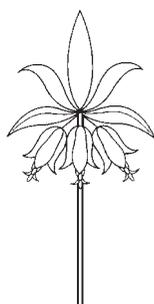


# HUNTIA

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Carnegie Mellon University

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The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

*Huntia* publishes articles on all aspects of the history of botany, including exploration, art, literature, biography, iconography and bibliography. The journal is published irregularly in one or more numbers per volume of approximately 200 pages by the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. External contributions to *Huntia* are welcomed. Page charges have been eliminated. All manuscripts are subject to external peer review. Before submitting manuscripts for consideration, please review the "Guidelines for Contributors" on our Web site. Direct editorial correspondence to the Editor. Send books for announcement or review to the Book Reviews and Announcements Editor. Subscription rates per volume for 2014 (includes shipping): U.S. \$65.00; international \$75.00. Send orders for subscriptions and back issues to the Institute. All issues are available as PDFs on our Web site, with the current issue added when that volume is completed. Hunt Institute Associates may elect to receive *Huntia* as a benefit of membership; contact the Institute for more information.

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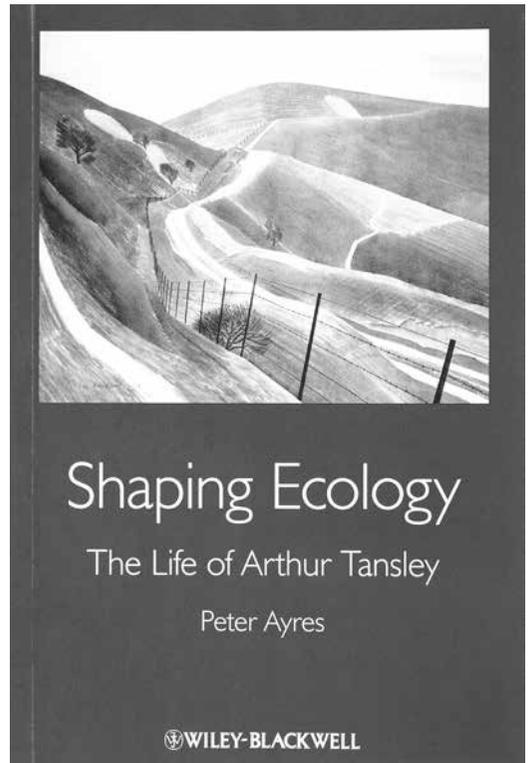


## Book Reviews and Announcements

**Ayres, Peter G.** *Shaping Ecology: The Life of Arthur Tansley*. West Sussex, England: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. xii, 213 p., ill., map, ports. \$29.95 (U.S.). ISBN 978-0-470-67154-2 (paperback).

Although few people today know of Arthur Tansley (1871–1955) and his contributions to land and wildlife conservation, he was a significant force in the origins of modern ecology and conservation science. This biography by Peter Ayres goes a long way toward re-establishing Tansley's reputation as one of the founders of the discipline of ecology. Tansley was a botanist who found the teaching methods of botany in his day to be wholly unsuitable for the needs of modern times, and he set out to effect change on several fronts. He “harnessed media power” by beginning a new journal, *New Phytologist*, which he edited then and which continues today. He transformed a committee to study British vegetation into the first learned society for ecologists, the British Ecological Society (BES), which celebrated its centenary in 2013. Tansley served as its first president and edited its journal, the *Journal of Ecology*, which also continues to be published and influential today. His full involvement in all three of these efforts shaped the way that the discipline of ecology developed in the United Kingdom and by extension influenced ecological developments far beyond his homeland.

He taught at both Oxford and Cambridge, shaping generations of students, and in the 1940s he became deeply involved in the development of the modern conservation movement in England. Alongside Julian Huxley (1887–1975), Tansley co-chaired the Wildlife Conservation Special Committee, eventually leading to the establishment of national parks in England and to the creation of the Nature Conservancy and a national nature conservation strategy. In 1939, after retiring from the Oxford Chair of Botany position, Tansley published *The British Islands and Their Vegetation*, “a tour de force that distilled 50 years' experience of studying the landscape and shaped the thinking of British plant ecologists for 50 years; it is strikingly modern in its understanding of the role of environment in ecology” (p. ix). Ten years later he published *Britain's Green Mantle* for a more general audience. Tansley corresponded with botanists and ecologists in continental Europe and the United States, and after he coined the



word “ecosystem” in 1935, the study of ecosystem science developed, primarily in the United States.

Part of the value of Ayres' work on this biography is in elucidating not only Tansley's personality, character, ideas, work and influence but also in placing them in the context of the times in which he lived and worked. Two world wars and several economic depressions affected British society's political and public attitudes toward what it was that Tansley was trying to do in England. That context makes it all the more remarkable that he was able to mobilize support for large and long-term projects requiring public support and public trust as well as political support. Swaying public opinion toward conservation took several decades.

Industrialization in the 19th century and the transportation links that it required consumed countryside and wild places. As people eventually realized what was happening, in 1896 the National Trust began to acquire land in order to protect it, but it would not be until 1912 that nature preserves would be established. The Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves was founded in 1912, followed by the British Ecological Society the next year. It would, however, take until the 1940s before these organizations would really begin to see the fruition of decades of hard work.

One of Tansley's many critical insights about nature and how to protect it came to him in the course of some work along the coasts of Norfolk and Brittany, where he realized that change is continuous in nature and preservation is really not an option. Thus he would focus his efforts on conservation rather than preservation, protecting wild areas so that they could develop naturally. A realist, Tansley also recognized the important roles that farming and forestry played in the evolution of the English countryside and saw the need for balancing those activities against protection of natural areas and wildlife. In 1945 he was appointed to a government committee to make the case for the establishment of National Nature Reserves as areas distinct from parks.

