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Book Reviews and Announcements

Editor's note

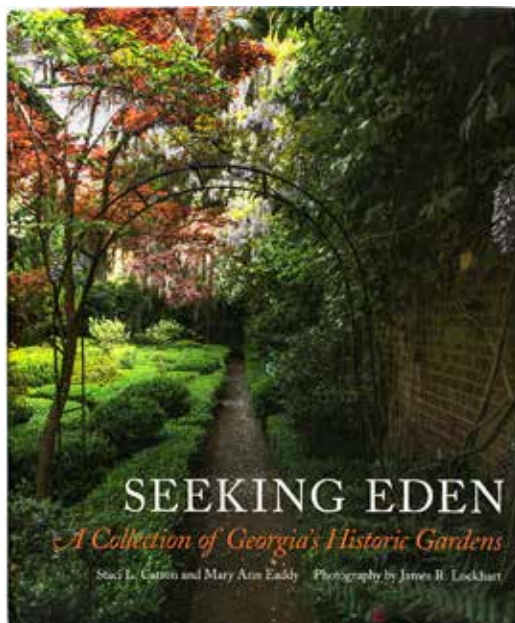
With this issue of *Huntia* we discontinue the Book Reviews and Announcements section. While we are happy to accept donations of publications for our Library, we will no longer accept publications for review in *Huntia*.

Catron, Staci L. and Mary Ann Eaddy. *Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia's Historic Gardens*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2018. xiii, 471 p., col. plans, ill. \$49.95 (US). ISBN 978-0-8203-5300-5 (hardback).

Seeking Eden builds on earlier work published in *Garden History of Georgia, 1733–1933* (1933), compiled by Loraine M. Cooney and edited by Hattie C. Rainwater. It also comes out of work done by the Georgia Historic Landscape Initiative in 2002, which set out to determine which gardens featured in the 1933 publication were still in existence, and if so, how they had changed. In *Seeking Eden* Catron and Eaddy present results of that survey in two ways: by showcasing 30 Georgia gardens and by brief status updates with descriptive quotations for 154 historic and modern gardens previously examined and documented in the 1933 publication.

In the introduction the authors note that Georgia was the last of the original 13 colonies to be settled and that its colonial period began with the Savannah town plan in 1733 that included an experimental garden in which exotic plants were grown. Numerous ornamental gardens were also begun in Georgia from its early days, and by the mid-1800s there were also a number of nurseries making ornamental plants available. Catron and Eaddy give an overview of the stages of garden development in Georgia since 1733 and name the various organizations that have been instrumental in planting and documenting Georgia's gardens. They describe how the Georgia Historic Landscape Initiative trained volunteers from garden clubs to do a new survey between 2002 and 2016, completing some 190 surveys. Around one-third of the 190 gardens surveyed in the 1930s have since been lost, another third contain only remnants of the original gardens, and about one-third are still in existence today. *Seeking Eden* is the vehicle for bringing the results of this research to the public, characterized as “a glimpse at one aspect of the state's garden history” (p. 8).

Catron and Eaddy present 30 selected private and public gardens, each with 10–20 pages of text and lavish color photographs by James R. Lockhart, along with occasional reproductions of historic garden plans. The oldest site described in *Seeking Eden* is Wormsloe,



a colonial estate dating to 1736 with a later Colonial Revival garden made there in the 1920s (plan, p. 350). Original owner Noble Jones (1702–1775) grew crops suitable for the low-country climate as well as fruit and mulberry trees. The gardens, fields and orchards changed over time, and as with many historic Southern garden sites they were maintained at least partly by slaves. Now a state historic site, Wormsloe includes ruins and the oldest standing structure in Savannah. The main house and former 1920s garden are privately owned by descendants and not open to the public.

A different kind of site is described in the chapter “Hills and Dales Estate,” which includes Ferrell Gardens, begun in the 1840s and now a public house and garden museum. Described as “one of the best preserved nineteenth-century designed landscapes in the southeastern United States” (p. 181), this garden includes extensive box gardens and was created and enhanced by

three generations of southern women over 170 years. The text includes three lists of plants they grew that are still cultivated there today.

Gardens in public planning are also represented in *Seeking Eden*. Savannah is known for its garden squares, a key component of the original city plan laid out by James Edward Oglethorpe (1696–1785), founder of the colony of Georgia. His plan organized Savannah using a grid with streets lined up in identical wards, each with a central green space. Facing the squares on the north and south were lots for private residences, and on the east and west were “trust lots” for public buildings. Oglethorpe’s original 6 squares were joined by another 18 over 150 years, and 22 of the 24 squares still exist and “allow for more open space in Savannah than in any city

layout in history” (p. 265). Although originally used in more utilitarian ways by residents, today the squares are public garden spaces.

Georgia’s garden history encompasses aspects of botany and agriculture as well as horticulture and provides a window onto the roles these cultivated plantings played in the development of the state. Catron and Eaddy have done a good job of pulling together information from earlier and current historical surveys to share what was developed and what still remains from these gardens. The volume also includes notes, bibliography and index.

