

Gentry's Rio Mayo Plants: The Tropical Deciduous Forest & Environs of Northwest Mexico. Paul Martin, David Yetman, Mark Fishbein, Phil Jenkins, Thomas Van Devender, and Rebecca Wilson, eds. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson. xvi and 558 pp., maps, diags., photos, notes, refs., and index. \$75.00 cloth (ISBN 0-8165-1726-6).

Howard Scott Gentry is finally getting his due. This volume is a completely updated, re-edited version of Gentry's original study of the Rio Mayo, in Sonora, Mexico. Here, in the moist canyons of the Rio Mayo, biologists continue to encounter the juncture of Neo-Tropical and true Sonoran Desert plant species. The original 1942 release of *Rio Mayo Plants* was to be the first of many volumes produced by one of the better field biologists of the century. Gentry did not consider himself to be a true botanist, and yet his contributions have endured, and his volume on the Agaves of North America is still the most comprehensive treatise on the subject of these succulents.

This new version is a beautifully produced, almost intimidating, compendium of new information on the region and its flora. To be sure, portions of Gentry's original prose are present, but only amount to about 40 pages in the new version. The editors of this tome have organized the volume into four sections. Part 1 consists of an overview of the Rio Mayo region, extant literature, and the contemporary vegetation patterns. A list of localities cited in the study follows in Part 2, and part 3 is a portion of Gentry's original work in describing the Rio Mayo. The bulk of this book is found in Part 4, which is a massive and useful annotated list of the Rio Mayo's vascular plants. The editors carefully organized this information, and were cautious with their taxonomic nomenclature; the region begs for further botanical and systematic work.

It is impossible to review a taxonomic list of new plant collections this vast. The contributors to the volume include 27 botanists and biologists, not including the large numbers of collectors involved in the revision of *Rio Mayo Plants*. Each individual plant citation provides the scientific name, common names in Spanish, as well as indigenous languages of the region (Guarijio, Mayo, and Pima). They also include habitat descriptions, the site of collection, and verbal descriptions of the plants as well as their past and current uses by locals. The first three sections of the book contain photos, tables, as well as illustrations completed by Paul Mirocha. Two maps are provided with the volume: one is a large foldout of the Rio Mayo region, while the smaller encapsulates the vegetation of the region. The annotated list, however, lacks any illustrations. The new volume is rather useless as a key in the field, yet the amount of information contained in the new list of plants justifies the cost of this volume, for true enthusiasts at least. The number of species described, or rather taxa, has more than doubled since the original volume appeared. In addition, the contributors explicate the Rio Mayo's changing biogeography, and how current patterns of land-use are changing the vegetation composition of this area.

The writing is clear, pithy, and fairly uniform. This is an uncommonly good trait for an edited volume with a large number of contributors. The only flaw in the production of this updated Rio Mayo Plants volume is that the press adver-

tises the inclusion of a large color map: my copy was black and white. Undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals interested in biogeography, ethnobotany, and arid lands ecology will want (to use) this encyclopedic work. Most libraries, especially those located in the Southwestern U.S., might find it useful to buy two copies of this volume. Paul Martin and friends have given us a true gem, although as they note themselves, the mountains of southern Sonora beckon for more botanical work. Surely more treasures of the Sierra Madre remain to be discovered. Had Gentry survived to see the release of this work, he would be pleased.

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