When the Nature Conservancy was founded in 1952, Tansley was its first chairman. Ayres identified that work, including the founding of National Nature Reserves, as Tansley's most tangible contribution to ecology and nature conservation. However, the book shows that his contributions were broader and deeper

than those, as Tansley really shaped the development of ecological science worldwide. One of his efforts was to attract young people to ecology and its study; he redefined the botanical curriculum to include newer disciplines and wrote a guidebook for teachers in 1946 to encourage their teaching of ecology. He helped to create the Council for the Promotion of Field Studies. He urged his botanist colleagues to go beyond the simple descriptive work of their botanical surveys and to make the sort of good physiological measurements that can support a higher level of explanation that gets at the causes of phenomena. Tansley was much influenced by the ecological work of Andreas Schimper and Eugenius Warming, whose work taught him that it would be a physiological approach that would provide answers to the greatest ecological problems, including what was for him the central question: "What forces drive change in vegetation?"

There is much more to his story as laid out in Ayres' book. Tansley was among a small handful of scientists, most of them botanists, who in the first two decades of the 20th century defined the new science of ecology. Today as we see mounting threats to the planet and its wild places and wildlife, we understand that we owe these pioneers a great debt for developing a discipline in which to focus the minds of those whose work can make a difference in protecting the living earth. By telling Tansley's story for new generations of scientists and a broad audience of persons interested in ecology and the natural world, Ayres has performed a great service.

—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

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**Cook, Alexandra.** *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Botany: The Salutary Science.* (SVEC, 2012:12.) Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2012. xxi, 436 p., ill., map, ports. £70.00. ISBN 978-0-7294-1055-7 (paperback).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) is known for his writings on politics, philosophy, morality and education, and even though we have botanical books in our library written by him, he was not primarily a botanist. However, he spent a considerable part of his later life engaged in the practice of botany. Alexandra Cook, an assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Hong Kong, has undertaken to explore in depth Rousseau's study and practice of botany, building on her earlier work editing and translating his botanical writings for the *Collected Writings of Rousseau*, volume 8, and her current contributions to his *Oeuvres Complètes*, French edition. The result is an impressive examination of every aspect of Rousseau's botanical thought: his method, his book and plant collections, his

correspondence network, the culture of science within which he pursued these activities and how his botanical studies fit into his larger perspective. Cook has made extensive use of a wide range of primary sources in the course of her work on this project.

Rousseau first took up botany in 1764, quite some time after he first published his *Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts* in 1750. In that essay he framed his thoughts about nature and society, and the corrupting influence of civilization, art and scientific progress. His botanical interests came much later, engaging him from 1764 until his death in 1778, with a few intermissions along the way. Cook refers to the work of several other scholars who have dismissed Rousseau's interest in botany as a mere pastime or hobby by which he removed himself from his more important spheres of inquiry. She believes, on the other hand, that his botanical study supported his core philosophical premise of the primacy of nature, and that it also functioned as a sort of environmental

therapy for him, allowing him to detach from his immediate concerns and elevate his thinking through the study of something outside of himself. Cook argues that this enabled him to function as an engaged natural philosopher, studying the book of nature, and that this was an expression of his basic thought about the relative values of nature and civilization. That this placed him outside of the arena of his earlier philosophical concerns was not a digression or a retreat but a deliberate act expressing the further development of his thought.

Much of 18th-century botany in the West was focused on questions of taxonomy, as botanists sought a classification system that would enable them to bring order to the ever growing numbers of plants and animals being discovered and studied. Cook shows that Rousseau moved in his own thinking from the artificial system devised by Carolus Linnaeus to a more natural method that sought to reflect the true relationships among plants in nature. He grappled with these ideas and engaged in correspondence and an exchange of books, specimens and ideas, also collecting plants and preserving and describing them and their environments, and annotating his botanical books with binomial plant names. This was an active intellectual and philosophical practice for him, in line with his ideas about nature and humanity and the importance of experiencing an unmediated contact with nature.

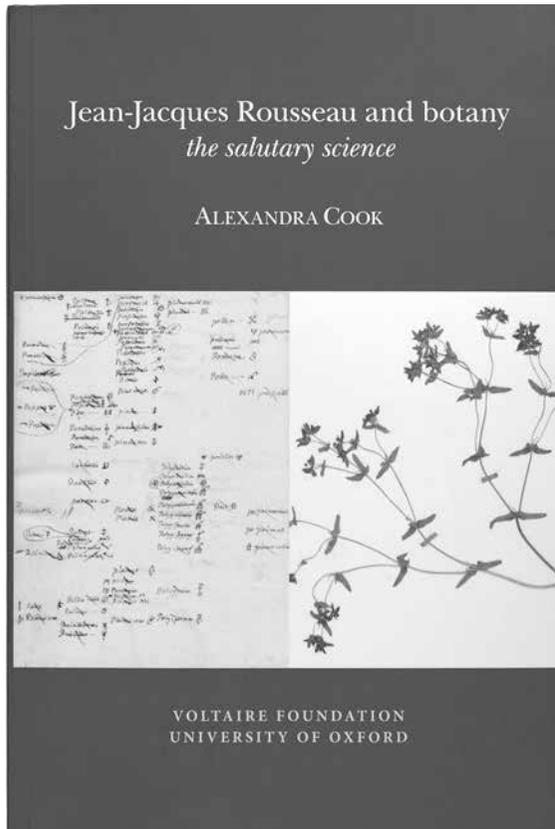
The subtitle of this book is “The Salutory Science.” Cook begins her study by looking at Rousseau’s views on treating “both social and personal problems with a derivative of the disease itself on the model of like curing like” (p. 4). Botany is seen as a “salutaire,” medicine for the soul. He was disillusioned with the academic medicine of his day, and he studied chemistry for a time, concluding that it could not be a salutary science because it was preoccupied with what was dead, its practice was

limited to the wealthy and it produced unwholesome medicines. Botany, on the other hand, could be practiced without expensive equipment and unconnected to material motivations. Because Rousseau began and pursued much of his botanical study in Switzerland, the cultural and scientific situation in Switzerland at the time is discussed, showing how conditions were conducive to his being able to be exposed to a range of botanical ideas. She goes on to discuss the development of Rousseau’s botanical thought as it evolved over

time, showing that he was influenced by his reading and his exposure to and contact with botanists such as Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1656–1708), Carolus Linnaeus (1707–1778) and Michel Adanson (1727–1806), whose works he read, and Bernard de Jussieu (1699–1777) and Antoine Laurent de Jussieu (1748–1836), with whom he botanized and with whose thoughts on natural method and natural orders he was familiar. Rousseau himself applied these ideas in his *Lettres Elementaires sur la Botanique*, “offering ... a short course in the spirit of the natural method” (p. 191). Cook explores the way in which the tools of study that enabled Rousseau to study nature, such as books and botanical nomenclature, were also theoretically problematic for him as mediations between humanity and nature.