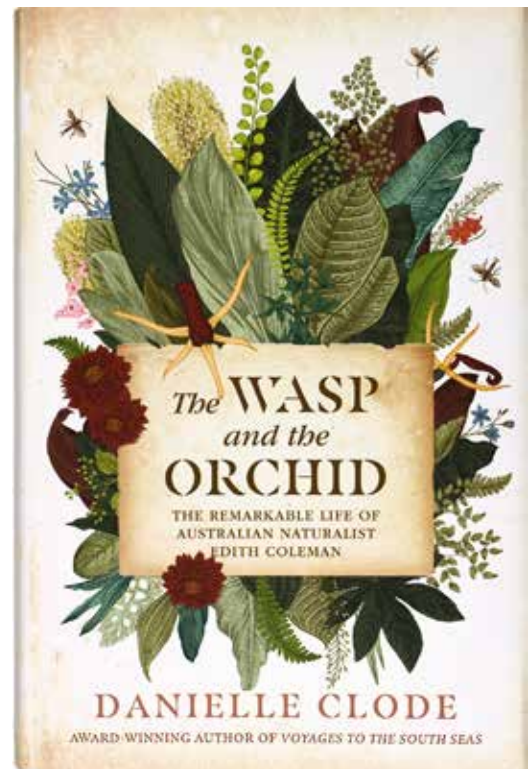
—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

Clode, Danielle. *The Wasp and the Orchid: The Remarkable Life of Australian Naturalist Edith Coleman*. Sydney: Picador, 2018. 420 p., [16] p. of pl., ill. (some col.), port. \$39.99 (Australian). ISBN 978-1-76055-428-6 (hardback).

Danielle Clode tells the story of fellow woman, nature writer and scientist, Edith Coleman (1874–1951). Coleman was born in England, where she spent the early years of her life before her family immigrated to Australia. She grew to embrace the land, flora and fauna and became one of Australia’s most influential nature writers and foremost experts on its orchids despite having no formal secondary education or affiliation with a university or institution. She started her writing career at age 48 after she had raised her two daughters, and her work appeared in popular magazines and academic journals alike. Readers of her era perhaps would recognize her name from those pieces in popular magazines, but today her name more likely is mentioned as one of the discoverers of pseudocopulation in orchids. She was also the first woman awarded the Australian Natural History Medallion for her contributions to the understanding of Australian natural history.

Clode, who has a science background and now teaches creative and academic writing, is a natural fit to take on Edith Coleman’s life. Clode’s own writing portfolio, like Coleman’s, celebrates the natural history of Australia, prehistoric to modern day. Her award-winning work spans many genres from essays and science writing to historical fiction and children’s books.

Given this background it is not surprising that this book is a mix of biography and creative non-fiction. It is as much a story of Clode’s discovery of Coleman as it is about Coleman. Clode weaves her 21st-century story with that of Coleman’s 20th-century one, filling in the gaps where the record of Coleman is missing, often times inserting her own musings and stories of her own life and



research for this biography. The sources for Coleman’s life include her grandchildren and great-nephew and his family history collection, her few surviving letters, and notes and papers that previous hopeful biographers had collected. At the beginning of every chapter Clode really exercises her creativity and reconstructs everyday scenes from Coleman’s life that are simple yet beautiful.

The scenes are based on findings in her research, but personal taste will determine if this is taking too much creative liberty or if it is a good way to connect with Coleman. However, Clode cannot put her own mark on the excerpts of Coleman's writing that are included, 14 pieces in all. They are a delight to read and necessary for understanding why Clode is so passionate about Coleman and her work.

Clode covers expected topics, such as women in science, the genre of nature writing (she firmly defends its legitimacy and Coleman's legacy), colonialism and the Aboriginal people of Australia, and of course Coleman's role in the discovery of pseudocopulation. Coleman's contribution is often overshadowed by two men, Maurice-Alexandre Pouyanne (1867–?) and Masters Johnson Godfrey (1856–1945), who preceded her in observing and publishing their conclusions about the wasp's relationship with the orchid. Clode, with her background in science, is able to give the readers a fair perspective on Coleman's achievements. As a woman, amateur scientist, without the backing of a university, without a lab, Coleman managed to *scientifically* prove that some orchids (in her case *Cryptostylis leptochila*

F. Mueller ex Bentham) mimic insects in order to achieve pollination, and the scientific community accepted her findings, partly because, as Clode argues, Coleman had an especially good knack for networking. Among her correspondents was Oakes Ames (1804–1873), noted Harvard orchidologist.

This work certainly will appeal to a more general audience with its casual style: citizen scientists, fans of nature writing, biography and memoir, and orchid lovers. It is an easy, enjoyable read, and one cannot help but want to get to know the smart and savvy Edith Coleman better. For the more scholarly reader, some of the creative choices Clode makes might not appeal, particularly not including a bibliography or marking endnotes within the text. Coleman's legacy is an important one for many areas of study, and Clode has put her name back on the map. Libraries with any sort of history of botany, entomology or natural history collections, and possibly women's history and literary collections will want this book on their shelves.

