

The Canadian Field-Naturalist

Book Reviews

Book Review Editor's Note: *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* is a peer-reviewed scientific journal publishing papers on ecology, behaviour, taxonomy, conservation, and other topics relevant to Canadian natural history. In line with this mandate, we review books with a Canadian connection, including those on any species (native or non-native) that inhabits Canada, as well as books covering topics of global relevance, including climate change, biodiversity, species extinction, habitat loss, evolution, and field research experiences.

Currency Codes: CAD Canadian Dollars, USD United States Dollars, EUR Euros, AUD Australian Dollars, GBP British Pounds.

BOTANY

Flora of North America: Volume 10, Magnoliophyta: Proteaceae to Elaeagnaceae

By Flora of North America Editorial Committee. 2021. Oxford University Press. 488 pages, 95.00 CAD, Hardcover.

We're getting near the end. After many years and 22 published volumes, the Flora of North America (FNA) series, that fundamental compendium of North American plants north of Mexico, is in the home stretch. So, I'd like to start this review of Volume 10 with a heartfelt thank you on behalf of botanical workers everywhere to the FNA association, committee, editors, and authors past and present for these massively important works.

Volume 10 is slightly slimmer than past issues, but only because it covers 12 of the (mostly) smaller North American vascular plant families, from Proteaceae (one species) to Elaeagnaceae (nine species) to Onagraceae (277 species). This includes diverse eudicot species from Florida to Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), which no doubt kept the expert regional reviewers running from one herbarium cabinet to the next (thanks to them, too!).

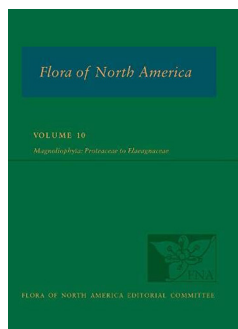
Early pages of this volume are devoted to a gorgeous frontispiece: a full-page colour plate of Blue Waxweed (*Cuphea viscosissima*) and a lovely tribute to Walter Judd. From there, the tome dives headlong into the taxonomic treatments, set up (like all FNA volumes) with useful keys, chapters devoted to each family, and within each family further keys and parallel genus and species descriptions. Approximately 25% of the species treated within are illustrated by

talented botanical artists, providing important visual context to the descriptions.

Keen to test the wheels on this volume, I ran through the keys and descriptions in the Onagraceae treatment by Warren L. Wagner and Peter C. Hoch, as this family includes Arctic and southwestern USA species of interest to me. For both *Epilobium* and *Chylismia* (my test genera), the keys are easy to follow and provide ample characters for identification of even the most challenging material. This family is also a showcase for one of this volume's greatest strengths—a commitment to parallel species descriptions. The *Epilobium* treatment in particular stands out due to the length of these descriptions—with extensive care taken to fully describe the morphology of these subtle species.

Of particular note, within the Lythraceae, the description of Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicari*) includes information on the status of this invasive species, as well as references regarding ongoing bio-control research. As a former invasive species ecologist, I found this section particularly interesting, but I also appreciated other efforts like this found throughout this volume, to make this work relevant to as many biological disciplines as possible.

With only seven more volumes of the Flora of North America series to come, my guess is that if you've been collecting this work all along, you likely already have Volume 10 at your home or institutional library. If not, I absolutely recommend adding this useful book to your shopping list (particularly if you work with taxa from the north or southwest deserts)! Nowadays, thanks to hard work from the FNA



team, the Flora of North America website contains all the information that the print volumes do in a complementary, easy to navigate, and up-to-date format. While this important effort makes the flora broadly accessible, the print copy is still pleasurable to use, important to archive, and key to supporting the efforts

of the FNA committee as they complete this monumental task.

PAUL C. SOKOLOFF
Canadian Museum of Nature
Ottawa, ON, Canada

©The author. This work is freely available under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0).