Still, he appears to have made use of such mediations for purposes of moving beyond them. She discusses his herbaria and the ways that they connected him with the larger world of European botany and science, and then examines how in France and Germany Rousseau’s botanical writings were for the most part available and appreciated without amendment, whereas in England and in the wake of work by his literary executors some of his botanical works were edited and changed.

The text quotes extensively from French sources and is well supported by footnotes. Three very interesting



appendixes, a bibliography, an index and a chronology are also supplied. “Appendix 1: Rousseau’s botanical sources” is a list of works on botany that Rousseau owned or consulted, presented in a table over 27 pages. “Appendix 2: Rousseau’s botanical correspondents and contacts” is an annotated list of botanical contacts known directly to Rousseau. “Appendix 3: Rousseau’s herbaria” presents two summary tables, one regarding his five extant herbaria and another on a separate table of five herbaria labeled “missing or of dubious authenticity.”

Because what was known about Rousseau’s botanical side has been so meager and so biased in its assessment by scholars who discounted this aspect of his life, this study by Cook is an important and welcome addition to the documentation of the history of science and culture. The Voltaire Foundation is to be commended for including this groundbreaking study in its wide ranging and excellent SVEC series (previously Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, and now renamed Oxford University Studies in the Enlightenment).

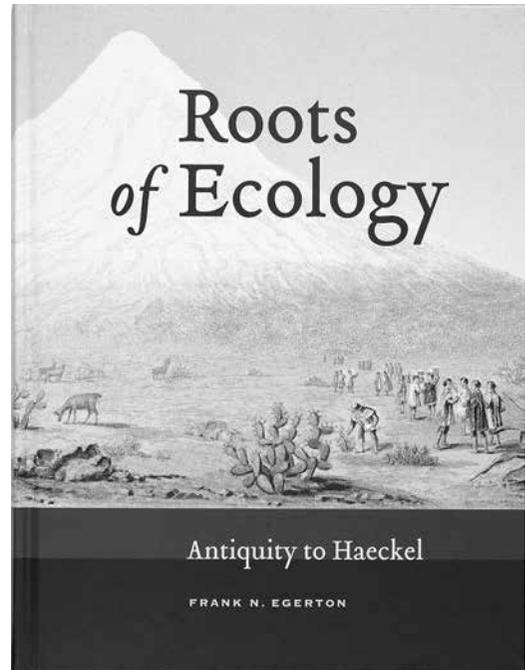
—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

**Egerton, Frank N.** *Roots of Ecology: Antiquity to Haeckel*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012. xiv, 274 p., ill., maps, ports. \$75.00 (U.S.). ISBN 978-0-520-27174-6 (hardback).

Frank Egerton in his introduction to *Roots of Ecology* writes:

Ernst Haeckel coined and defined the term “oecologie” in 1866, and four sciences—plant ecology, animal ecology, limnology, and marine biology—emerged during the 1890s. So why write on the history of ecological sciences beginning in antiquity? A rose by any other name is still a rose. Greeks established the balance-of-nature concept, zoology, and botany; and a Roman invented a catch-all ecological science—natural history. . . . This book . . . encompasses natural history and prehistory of plant ecology, animal ecology, limnology, marine biology, Darwinian natural selection, parasitology, entomology, plant physiology, and phytopathology, which are ecological sciences, even if their practitioners did not think of themselves as ecologists (p. xi).

Egerton is writing neither a history of the term “ecology,” nor a history of the discipline. Rather, he digs down through the work of many individuals over two millennia to unearth the roots of ecology, and so his book is very aptly named indeed. As one reads this selective historical survey of particular aspects of the life sciences in the western world, it’s striking to see how many of the people who were studying and making observations about natural communities of living things over the centuries were in fact “doing ecology” in some sense—often implicitly and beyond their own goals—or at least doing foundational work through their own studies, collections, writings, discussions and experiments that would lead to the development of ecology and related disciplines in the future. They



did not see what they were doing in that light, but as we look back at their work and their accomplishments we can see that what they did enabled life science to develop in particular ways. Egerton had been cautioned against writing a Whiggish history, and he addresses such concerns directly and convincingly in his introduction. However, tracing the foundations over long history to track and document the historical roots of ecology seems to require the sort of approach that he has taken. Much of the early spade work in this field that would not be conceived of, defined or named until the 19th and 20th centuries was done in other disciplines, and it has taken someone with a very broad understanding of the history

of science to identify those many strands of thought in numerous other disciplines and tease them free so that they can also be woven into a new story, the history of ecology. Egerton notes that naturalists of the past would read Herodotus and Plato and see discussions of natural history embedded in their writings on human history and philosophy and adds that to dismiss these important embedded expositions would lead to missing the origins of important ideas that would later develop in new and unforeseen ways.