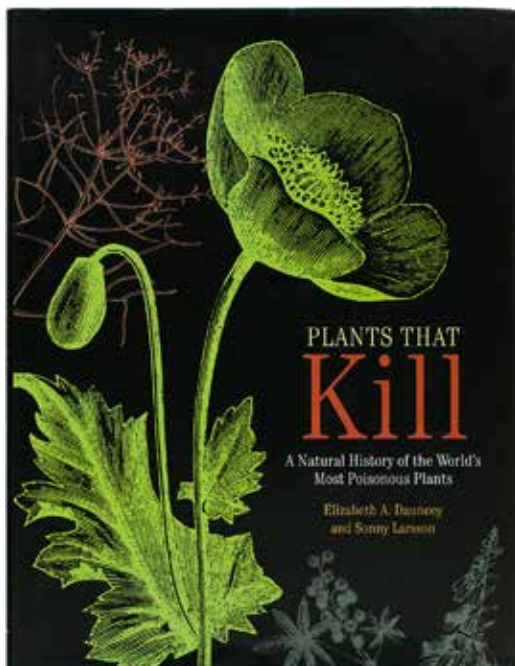
—Jeannette McDevitt, Assistant Librarian

Dauncey, Elizabeth A. and Sonny Larsson. *Plants That Kill: A Natural History of the World's Most Poisonous Plants*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018. 224 p., 400 col. ill. \$29.95 (US). ISBN 978-0-6911-7876-9 (hardback).

Elizabeth Dauncey worked as a botanical toxicologist for almost 20 years and is now an independent botanist specializing in poisonous and medicinal plants; Sonny Larsson is a licensed pharmacist and independent researcher at the Swedish Poison Information Centre. Working together, these two have authored an accessible and fascinating book about the most poisonous stars of the plant kingdom.

A dark black cover with plant engravings in Mr. Yuk green and cautionary orange—as well as the word “Kill” standing alone in red—leave no doubt as to the seriousness of the book's subject. The first two chapters cover why plant toxins exist and what parts of the body or group of bodily functions they target. The remaining chapters focus on the targeted body area or function and the toxins involved, with a final chapter dedicated to the use of plant toxins in medicine. Plant families and chemical groupings of toxins appear as additional subjects as they become relevant to the narrative. This structure keeps the information flowing and the narrative lively.

The book is designed in a visually striking manner: subject matters get a two-page spread with a large subject heading, an overview paragraph in large type, a chart with specific information about the toxin and the



plants that produce it. Several paragraphs of detailed information in normal type complete the grouping. Attractive photographs and botanical illustrations

complement the text and keep the reader's eye moving smoothly through all the areas of the page. Occasionally a second two-page section will follow, breaking down a related subject. Inset boxes illustrate most subjects with an anecdote or real-life story. Using this structure as a guide, readers can easily choose to skim the book for basic information or to dive deeper. Readers will find that they can pick up and read *Plants That Kill* many times, and the book will not grow stale.

Those without a degree in chemistry may find the toxin structure images and their captions dense compared to the general narrative style of the book; beyond that, the wealth of information presented in *Plants That Kill* is accessible and enjoyable. Occasionally the authors trim anecdotes down to bare details or such phrases as "there have been reported..." and "...fatalities have occurred." This keeps the book from bogging down in sensationalism, but leaves the reader wondering about those cases. The feeling of "What happened there?" keeps the mind engaged and curious.

Plants That Kill disappointed me in only one way. For a book so dense in information and so carefully

designed to deliver that information in a way that gives value to every level of reader, the near-complete lack of references surprised me. It is clear that the subject matter is sensitive and viewed with caution; a detailed disclaimer follows the title page. The book ends with a glossary, a list of recommended reading, an extremely short list of online resources, an index to chemicals and plants, acknowledgments and a list of image sources. There is no list of citations for any of the studies, medical information or anecdotes mentioned in this volume, and I find that a shame. In today's age of social media, where rumors, half-truths and outright falsehoods circulate with little to no control, the ability to point to a reliable source is key to establishing the legitimacy of scientific information. *Plants That Kill's* elegant design could have been part of a valuable resource book or an engaging textbook. The lack of citations makes it clear that instead, this natural history is for casual readers. May they enjoy it with discernment, caution—and the best of health.

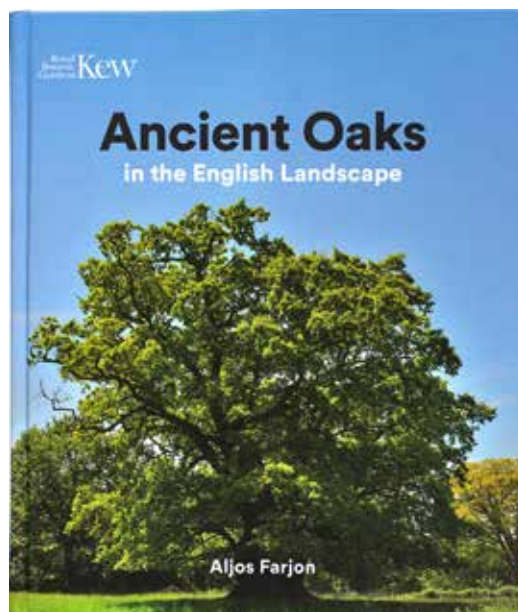
—Nancy Janda, Assistant Archivist

Farjon, Aljos. *Ancient Oaks in the English Landscape*. Kew, Richmond, Surrey: Kew Publishing, Royal Botanic Gardens; distributed by The University of Chicago Press, 2017. 348 p., col. ill., maps. \$50.00 (US). ISBN 978-1-84246-640-7 (hardback).

