, for whatever reason, enjoy the southern Appalachian Mountains.

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Customer Reviews

"Although the title suggests this is a guide to plants in a limited geographic range, the plants here

are found in many areas of eastern North America, and the book can therefore be used as a guide for this larger area. But for naturalists visiting the beautiful area of the Southern Appalachians, it is a detailed and useful guide to the amazing variety of trees, shrubs, and woody vines growing there." (American Reference Books Annual)"The finest book on tree identification I have ever seen... Magnificent pen and ink drawings... [this book] will be of interest to anyone who loves the outdoors." (Asheville Citizen-Times)

Extending through the Carolinas, Georgia, and eastern Tennessee, the southern Appalachian Mountains are home to a rich diversity of plant life. This convenient and comprehensive field guide contains detailed information on 130 genera and 280 species of trees, shrubs, and woody vines-- all but the very rarest species-- including those found along the popular Blue Ridge Parkway and in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

This book is an excellent botanical field guide for trees and shrubs in the Southern Appalachians. It is small and lightweight to easily carry on a field trip into the mountains, and it is suitable for keying out plants on both summer and winter hikes. It covers 130 genera and 280 species of trees, shrubs, and woody vines. I hike a lot in the area and have not yet come across a tree or shrub that was not mentioned in this book. It was clearly put together with a deep knowledge of the plants growing in the area. Its target audience probably would be botanists and naturalists with some experience in using botanical keys. It contains a map showing the area covered, and a convenient ruler in both centimeters and inches. The introduction explains the terminology, while the appendix contains a glossary of terms. Both of these are valuable resources needed to work with this book and understand the descriptions of plant features in the keys. The index lists both common and scientific names of plants. For plant identification, both summer and winter keys are provided to narrow plants down to families. These include keys for plants with needles/scales, plants with different leaf or leaf scar arrangements (opposite, alternate, whorled), different leaf types (simple or compound), and evergreen plants. There are a couple of pages with shortcut keys to quickly identify plants with one or more especially noticeable characters such as climbing vines, milky sap, thorns etc. It helps if you are familiar with the botanical terminology used in the keys. The section with the keys and shortcuts is followed by descriptions of the plant families, again containing more keys to narrow the plants down to species level. If you know how to use botanical keys, this book is a pleasure to work with in the field and a great teaching tool for botany classes. I found it easy to learn and fun to use. This is not a "picture book" though and there are no photographs in it. You cannot use this book to visually

compare a plant you found against a number of pictures to find out what it is. I think having a few plates with color photographs of representative species would be really helpful to have - this is one of the things I'm missing. The book contains 161 figures with line drawings illustrating e.g. leaf and bud shapes in the plant families sections, which I found to be beautifully done, very informative and highly useful. But beyond these illustrations, it is purely text. The information provided in the text is pretty much exclusively descriptions of plant features for identification purposes. To learn more about these plants besides what they look like and where they grow, you would have to search for more information in other books or online. Sometimes I think it would be nice to have a little bit more information about the plants I find - this is the other thing I'm missing. But the drawback of including more information would be to have a heavier book that is less convenient to carry on hikes. In conclusion, this book is limited in scope to being a botanical field guide for identifying woody plants, but it fulfills this function beautifully if you know how to work with the keys and do not depend on photographs for comparison.

This book was a textbook for a forest and wetland ecology class I took. It definitely takes some practice to identify trees and shrubs correctly! I can remember having a quiz where we had to use it to identify a tree, and I kept coming to poison ivy (and I knew this wasn't it because my teacher would not keep touching it so willingly!) After about 20 minutes I finally figured out what it was (I don't remember what it ended up being though.) Now that I've gotten used to the book and the jargon it uses (which the book also explains with descriptions and good diagrams) I don't leave the house without it when I go on a hike! Very helpful on my hikes in Virginia.

Very good resource.

Bought it as per request by a professional plant ecologist - he loves it.

Not much information on plants and too technical.

This is the best field guide to shrubs in the Appalachians...Robert who has spent the last eleven years studying the Sonoran Desert is busy again getting ready for his study of the Arizona Desert..The book displays a wide range of the author's knowledge and brings forth the living desert...

I agree that this field guide is for the knowledgeable, but if you take the time to learn the terminology, you will find there is no better book. It is not nearly as technical as "Guide to Vascular Plants of the Blue Ridge" yet far exceeds that standards of Peterson's or Audubon.

Buffelgrass - Arizona-Sonora Desert

Museum www.desertmuseum.org/invaders/invaders_buffelgrass.php Tumamoc Hill in Tucson, home of the University of Arizona's historic Desert Laboratory visible at left, has been overrun by buffelgrass in the last two decades.

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