Of course there was science or “proto-science” before the ancient Greeks, but they developed natural philosophy and later also theoretical and practical science, and their writings include considerable information about animals and plants in the context of their surroundings. The ancient Romans emphasized agriculture, and the historian Pliny came from Rome. Of the three great medieval civilizations in Europe, the Byzantines and Arabs were influenced by the Greeks while the Europeans were influenced by the Romans. In the late Middle Ages, the Renaissance in Italy entailed in part the recovery of ancient texts, leading to a scientific revolution in the 16th and 17th centuries. The herbals from that period contained ecological observations, and the example of their coverage would lead to medical professors publishing books on vertebrate animals. Scientific organizations arose in the 1600s, as did studies in human demography coming from John Gaunt’s interest in mortality records, leading to wider interest in statistics and demography of humans and then Gaunt’s and others’ similar interest in animal demography.

Science expanded in the 18th century, with professional naturalists focusing on specific branches of natural history. These studies were fed by the proliferating accounts of voyages and explorations and by the specimens coming into Europe from such travels. Later in the century, microscopy and other techniques contributed to new understanding of plant physiology, morphology and pathology. By the early 19th century the

beginnings of an ecological science were emerging from biogeography, floristic and ecological plant geography, evolutionary theories and marine biology. The work of several specific explorers is highlighted.

This historical survey ends with German biologist Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919), who was primarily a zoological evolutionist with a strong interest in botany and who saw the importance of ecology and coined the term in 1866, promoting it in his writings.

The first line of the first page of the book establishes Egerton’s sense of purpose: “My entire career has been preparation for writing this book.” During his education Egerton took various courses in botany and zoology and studied plant and animal ecology, and then after realizing that he was at heart a historian rather than a scientist, he earned a doctoral degree in the history of science with a dissertation on the history of the study of animal populations from the ancient Greeks to Darwin. He has read and thought deeply in a vast expanse of scientific, historical and philosophical literature to arrive at the deep understanding that he shares in this book. The text is engaging and engrossing and is illustrated mostly with portraits but also with a few maps and landscapes. The eight chapters come with extensive notes, and there are sixty pages of references and an index at the end of the volume. I would think that *Roots of Ecology* will be an essential part of the canon for historians of science as well as for ecologists, botanists and zoologists for many years to come. Egerton has also undertaken to write a series of articles for the *Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America* using and expanding on some of this same material and providing an online history with additional information. *Roots of Ecology* represents a huge amount of work distilled into a manageably sized presentation, explicating the past for the present and the future, and Egerton is just the person for the job. How fortunate for all of us that he undertook it.

—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

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**Fisher, Celia.** *The Golden Age of Flowers: Botanical Illustration in the Age of Discovery, 1600–1800.* London: The British Library; distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 2013. 144 p., ill. (chiefly col.). \$20.00 (U.S.); £14.99. ISBN 0-7123-5820-0 (paperback).

Celia Fisher is an expert on the painted flower. She studied flowers in 15th-century paintings and manuscripts while earning her masters and doctorate at the Courtauld Institute of Art, a school for the history and conservation of art and architecture. Fisher is a lecturer, gardener and writer, having published several other books on flowers in art.

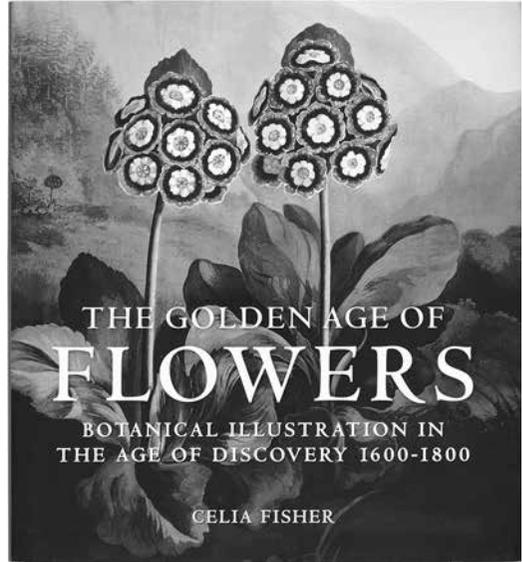
*The Golden Age of Flowers* begins with a 13-page introduction, which runs through the most famous explorers, authors, artists, gardeners and botanists whose stories will be fleshed out in a little more detail within the heart of the book. Fisher is good at not giving too much away, leaving stories open ended to encourage reading further. Fisher then presents in alphabetical order 101 (the dust jacket says 100, but counted, it is 101) genera known for their beautiful flowers that were introduced to Europe during the Age of Discovery. Each of the 101 entries is labeled with a generic name, which is oftentimes accompanied by a common English name

that applies to all the species in the genus (for example, “pineapple flower” to those in the genus *Eucomis*). Most entries touch on a few different species and are a paragraph or two long, telling how and when these plants were introduced to Europe and discussing some of their unique attributes.

The gem of each entry is the beautiful accompanying half-page color illustration from the period and the occasional full-page color detail. While most of the illustrations are by the European artists one would expect to see in such a publication (Redouté, Ehret, Bauer, etc.), the book also features several works by unknown Indian and Chinese artists who were commissioned by British employees of the East India Company. Some of these come from the “Canton Album” at the British Library, but unfortunately Fisher never elaborates on what this album is.

Captions include book plate numbers and British Library collection numbers but do not include the name of the species illustrated. Perhaps it is implied in the text, but the lack of binomials in the caption seems to be a critical omission. A general index and a small “further reading” list follow at the end. A few errors were found in the index, specifically when trying to find pages mentioning the Marquess Wellesley.

Fisher admits that her subject is large and that her purpose is to inspire her readers to learn more. It is a great introduction to a large subject. Therefore this book can appeal to a wide audience of artists, gardeners, history buffs and amateur botanists, giving them a quick tour through the age when new plants were pouring into Europe from all corners of the globe. Given the encyclopedia-like layout, the text is not forward moving—it’s a great book to pick up when the mood strikes or to pull out to learn something about a new



flower in the garden. However, someone looking for in-depth accounts and descriptions of either the plants or, even more so, the people should look elsewhere. In order to piece together the peoples’ stories, one might have to read several entries, which can feel too brief, as the illustrations far outweigh the amount of text. Given her background, perhaps Fisher could have included more commentary on the illustrations she chose. However, the visual beauty of this book makes up for any deficiencies in textual content. Indeed, the flowers are the focus here, and they can speak for themselves.