At first glance this might seem like a coffee-table book with its glossy pages, abundance of full-color photographs and title that brings to mind myths and fairy tales, but this is not a coffee-table book, and there are no myths or fairy tales included. It is, however, a fascinating blend of history and science as the back cover says. Aljos Farjon presents the results of his methodical survey of English oak trees that most likely germinated before the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 and asks why England has so many of these ancient oaks, what their importance is and how they can be conserved.

Farjon, a Dutchman, became interested in ancient English oaks in the 1990s while he was working first at the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Oxford and then at Kew where he researched conifers. Upon retiring from Kew, he was able to spend more of his time making visits to ancient oaks around England and gathering data. The Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory (ATI) aided his early research, and as time went on Farjon in turn has added significant data to the Inventory.

The first two chapters established foundational information on the life cycle of the oak, how people have historically used and altered oaks and how Farjon determined if an oak was ancient (an enlightening read



on the challenges of measuring the circumference of a tree, among other things). In the third chapter, with the help of mapping software, Farjon shows the strong correlation between his ancient oaks and where medieval or Tudor deer parks and Royal Forests were located.

For the more history-oriented person, the heart of the book will be of great interest. The amount of information here is quite impressive, to say the least. Farjon looks specifically at these English medieval and Tudor deer parks, Royal Forests, as well as other types of land that are relevant to where ancient oaks are located today. The reader is treated to short history lessons about these land uses and how king, commoner and grazing beasts provided oaks with the perfect environment for growing old. Then in an almost guidebook-like fashion Farjon reviews all of the deer parks in the twelve English counties with the highest density of deer parks and all of the wooded English Royal Forests (forest did not always mean “woods” as it does to us today). Some reviews are short while others are more lengthy, but they all include history of the land use and any ancient or veteran oaks living there. The tables in these chapters include data on all of the counties in England, not just those detailed in the text. Farjon then contrasts the situation in England with that of the rest of Europe, where there are far fewer ancient oaks, looking at how land-use practices and historical events on the continent were less favorable for oak longevity.

The tail end of the book looks at whether maintaining a population of ancient oaks is sustainable. This includes

a look into prehistory to determine whether the type of forest that produces ancient oaks is natural or man-made. He highlights the most important ancient oak sites that are worth conserving and spends a chapter looking at ways to protect these trees from natural and man-made threats. Three guest writers share their expertise on the fungi, lichens and invertebrates that live in and on ancient oaks and other ancient trees. Many of these species are rare and vulnerable, some species are known in only one park or forest, and the continuity of these landscapes is vital for protecting these rare species.

Farjon thoroughly covers his subject, but the additional details make this an exceptionable book. He synthesizes and digests the information presented in the text with plenty of tables. The glossary is essential for keeping some of the niche terms straight. The extensive list of references will provide ample additional reading for those who would like to keep exploring the world of ancient trees or English land-management practices. Of course the photos are beautiful. I would recommend this book especially to garden and arboretum libraries but also to park-management and land-conservation professionals.

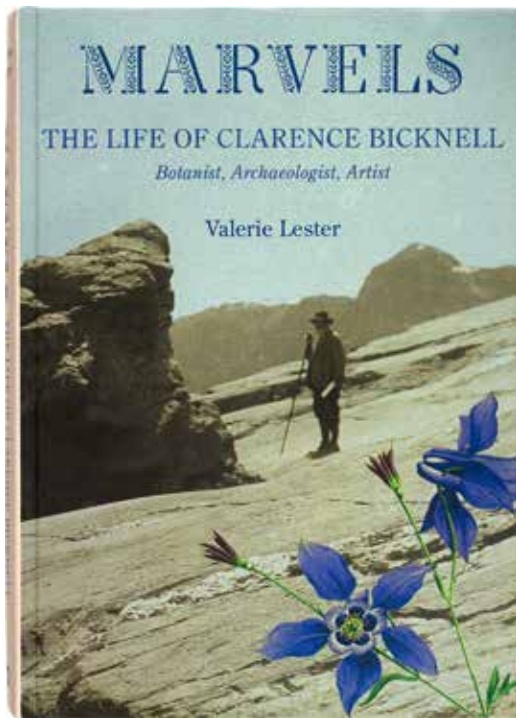
—Jeannette McDevitt, Assistant Librarian

Lester, Valerie. *Marvels: The Life of Clarence Bicknell, Botanist, Archaeologist, Artist.* Leicester: Matador, 2018. ix, 245, [1] p., port., maps, ill. (mostly color). £25.00. ISBN 978-1-7890-1494-5 (hardback).

