BOOK NOTICES


Subtitled "A Botanist Looks at the Attachments between Plants and People," this volume is a potpourri of essays on disparate botanical topics. The 14 chapters cover greenhouses/Rousseau/Mapplethorpe, a plant sanctuary near Melbourne, the botany of salads, the saffron crocus, passion flowers, heterostyly, nectar and nectaries, hoons and *Cannabis*, wattles (Acacia), Lycaste orchids, magnolias, columbines, daffodils, and orchids in cemeteries. Then follow an annotated bibliography (45 entries) and an index. Illustrations are line drawings and a few plates of splendid color photos. Bernhardt’s chatty style combines with the interesting subject matter to make this book good and recommended reading.—John W. Thieret.


This is an account of the pre-1803 works in Cleveland’s Holden Arboretum, the Cleveland Medical Library Association, and the Garden Center of Greater Cleveland. Detailed bibliographic data are given for 977 books plus a few manuscripts and paintings; the earliest entries are "c. 1477" and a definite 1479. The "Notes" give data on authors and their works, a bonus for the general reader. Even to those who have no special knowledge of old botanical literature, quite a few of the authors’ names will be familiar as the basis of many well-known generic names, e.g., *Commelina, Lindernia, Limnanthes, Lobelia, Lonicea, Monarda, Ranilla,* and many others. Separate indexes are given to authors/titles, printers/publishers, illustrators, portraits, and non-botanical illustrations. The bibliography has about 160 entries. Persons interested in early literature on plants will want this book, as will botanical and biological libraries, for which it is a “must” reference work and a reminder of our rich botanical heritage.—John W. Thieret.


Lying just northeast of Corpus Christi, Matagorda Island is one of the Texas barrier islands, less well known and less easily accessible than Padre Island a few miles to the south. This book is an fine guide to this bit of real estate (38 miles long and up to about 5 miles wide). The 10 chapters cover generalities (e.g., location, physiography, soils, climate, precipitation, temperature, storms, the human factor, Matagorda Island State Park and Wildlife Management area, how to get there [by ferry only], and tips for visitors), geology, history, ecology, vegetation, mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, and invertebrates. Following are five appendices (mainly lists of island organisms), a three-page bibliography, and an index. One of the best “naturalist’s guides” that I have seen, this well-written and most interesting book is recommended as good reading even for those who may never visit its subject island.—John W. Thieret.