—Jeannette McDevitt, Assistant Librarian

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**Harris, Stephen.** *Planting Paradise: Cultivating the Garden, 1501–1900*. Oxford: Bodleian Library; distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 2011. ix, 142 p., ill. (chiefly color). \$50.00 (U.S.). ISBN 978-1-85124-343-3 (hardback).

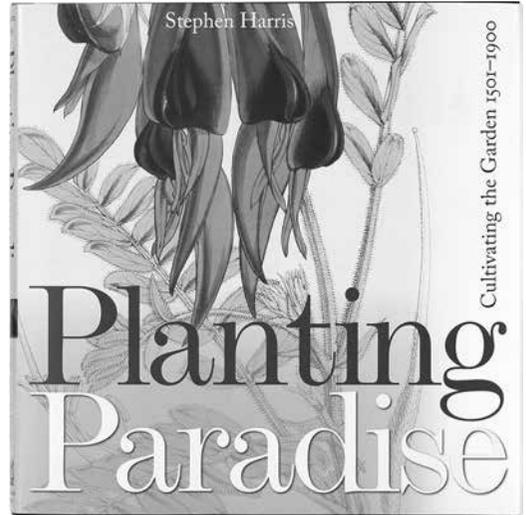
*Planting Paradise* “explores the roles of gardens, in their widest sense, as laboratories for the investigation of botanical diversity” (p. ix), touching on a variety of subjects, including biology, ecology, bibliography and religion. Stephen Harris is the Druce Curator of the Oxford University Herbaria, a university research lecturer and a governing body fellow at Oxford’s Green Templeton College. Some of his research interests include conservation biology and the effects of “human-mediated plant movement.”

To cover 400 years’ worth of history, the book is arranged in seven themes, each to a chapter, rather than chronologically. Though the book is meant to be read in whole, due to the theme arrangement one can read each chapter like an essay. Chapter one quickly gives a nod to the major plant groups and a few experts on those groups, as well as our history of using plants. Chapter two focuses on how we learn about plants by collecting and growing them and documenting this knowledge in books, manuscripts and herbaria. Chapter three takes a side trip to the Garden of Eden, the Doctrine of Signatures and astrological botany. Chapter four focuses on the utilitarian plants, specifically medicinal and food plants, the herbals that explained their uses, and the successes and failures of the Europeans in trying to cultivate these

plants in the gardens they established throughout the world. Similarly, chapter five explores how knowledge and possession of plants were sources of power for a nation, highlighting the rubber tree as an example. This chapter also discusses the unforeseen problem of invasive species. Chapter six is more biological in nature, discussing the ins and outs of growing and propagating plants outside of their natural habitats, which includes a look at the manure industry. Chapter seven tackles classification schemes, plant sexuality and inheritance. Harris leaves us at the beginning of the 20th century, when the focus went from collecting and documenting all plants to understanding them.

Using the treasures of Oxford's Bodleian Libraries and Herbaria, Harris illustrates the book abundantly with full-color images from the years 1501 to 1900. The reader gets to see what the copy at the Bodleian Library looks like, including the occasional owner's mark or tear. Harris puts a lot of his information about the illustrations and their publications in the captions, which makes them a read unto themselves and perfect for a leisurely flip-through. In the text he uses many primary, first-hand quotations from his subjects—using their publications, letters or diaries—or from their contemporaries. The list of references is extensive, giving an idea of the variety of topics Harris covers. He also adds a section on further reading for each chapter where readers can find more information.

Harris never directly states his geographical scope, but it becomes clear that he is writing as a British man about the British, his examples focusing heavily on the British Isles and Oxford in particular. This is confirmed by the dust jacket, which states "This... book examines the changing role of the garden in Britain." Details about other European entities and their gardens fill in the gaps.



Harris covers a lot of ground in an easy-to-read manner. Although he discusses the familiar theme of exploring the origins of our garden plants and all of the relevant famous botanical literature, he makes them feel pertinent to the modern reader, appealing to our caffeine-related vices and touching on the current hot topic, human impact on the environment. Perhaps it is this and the variety of facets related to the familiar theme that are new and keep the readers' attention. *Planting Paradise* will appeal to the wide audience of plant lovers and is a wonderful resource for broadening the amateur's perspective.

—Jeannette McDevitt, Assistant Librarian

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**Mociño, José Mariano and Martín Sessé.** *La Real Expedición Botánica a Nueva España*. México, D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México; [Culiacán, Sinaloa, México]: El Colegio de Sinaloa, 2010. 12 vol.: ill. (chiefly col.), maps, port., facsim. \$1,309 (U.S.) for the set. ISBN 978-607-03-0170-4 (set, hardback). In Spanish. Available from the publisher (<http://www.sigloxxieditores.com.mx/>).

This is both a history of the Royal Scientific Expedition to New Spain (1787–1803) and of the contributors to the history of the knowledge of Mexican flora and fauna. Included are the original drawings from the Hunt Institute's Torner Collection of Sessé and Mociño Biological Illustrations and several maps, portraits and drawings from other important archives in

Mexico and Spain. These volumes were made possible by a collaboration of over 60 academics from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and from departments at the university including the Institute of Biology, Institute of Philological Research, Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Graduate Studies Iztacala. This project was coordinated by general editor Jaime Labastida, academic editor Estela Morales Campos, biology editors José Luis Godínez Ortega, María Hilda Flores Olvera and Fernando Chiang Cabrera, and philology editors Aurelia Vargas Valenica and Martha Elena Montemayor Aceves.