Here at Hunt Institute we primarily know of Clarence Bicknell (1842–1918) as a botanist who wrote about the flora around the Maritime Alps and the Italian Riviera coast and as a botanical artist. In this biography by Valerie Lester we have a fuller picture of him as also being an Anglican clergyman, archaeologist, Esperantist and a socially engaged British expatriate who lived for 40 years in Bordighera, a vacation spot and Italian home to a number of Britons and Europeans.

Botanically, Bicknell was an enthusiastic explorer, cataloger, classifier and artist. By 1884 he had made more than 1,000 watercolor drawings of local wildflowers from the Riviera and the Maritime Alps. His publications from this period include *Flowering Plants and Ferns of the Riviera and Neighbouring Mountains* (1885) and *Flora of Bordighera and San Remo* (1896). He was a highly skilled amateur in the best sense of that term.

He became friends with Swiss botanist Emile Burnat (1828–1920) in the mid-1880s, and they corresponded for 31 years, also visiting each other and sharing knowledge and specimens, and “bonded in personality, interests, and collections” (p. 83). Bicknell contributed hundreds of specimens to Burnat’s herbarium—now at Geneva along



with their correspondence—and many descriptions to Burnat's *Flore des Alpes Maritimes* (1892–1931), co-written with John Briquet (1870–1931) and François Cavillier (1868–1953). Bicknell discovered several new plant species, including two later named for him: *Pimpinella bicknellii* Briquet and *Euphrasia bicknellii* Wettstein.

He also became friends with Florentine botanist Stefano Sommier (1848–1922), who was writing a book on the wildflowers of the Tuscan archipelago. He and Bicknell exchanged plant lists and specimens and remained in correspondence. Another connection was H. Stuart Thompson (1870–1940), whose *Flowering Plants of the Riviera* (1914) contains 112 Bicknell watercolors. Beyond these botanical friendships he had numerous others, maintaining a vigorous correspondence and plant exchange throughout his life.

His other scientific focus was ancient rock carvings. In 1881 Bicknell found petroglyphs in Vallée des Merveilles / Valle delle Meraviglie, and beginning in 1885 he located, copied and cataloged more than 10,000 stone carvings. He published several works on them, including *Guide to the Prehistoric Rock Engravings of the Italian Maritime Alps* (1913). He had a summer retreat built in Casterino from which to sojourn on botanizing and petroglyph-hunting trips. At a 1905 congress on archaeology in Monaco, Bicknell made another new friend, Émile Cartailhac (1845–1921), who was exploring for petroglyphs in caves. The two corresponded intensively and traveled together to Ariège and the Pyrenees to look for petroglyphs.

Beyond Bicknell's scientific interests, this biography lays out his whole life story, giving greater context and a colorful view of a full life. He was an active part of

the expatriate community in Bordighera and to some extent also of the local community. In the mid-1880s he commissioned a new building for his herbarium, library and paintings and for a community center, and the displays and events were open to all. In 1887 and 1908 two catastrophic earthquakes hit this area of Italy. Bordighera escaped severe damage, but Bicknell aided others by taking provisions to villages by mulecart. His philanthropy included working with Father Giacomo Viale (1830–1912) to create St. Joseph's Home for the Aged Poor in 1912 and working with the Red Cross during World War I, visiting the sick and turning his museum over to convalescing soldiers. Throughout his life in Italy, Bicknell was helped in his domestic, travel-related and research activities by Giacomo Pollini and his son Luigi, assistants who became dear friends, and several other loyal assistants.

Other interests also filled his life. Intrigued by the idea of a universal language as a possible key to world peace, from 1897 Bicknell developed an active interest in Esperanto and attended congresses including one in Boulogne in 1905. Also around that time, Bicknell explored making creative plant drawings in less portraitist and more Arts and Crafts-inspired styles, producing albums of brilliant and inventive artworks; seven of these are now at the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge.

Bicknell died suddenly on 17 July 1918 while resting on a balcony in full view of the mountains he loved. Lester's engaging tribute to him includes notes, bibliography and index.

—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

MacGregor, Arthur, ed. *Naturalists in the Field: Collecting, Recording and Preserving the Natural World from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-First Century*. (Emergence of Natural History, vol. 2.) Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018. xxxix, 999 p., ill. (some col.), port. \$294.00 (US). ISBN 978-90-04-32383-4 (hardback).

This volume from Brill's The Emergence of Natural History series brings together thirty essays by subject experts on various aspects of natural history collecting by Western naturalists over seven centuries. Rather than being a group of essays about collectors or exploration travels, this is about the actual activity of natural history collecting and how it was done in different places and times and for various purposes. An added and important feature of this volume is the presentation of ten sets of instructions for collectors spanning the period 1602–1826; the book also includes references and a general index.

