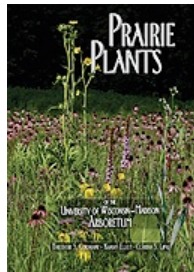


Plant Guide Reviews

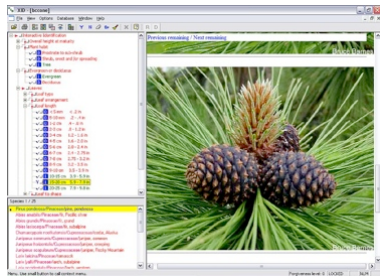
Prairie Plants of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum: Including Horsetails, Ferns, Rushes, Sedges, Grasses, Shrubs, Vines, Weeds, and Wildflowers.

By Ted Cochrane (writer), Kandis Elliot (graphics illustrator) and Claudia Lipke (photographer). University of Wisconsin Press, Madison. 2006. 365 pages. Retail cost: \$35.00, or \$30.00 to UW staff, students, and alumni. <http://www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/books/4417.htm>



I don't know how to begin to praise this sturdy, soft-cover book. With 1,200 color illustrations covering 360 species of herbaceous plants, it modestly purports to cover just the flora of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum. But in reality it is an indispensable wildflower-graminoid-pteridophyte guide to the common plants of a much larger area that covers nearly all of the Midwest south of the boreal forest. It will be useful not only in prairie communities, but also in old field successional habitats, barrens, savannas, woodlands and dry forests throughout several states. Master botanist Ted Cochrane – who, together with Bob Freckmann, probably knows more about the flora of Wisconsin than anyone else -- has a clear and concise writing style. He includes the derivations of scientific names, information on ecology, and interesting folklore about and the medicinal uses of many species. Claudia Lipke's photos are outstanding and include such challenging subjects as grass and sedge spikelets and their minute parts, all well-lighted and in crisp focus. Kandis Elliott's manipulation of Claudia's photos into a coherent, aesthetically appealing whole that is integrated with the text is a masterpiece of graphic art. The book is organized alphabetically by plant family, a wise choice, and most species treatments occupy a full page. The introduction includes a very appealing and useful illustrated color glossary. Among Midwestern plant guides, "Prairie Plants of the University of Wisconsin Arboretum" ranks right up there among the very best and should be on the bookshelf of every person interested in Midwestern natural history.

Book Review by: Emmet Judziewicz, UW-Stevens Point



FLORA ID INTERACTIVE PLANT KEYS AND COLOR PHOTOS FOR WISCONSIN CD by Bruce Barnes

Users are given three hints to aid an identification: (1) pick a good specimen, not the biggest or the smallest, (2) look and decide what is unusual about it, and (3) stick with traits that are understood, distinct and obvious. An identification proceeds when the user selects one feature after another with each selection eliminating species until only one name remains.

Editor's Note: A full critical review of this software is printed in the May 2007 issue of *Menziesia*, the newsletter of the Native Plant Society of British Columbia, which I may reprint in the spring issue of *Wisconsin Flora*.

(Bruce Barnes photo)

For more information on this software click on www.xidservices.com/FID or email Bruce Barnes at flora@uci.net