Volume 1 includes essays by the editors and many other contributors titled: "Illustration and independence: José Mariano Mociño and modern"; "Spanish scientific expeditions in the Bourbon era"; "Martín de Sessé y



Lacasta, director of the Royal Expedition”; “Vicente Cervantes Mendo and the Royal Botanic Expedition to New Spain”; “The artists and the illustrations of the scientific expedition to New Spain”; “The Torner Collection: A historical introduction”; “The illustrations of plants and their importance in the knowledge of the flora of Mexico”; “The zoology of the Royal Botanical Expedition”; “The ornithology of José Mariano Mociño”; “Drawings of the Royal Botanical Expedition to New Spain kept in the Archives of the Royal Botanical Garden of Madrid”; “The classical languages: Vehicle of humanistic and scientific communication.” Also included are historical texts by Augustin Pyramus de Candolle, Fernando Altamirano and José Ramírez and an anthology of texts of José Mariano Mociño, along with a chronology, bibliography and appendix including the assigned names of plants according to de Candolle and Sessé and Mociño.

The remaining 11 volumes contain 1,989 drawings from the Hunt Institute’s collection. Volumes 2 through 11 include plants organized by family, and volume 12 includes drawings of birds, crustaceans, fish, insects and mammals. Each volume includes an alphabetical index of the biological specimens illustrated, and volume 12 includes an index of the entire set by volume. These illustrations are accompanied by current taxonomy; the original name, if noted; the Torner Collection accession number; and when available the name as published in Sessé and Mociño’s *Plantae Novae Hispaniae* (1893) and *Flora Mexicana* (1887), taxon by de Candolle, a bibliography, and the original and historical descriptions.

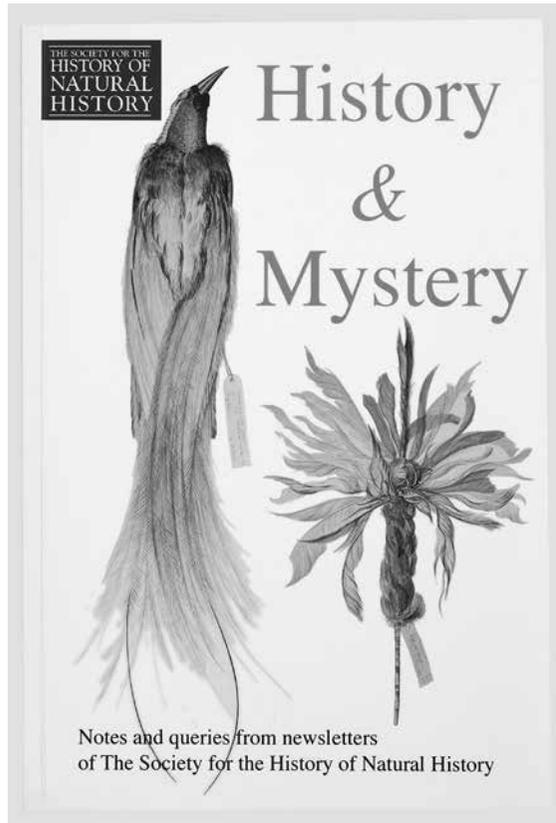
Thumbnail images of the Torner Collection can be viewed on our Web site ([www.huntbotanical.org](http://www.huntbotanical.org)) in the Catalogue of the Botanical Art Collection at the Hunt Institute database by a search using *Sessé* in the name field or the prefix *6331.* in the accession number field.

—Lugene Bruno, Curator of Art

**Nelson, E. Charles, ed.** *History & Mystery: Notes & Queries from the Newsletters of The Society for the History of Natural History*. London: Society for the History of Natural History (SHNH), 2011. viii, 200 p., ill., port. £15.00 in the U.K., £18.00 elsewhere, prices are postpaid. ISBN 978-0-901843-09-8 (paperback). Available only from the Society (<http://www.shnh.org.uk>).

The SHNH's *Newsletter* began in 1977 as an adjunct publication to the longstanding journal that began in 1936 as the *Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History* and now is called *Archives of Natural History*. While the journal publishes articles and book reviews, the newsletter primarily publishes news, announcements, notes and queries. Historical research and information sharing are primary activities among SHNH members, and the queries are a means of tapping a large pool of varied expertise in hopes of moving one's research past some thorny problem or other. It was a brilliant idea to collect so many of them into an anthology, organized thematically by topic. The *Newsletter* is more ephemeral than the journal and, other than the most recent issues, it is not available online, and few people are likely to have access to a complete run. That is one of the reasons for issuing this compilation. Also, some of these reprinted queries are still unanswered—"if you have the answer, please contact us," editor Charles Nelson writes—and the volume's indexes are preceded by four pages of "Addenda" that provide updates to the status of the queries that are reprinted in the book. There are indexes to subjects, titles of principal books and publications, authors and articles (by titles), and they are followed by "Illustrations and their sources (arranged by page number)."

The mining is so rich here that one can open the book anywhere and be immediately engaged. There are chapters on branches of natural history and those who worked in them—"Botany & botanists," "Geologists



& geology," "Fungi & mycologists"—as well as on other categories of persons, such as "Mainly about naturalists," "Who was who?," "Women in natural history," "Novelists & naturalists," "Criminals as naturalists," "Moravian naturalists," "Charles Darwin & family," "Philip Henry Gosse (1810–1888)." Other branches of natural history also have their own sections: "Treasures of the deep," "Insects & entomology," "Birds ancient & modern," "Wild animals obtuse & furry." There are sections relating to research, curation and bibliography, such as: "Conservation," "Papers & correspondence," "Books & bibliography," "Dates of publication," "Misprints: best & worst?," "Newspaper gleanings," "Hunting Libri Picturati," "Useful resources." Collecting is represented: "Collections & collecting," "The ephemera of collecting," "Auctions & sales," "Taxation." There are yet more sections that don't fall into my ad hoc groupings: "Very proper pronunciation," "The business of natural history," "SBNH to SHNH," "Clubs & societies," "Lighting the darkness." Two sections at the end, "In memoriam" and "Memorials to naturalists," record deaths and memorials.