The editors provide an essay on issues that arise as modern scholars consider past collecting practice, and they comment on how the scientific and cultural perspective on this activity in the past differed considerably from the climate in which collecting is done today. In the 21st century we have a greater realization of the dwindling numbers of plants and animals and the fact that we are losing species, and much more is known about how specimens are linked to their environment (something that was recognized early by botanists). We also have a sense of how conscious and unconscious assumptions guide collecting decisions and how parts of the natural world are presented in the artificial context of a collection.

Ten of the essays are about botanical collecting, or partly so (numbers 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 17, 18, 19 and 28). Marie Addyman's essay on William Turner (?–1568) looks at how his skillful observations of plants were

presented by weighing classical authorities' texts, contemporary writings and his own knowledge, so that he was not just presenting the classical view but his own "learned empiricism" (p. 118).

Florike Egmond's essay on 16th-century botanical fieldwork, broadly defined, discusses how medicinal herb gathering informed physicians' botanical fieldwork and how that was shaped into a scientific methodology that also included experiments, acclimatization tests and floristics.

Charles Jarvis's essay on apothecary and naturalist James Petiver (1663/4–1718) highlights his development of innovative instructions for collecting natural curiosities (one version is in the appendix). He developed a huge collection of natural history specimens about which he studied and wrote and had a large network of contacts including many collectors.

Hanna Hodacs writes of the fieldwork of Carolus Linnaeus (1707–1778) and his students in context of the educational, political, economic and social factors at play in 18th-century Sweden. His local botanical field trips combined research and teaching within each class group, with students learning and teaching each other, being trained as natural historians and gaining transferable skills that benefited them later.

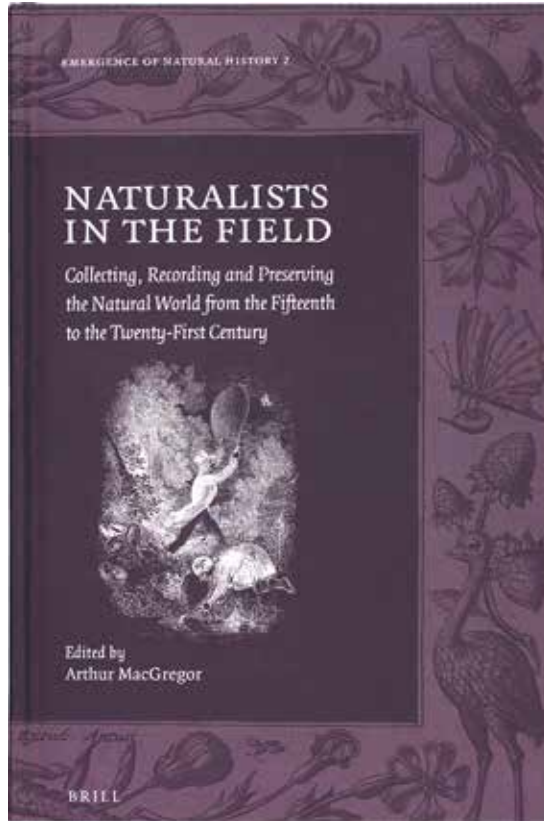
Malgosia Nowak-Kemp writes about William Burchell (1781–1863) and his botanical and zoological collecting in South Africa (1811–1815). We learn how he planned his trip, organized finances, equipped his wagon (of which there is a wonderful painting of the interior reproduced as figure 17.3) and conducted his collecting.

Stephen A. Harris looks at 19th-century plant collecting in colonial and imperial Brazil, discussing a number of collectors and giving detailed descriptions of collecting practices and working routines, including decisions about where and when to work, and showing how collecting and maintaining specimen collections was both expensive and labor intensive.

E. Charles Nelson offers a good overview of how plants were conveyed from collecting sites back to Europe. Some could be sent as seeds while others would require living plants (sometimes in the hundreds) to be shipped, including some trees. Effects of salt water and crossing climate zones had to be mitigated, and coverable cases developed by John Ellis (?1710–1776) and Nathaniel Ward (1791–1868) supplied some relief.

In essays also containing botanical information Glyn Williams writes about naturalists in the Pacific in the age of Captain James Cook (1728–1779), Arthur MacGregor about the European Enlightenment in India, and A. M. Lucas about collecting in Australia. The other 19 essays focus on zoological collecting and are similarly intriguing and enlightening. We hear so much about natural history exploration, but it is very instructive to see this group of essays on how the collecting was actually done and what kinds of issues collectors faced. Thanks to Brill and these authors for this skillfully written and important book, which deepens our understanding of the history of natural history.

