

how many species of *Vanilla* (of vanilla ice-cream fame from *Vanilla planifolia*) that are native to Florida.

The author uses the term “waif” to denote random individual occurrence. An example of a waif is *Laelia rubescens*, first seen in Florida in 1999. This abundant and attractive Central American species is a popular garden plant and a likely escapee. The accompanying photograph shows a white blossom. All the wild *L. rubescens* I have seen were pale lavender.

The species coverage and their current status are both accurate and up-to-date. This book contains the split between the Spotted Orchid, *Cyrtopodium guttatum* (Alaska and NWT), and the Yellow Spotted Orchid, *C. yatabeanum* (Kodiak Island). It includes the Newfoundland orchis (*Platanthera albida*) of Newfoundland and Greenland. The book does not contain any habitat information, nor anything of the plants’ biology. Generally, nothing is given on abundance and the distribu-

tions are very generic (e.g., Manitoba east to Newfoundland south to Texas and Georgia). It would be exciting to see an expanded version of this book containing descriptive text on habitat and biology, accompanied by useable range maps. This would create an encyclopedia of North American orchids. In the meantime, this book is a very handy reference and will make a good field guide.

The book’s size precludes it fitting a pocket, but it will slip easily into your back pack. As well as the usual glossary and bibliography, the author includes a well-organized key. This, combined with the clear format, makes it a no-nonsense, practical guide for botanists, naturalists and orchid enthusiasts.

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Trees of the Carolinian Forest: A Guide to Species, Their Ecology and Uses

By Gerry Waldron. Boston Mills Press, 132 Main Street, Erin, Ontario N0B 1T0 Canada. 274 pages. \$24.95.

The Carolinian zone of southern Ontario is home to more than 1600 plant species. It is also the most densely populated area of the country. As a consequence, Canada’s most biologically diverse forests are also among the habitats most threatened by development. Anyone with an interest in the appreciation and conservation of this natural heritage will do well to read Gerry Waldron’s *Trees of the Carolinian forest*. Mr. Waldron has succeeded in producing a beautiful book that is at once a pleasure to read and quite informative. The subtitle, “A guide to species, their ecology and uses” is somewhat misleading – this is much more than a field guide. Waldron draws on a variety of historical and scientific sources to set the scene: what is the Carolinian zone? how is it related to other ecological regions? and how have successive human cultures altered this region? With the ecological context established, Waldron treats each of 73 tree species not as individuals but as members of a community.

The book starts with an ecological history of the Carolinian zone, from glaciation through settlement by indigenous and European humans up to the present. While far from an presenting an exhaustive review of post-glacial colonisation, Waldron includes enough detail to distinguish his treatment from the usual clichéd summary that appears in books of similar scope. We learn of the massive hemlock dieback 5000 years back, and that beech was averaging 20 kilometres per century as it crept north. This is a fascinating subject, and it’s a shame that Waldron includes no references to his sources here. While in-text citations would be overly pedantic, including a few key references such as Pielou (1991) would be worthwhile.

Waldron uses quotations from the journals of early settlers and survey crews to illustrate both the appear-

ance of the “virgin” forest and the attitudes of Europeans to their new homeland. Once again, he piqued my curiosity, but in this case there are perhaps no readily accessible published sources he could refer the reader to for further information.

A short discussion of the definition of the term “Carolinian” follows. Waldron covers the topic in five pages – a clearly presented summary of an important concept. This is typical of the book as a whole. The author quite capably distills complex ideas into simple language, without sacrificing accuracy in the process.

With the context established, Waldron devotes some forty pages to a discussion of biodiversity, ecological communities, and our role in their protection, and especially, their restoration. He obviously brings a lot of experience to bear on the subject. Most books on restoration focus on technical details – how, where, and when to plant a tree, etc. Refreshingly, Waldron starts by examining why (and why not) to plant trees as part of a restoration. In a region where restoration of endangered prairie habitat often begins with the removal of trees planted as part of misguided naturalization programs, this is an important discussion. That said, he acknowledges the difficulty in pursuing a “do-nothing” approach, and offers suggestions for accelerating natural successional processes. These are presented as ideas to consider, not as ready-made prescriptions for restoration success.