The title of this book was inspired by a maxim of uncertain origins, although it seems to have been devised in connection with hunting: "What's hit is history, and what's missed is mystery." The first two pages of the text are a prologue citing various instances of the maxim over several centuries. The use is apt, even though it's being repurposed away from bagging game and toward a more cerebral hunt. The many notes and queries reproduced here embody the spirit of inquiry that characterizes historical and bibliographic research. There are so many tantalizing and interesting connections being made, both retrospectively and in the present, among ideas and among persons, that reading these pages induces a heady experience as the reader is reminded of the vast expanses

of literature and knowledge that we are privileged to enjoy and of the many lost traces still to be found and questions yet to be answered. They are also a reminder that there are many people who share these interests and who are at work on pieces of the larger picture.

The text on the back cover best describes the target audience:

History & Mystery celebrates the SHNH's  
Diamond Jubilee. Founded in London in 1936

as the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, the SHNH is an international society which welcomes as members everyone with an interest in the history of natural history in the broadest sense—including botany, geology and zoology—as well as natural history collections, exploration, art and bibliography in all periods and cultures.

—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

**Payne, Michelle.** *Marianne North: A Very Intrepid Painter*. Richmond, Surrey, England: Kew Publishing, 2011. 96 p., ill. (chiefly col.). £12.00. ISBN 978-1-84246-430-4 (paperback).

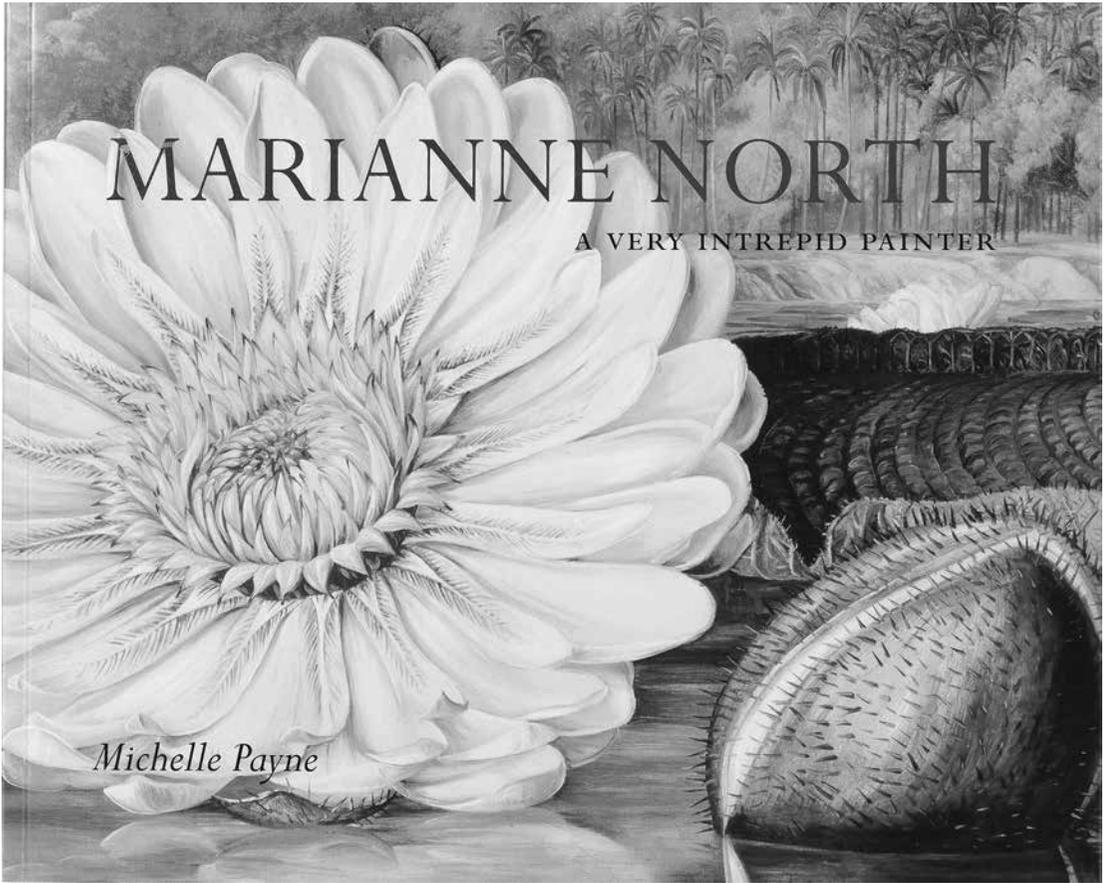
Marianne North was an artist, a naturalist, a pioneering woman and indeed a very intrepid painter. Born in Hastings in 1830 to a wealthy and well-connected family, Marianne benefited from an early appreciation for travel, and though she had little formal education, she was well trained in music and the arts. A youthful passion for music, and singing in particular, was foiled by stage fright, but she continued to enjoy playing the piano and singing privately, and she continued to paint. Much of her childhood into adulthood was spent traveling with her father, with whom she was very close, her mother and her three siblings. Most often in Europe, their travels were exciting as they experienced all modes of transport, including the new railway system, explored incredibly varied landscapes, and even survived a dangerous escape from Vienna under siege. All the while, Marianne and her sisters recorded everything in their sketchbooks.

After the death of her mother in 1855, her life simplified. She, her sister Catherine and their father spent more time in London, requiring fewer servants and hosting fewer guests in a newly acquired flat that would become her permanent home later in life. The family still traveled, though, and after her sister married and her father lost his Parliamentary election in 1865, the journeys Marianne took with her father stretched further and further across the world. When he passed away in 1869, Marianne was devastated. She quickly planned a new journey, alone, with only her maid to assist her, as a way of both mourning the loss privately and learning to be an independent traveler. In 1871 Marianne set off on what would be 19 years of adventure and painting, utilizing family connections to find hosts in far away locations and patronage of her work at home in London. She became such a pioneer in identifying new plant species that several were named in her honor, and even Charles Darwin encouraged her travels abroad and her artwork. Her relationship with William Hooker

(1785–1865), then director at Kew Gardens, and with others at Kew, aided all parties immensely. She often sent specimens and artworks back to Kew for identification and in 1879 offered to give Kew her collection of paintings and a gallery to house them. It is this gallery and collection that is the primary focus of *Marianne North: A Very Intrepid Painter* by Michelle Payne.