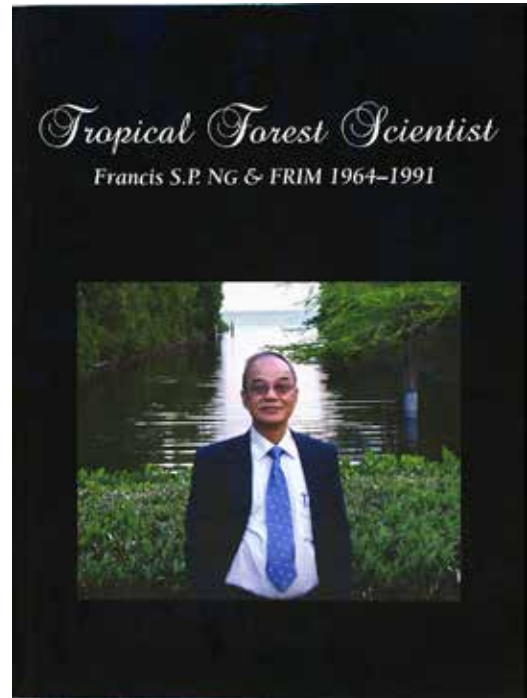
—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian



Ng, Francis S. P. *Tropical Forest Scientist: Francis S. P. Ng & FRIM, 1964–1991*. Kepong, Kuala Lumpur: Forest Research Institute Malaysia, 2018. 200 p., ill., maps, port. (some col.). \$18.00 (US) plus postage. ISBN 978-967-2149-07-1 (paperback). Available from Forest Research Institute Malaysia (<https://info.frim.gov.my/infocenter/Korporat/2003Publications/Links/Other%20publications/FRANCIS.hht>).

Francis S. P. Ng spent 27 years of his career at the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM). Following Malayan independence from British rule in 1957, it took eight years to “Malayanize” the Forest Department, which included FRIM. Ng joined FRIM near the end of that process as a first year pupil botanist in 1964. This intelligent, curious and highly motivated fledgling scientist hit the ground running, eventually becoming an expert in tropical tree biology and the Malaysian tree flora through exploration, experimentation and endless curiosity about trees. He took time out to earn a Ph.D. at Oxford in 1971.

Exploration of Malaysian forests led to numerous projects. In 1970 he began an extensive study of tree seedlings, seeds and fruits. A related study on seed germination eventually covered around 630 species. Experimentation on regeneration in logged forests yielded important insights.



His study of flowering-to-fruiting periods in trees led to a better understanding of gregarious flowering in Malaysian forests in which many species flower at the same time followed by mast fruiting unlike the more predictable times seen in non-tropical deciduous forests. His pioneering paper on “crown shyness” in several tropical tree species—treetops not in contact with each other, allowing unfiltered sunlight to pass through the canopy—was met with excitement among international dendrologists. He wrote on another aspect of tree growth in a joint paper with Francis Halle, who had already worked with others on classifying tree architecture. Missing from their work was an explanation of the architecture of the mature crowns of canopy trees, which



completely change shape after a certain stage of growth. Ng’s insights into these and other topics unlocked research problems for others and led to his being invited to speak at numerous international symposia.

His first overseas symposium was Tropical Trees as Living Systems, at Harvard in 1976. He was one of 27 leading tropical forest scientists invited to contribute to the 1978 book of the same name. His chapter on germination theory discussed a problem with the presentation of only two European germination types in standard texts, but Ng found that four types occurred in the tropics. He comments, “Until then I had no idea whether my research, published in *The Malaysian Forester*, was having any international impact” (p. 79).

In 1978 Ng was transferred to lead plantations research in FRIM, a move by the new director to discontinue discrimination in staff development and promotion, and later that year was promoted to deputy director of the Forestry Research Division. By 1981 FRIM had become the intellectual center of Malaysia’s forestry sector. In

1986 Ng was appointed deputy general of FRIM, and he worked to put FRIM on a solid scientific footing before his impending retirement. He also spent considerable time collaborating with and mentoring others at FRIM and in the region. He worked on a joint research project with every new scientist to come under his charge to start them on their research careers. He also advocated for the importance of networking and information sharing. As time went on he shared more of his expertise with other governmental research institutes locally, regionally and internationally. In 1990 he was hired at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as chief of Forest Education, Research and Training, based in Rome. After six years away he returned to Kuala Lumpur. In 2009 he received the David Fairchild Medal for Plant Exploration from the National Tropical Botanical Garden.

Much of Ng’s published work is in FRIM journals. His books include *Tree Flora of Malaya* (1972–1989, volumes 3–4 edited

by Ng); *The Tropical Garden City* (1990) with Salleh Mohd Nor and Wong Ywe Kwan; and *Manual of Forest Fruits, Seeds and Seedlings* (1992), covering more than 600 species. Ng took particular satisfaction from the *Tree Flora of Malaya*: “I think the *Tree Flora of Malaya* was the only flora ever completed in a former colonial territory after independence” (p. 175).