And so it is that on page 112 of this tree guide that the actual species treatments begin. Each species is allotted two pages. This includes the usual description of their habitat and appearance, with insights into their use in restoration and urban plantings. Unfortunately, Waldron has chosen to arrange the species alphabetically by common name. This may simplify things for the beginner, but it has the unfortunate consequence of separating walnut (*Juglans nigra*) from butternut (*Juglans cinerea*) and poplar from aspen (both *Popu-*

lus). Taxonomic arrangements are a very useful tool for learning about the relationship between species, but only if we use them!

The book is rounded out with 32 colour plates. These include a variety of habitat, habit, and close-up photographs of Carolinian trees. Some of them are quite instructive, such as the close-ups of the bark cross-sections of red and white elm, or the collection of acorns from different oak species. Others are simply beautiful images of the authors favourite organisms. One small improvement would be the inclusion of a scale for the close up shots.

Taken as a whole, this book is an incredible resource for naturalists in southern Ontario. It will serve equally

well as an introduction to the ecology of the Carolinian forest for the general naturalist and as an idea book for restorationists and land managers. I look forward to the publication of a companion volume on the shrubs of the Carolinian forest, hinted at in the introduction.

Literature Cited

Pielou, E. C. 1991. *After the ice age: the return of life to glaciated North America*. University of Chicago, Chicago.

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ENVIRONMENT

Good News for a Change: How Everyday People are Helping the Planet

David Suzuki and Holly Dressel. 2003. Greystone Books, #201 – 2323 Quebec Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V5T 4S7 Canada. 399 pages. \$24.95, U.S.\$16.95

This is a paperback re-issue of Suzuki and Dressel's 2002 book originally titled *Good News for a change: hope for a troubled planet*. Either way, the book is cleverly titled to attract readers who are tired of doom and gloom environmental books. The concept is praiseworthy: bring together in one place success stories of the many and varied ways people around the world are changing the way they do things, for the benefit of their communities, their environment and their offspring. At the same time, the authors do not shy away from the bad news. Yes there are wonderful changes taking place but they are up against very serious problems and a frightening inertia embedded in our social and economic systems.

The authors have set a tremendous challenge for themselves in tackling the full sweep of environmental problems we face and in trying to represent emerging solutions from around the planet. They organize this unwieldy subject thematically with chapters on business practices, democracy, biodiversity, water, food, forests, fisheries, and air pollution. The final chapter "Breaking out of the Box" addresses the effect of our global culture on humans as natural beings and the importance of reconnecting what we do with our deepest values. Most chapters focus on one or two case studies examined in some depth with additional examples of related projects in other parts of the world. Examples are drawn from village co-operatives, family-run businesses, multi-national corporations, farms, indigenous societies and non-profit groups from such diverse places as India, Africa, Germany, Brazil, USA, Indonesia and many others. Also included are a list of organizations to contact, detailed endnotes, a brief bibliography and a reasonably detailed index. The book is a little lax in explaining the political background to some of its examples, especially Canadian

ones, and a map plotting the locations for major examples would have been beneficial.

Throughout *Good News* there is an admirable effort to synthesize, and several key themes are followed. Aligning our activities with natural environmental systems results in double dividends – the costs are lower, the benefits are greater and extend beyond economics. A resource is used sustainably when it is managed by a stable community that is economically dependent on it and exerts local control and local ownership. Sustainable practices must be tailored to the specific situation; the people who follow them are humble and are constantly learning from their mistakes. Many small projects are more effective and more efficient than a single large one. We are all indigenous to this planet.

If I have any quibble with this book it is that there isn't enough of it. I want to know more about how Judy Wicks manages to make a living (and a rather substantial one) running a social activist restaurant. I want to understand how a small check dam on an intermittent stream in India can reverse desertification caused by forest removal. I want to hear from the efforts that haven't worked, because I don't believe as easy as the book makes it seem. There is no question we need more books like this, perhaps ones targeted at specific issues. Henry Mintzberg (1994) argues for the importance of identifying "emergent strategies" (new strategies that emerge spontaneously at any level of an organization) and helping them spread. That in essence is what Suzuki and Dressel have done.

Literature Cited:

Mintzberg, H. 1994. *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*. Free Press, Simon and Schuster, New York, USA. 454 pages.

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