Since the Marianne North gallery opened in 1882 with 627 paintings, it has undergone a handful of upgrades, remodels and conservation efforts, as well as additions to accommodate what is now 848 paintings and 246 wood samples crafted into wainscoting. This book by Michelle Payne brings us to 2011, just after the most intensive conservation of both the building and the individual artworks to date. While much of the biographical information has been written before by many others, and often is taken from Marianne North's own autobiography, Payne separates herself in the inclusion of chapters devoted to North's travels and the more recent conservation and restoration of the gallery and artworks. Mixed in with chapters describing the exotic locations where Marianne spent time, and the anecdotal tales of her experiences there, Payne inserts subchapters devoted to the plants themselves. An example is a section on "Economic crops," which uses paintings of landscapes or field-workers to illustrate discussion of the importance of rice, coffee, tea, sugar and spices in many of the locales visited by North. Often, quotes from North are included as she was a woman as intensely interested in the people and their lifestyles, diets and habits as she was in the plants themselves. While quite brief and with often only a small paragraph or two of information on the crop itself, these sections help to paint a clearer picture of the experiences Marianne may have been having while abroad. Often, as is especially the case in the "Fantastic fruits" subchapter, the plants described in these special sections are rare outside of the tropical locations where they first fascinated Marianne, making these small sections all the more intriguing.

Ultimately, where Payne is most successful is in piquing the interest of the reader. These chapters and subchapters, while interesting and beautifully illustrated,



are very short, leaving one with the sense that they have just read the introductory paragraphs for a dozen books but not the books themselves. Additionally, the chapter on the conservation of North's paintings provides some of the most interesting details about the artist, her work and the gallery itself. Her descriptions of the painstaking and meticulous conservation efforts are engaging and give the reader a glimpse into what a massive undertaking such a large-scale conservation project this was and also how rewarding. How exciting to be a conservator on your first day and uncover an unknown painting! At barely four pages, again it feels like an introduction to a fascinating exploration. Most disappointing for this reader is that this is a companion piece to the gallery, and as such Payne assumes the reader's ability to fill in

gaps in information with the artworks themselves, with the interactive gallery tools she describes and with the purchase of another publication, the *Official Guide to the North Gallery*, rev. ed. 6 (London, 2010; orig. ed., 1914), described on the inside cover of the book alongside a large photo of the restored interior of the gallery. For a reader already familiar with the gallery and its holdings, looking for beautiful images with just enough text to remind you of your visit, this is a lovely book. For those doing scholarly research into the intrepid woman herself, her work or the places she traveled, those needs would be better met elsewhere. For the uninitiated, this is a lovely place to start.

—Carrie Roy, Assistant Curator of Art

**Sonnerat, Pierre.** *Nouveau Voyage aux Indes Orientales (1786–1813)*. Texte établi et annoté par Jean Deloche and Madeleine Ly-Tio-Fane. (Collection Indologie, no. 115) Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry (IFP) and Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), 2010. xl, 377 p., port., maps, 8 p. of col. pl. 750.00Rs; €32.00. ISBN 978-81-8470-182-1 (IFP), 978-2-85539-107-6 (EFEO; paperback). Available from the publisher (<http://www.ifpindia.org/Nouveau-Voyage-aux-Indes-Orientales-1786-1813.html>).

From the back cover:

In this New Journey to East India, begun in 1786 and completed in 1813, Sonnerat sets out to furnish his readers with the information that he has gleaned through years of travel and research in that country and at the same time to gather together contemporary European knowledge about India. A stimulator of ideas, he makes a contribution of his own to knowledge about natural history, and opens the way for the study of physical geography (morphology, climatology, soil survey, hydrography) and human geography.

In doing so, he described the relationship of Indian people with their surroundings by studying the agricultural, industrial and commercial resources of the areas they inhabit and the benefits that they draw from them. The manuscript of this text, which has been untraceable since 1816, was found recently at the Mitchell Library in Sydney, Australia.

Sonnerat had published two earlier books recounting his travels in southeast Asia and had been working on a third book at the time of his death. This last manuscript

was lost after his death and remained missing for nearly two centuries, after which it was found by Madeleine Ly-Tio-Fane in the Mitchell Library in Sydney in 1978. The present book is the result of years of work by Deloche and Ly-Tio-Fane to edit the manuscript so that it could be published as a coherent account. An appendix reproduces some of the watercolor illustrations of plants that were commissioned by Sonnerat of Indian artists, with species determinations made by Dan H. Nicolson in 1994. Antoine Laurent de Jussieu had seen and worked with the

illustrations sometime after 1816 and had annotated some of them, and these annotations are transcribed. The book concludes with a bibliography and two indexes.

In his introduction Jean Deloche writes about the history of the manuscript and the problems that it posed. It comprised 1,082 leaves with the text organized in 3 volumes and 19 chapters. Deloche comments that if the book had been published at the beginning of the 19th century, it would have been considered to be an excellent encyclopedia or practical manual of Indian studies by its French audience. However, today much of the information in the text is out-of-date and obsolete. A number of Sonnerat's observations and descriptions were based on adaptations of other authors' studies that were already published. Such second-hand information

would not be published today. The manuscript, does, of course, also contain Sonnerat's own observations. The editors have moved his marginal notes into the body of the text, noting where they had been found in the manuscript. Deloche goes on to discuss how this recounting of Sonnerat's final voyage contributes to various aspects of our knowledge of India. In part two of the introduction, Madeleine Ly-Tio-Fane presents a biographical sketch of Sonnerat. After that, Sonnerat's words begin with his own introduction to this account of his last voyage.

—Charlotte Tancin, Librarian