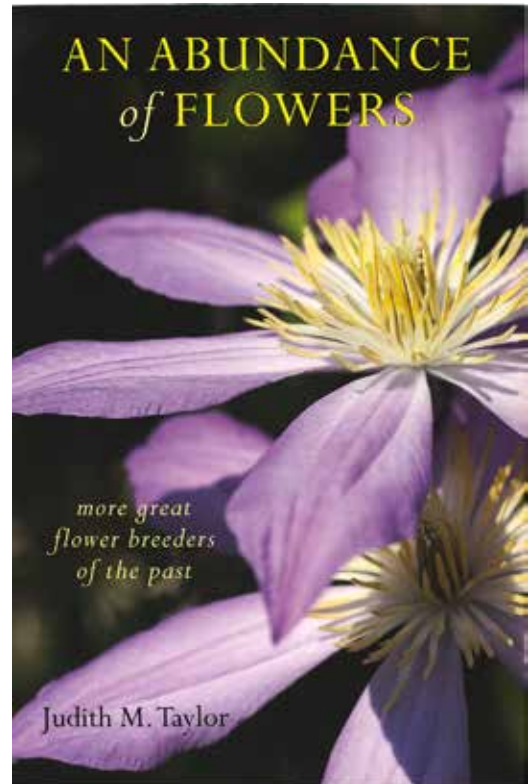
Ng has given us a narrative interwoven with information about tropical trees and forests, the 20th-century Malaysian scientific world and various intriguing botanical problems. The format of the book combines chronological journal-style entries with grey text boxes expanding on topics in the journal entries, such as tree biology, forestry, science, post-colonial politics and more. The book offers an interesting and compelling recollection of a scientific world unfamiliar to many in the West. An index and two maps are included, one keyed to an accompanying list of the Malaysian forest reserves.

—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

Taylor, Judith M. *An Abundance of Flowers: More Great Flower Breeders of the Past*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2018. x, 230 p., 55 col., 24 uncol. photographs. \$65.00, \$28.95 (US). ISBN 978-0-8040-1192-1 (hardback); ISBN 978-0-8040-1193-8 (paperback).

For an author interest in the subject matter of a completed manuscript does not end with its publication. There are often aspects of one’s research that linger for resolution. In this case Judith Taylor picks up where her *Visions of Loveliness: Great Flower Breeders of the Past*

(2014) ended. The author selects eight popular flower genera and informs and entertains the reader with an overview of the history of their cultivation and the contributions made by major and minor breeders from Europe, America and Asia. She also corrects myths about the discovery and dissemination of these plants and describes their botany. Taylor discounts the introduction of poinsettia to South Carolina by its namesake, the American minister to Mexico Joel Roberts Poinsett (1799–1851), and delves into the likeliness of it being introduced by his correspondents from Philadelphia, where it was first exhibited. Although the chrysanthemum had been introduced to, and fell out of favor in, 17th-century Europe, in the following centuries imports from China through diverse channels and the development of a means to ripen seeds led to the development of many new cultivars by members of flower societies, such as Alexandre de Reydelle (?–1905), the stationmaster, hobbyist and founder of the Société Française Chrysanthémistes. The resurgence of interest in native plants led the author to penstemon, originally named pentstemon by Carolus Linnaeus and first described in 1748 from specimens collected in Virginia and North Carolina by the physician John Mitchell (1711–1768). University of Nebraska professor Glenn Viehmeyer (1900–1974) discovered that the pollen of penstemon ‘Flathead Lake’ was compatible with most other species and developed crosses of species once thought impossible. The Ontario banker turned plant breeder Henry Harris Groff (1853–1933) took the gladiolus world by storm with his prize-winning display of cultivars at the 1901 Pan-American exhibition, and we can thank Amos E. Kunderd (1866–1965) of Goshen, Indiana, for creating new gladiolus flower forms, including ruffled, lacinated and dwarf. Who today could imagine that cross breeding dianthus would create such an inner turmoil in the London gardener Thomas Fairchild (1667–1729), who believed that he had dared to usurp the perfection of one of God’s creations. Alphonse Alegatière (1821–1893), the owner of a tanning business in Lyon, France, found the garden more suitable for his health and crossed carnations to create stronger stems and discovered that cuttings, rather than layering, were all that was necessary for propagation. Under communist rule in 1950s Poland, the Jesuit monk Brother Stefan Franczak (1917–2009) filled the monastery’s kitchen garden with many of the 82 clematis cultivars that he developed on land not requisitioned by the government. Sadly, the records of many German horticulturists were lost during the two World Wars and communist rule, and gratefully, the author lists several of the contributors to the development of violas and pansies by individuals and firms such as Ernst Benary, Doeppler, Gotthold and Co.,



A. Knapper, C. Lorenz, Gebrüder Mette, Moschkowitz and Siegling, Schwanecke and H. Wrede. Robert Kirk Strawn (1922–2008), biology and ichthyology professor at Texas A&M University, developed and shared an enthusiasm for water lilies with his wife and began collecting, growing and later breeding specimens while determining and correcting the names of those that were identical or misidentified. While this is merely a sampling of the intriguing individuals described by the author, she also has enhanced the value of this publication with the inclusion of a plethora of historical illustrations and contemporary photographs of plants and plant breeders, references for each chapter and a thorough index that also contains a list of cultivars for each genera discussed.

We are grateful to authors, such as Judith Taylor, who continue to search archives, historical societies and publications and interview family members to unearth information about, and bring attention to, those figures in the plant sciences whose accomplishments have been buried with time. As the author writes in her endnote, “the knowledge increases the pleasure” of these plants.

—Lugene B. Bruno, Curator of Art