

Pictorial Guide to the Mammals of North America

By Leonard Lee Rue III. 1967. Apollo Editions, Crowell, New York. 299 pp., illus. \$9.95.

This attractive book is more than a pictorial guide; it has two or three pages of text devoted to each of the 66 species discussed, so that besides being interesting to read, it should be useful as a reference source for laymen. It is written in the easy style made popular in the author's series *The World of the Beaver*, *The World of the Red Fox*, *The World of the Raccoon*, etc.

Rue's choice of mammals for this book is practical. He concentrates on large common species, including small mammals to round out the collection. If one is limited to one shrew, the short-tailed shrew *Blarina brevicauda* is the best-known example; if there are to be only two bats, the little brown (as a hibernating species) and the red (as a migrating one) are suitable representatives. It is odd, however, to have all marine mammals represented by Californian sea lions. Of the mammals discussed, only 13 are not found in Canada.

The many illustrations in this book will make it especially appealing to children. The photographs, most of them excellent, are all by the author, who has obviously traveled widely in North America. The small maps of North America suffer the problems of

all greatly reduced maps — the extent of the distribution of some species is underdone, and of others seemingly overdone. The badger and the cottontail are missing from Ontario, while the wolverine is represented in eastern Canada by a wide sweep of gray that belies its almost endangered status. The footprints are detailed but their arrangement into tracks is disappointing. Unless the gait an animal used to make the track is noted, it is usually impossible to tell which feet are which. For the black bear the forefeet are obviously different than the hind feet, but there is no legend indicating which is which, or how big either is.

The appendices include a brief mention of what mammals may be seen in the many federal, state, and provincial parks on this continent; a compilation with addresses of the bureaus, departments, and agencies that deal with wildlife; and a list by family of all the mammals present in North America together with their scientific names. The reference list is short with the most recent item 1964, underlining that this printing of the 1967 edition has not been updated.

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BOTANY

Plant Names

By T. S. Lindsay. 1976. Facsimile of 1923 edition. Gale Research Co., Boston, Massachusetts. vii + 93 pp. \$8.

This small book, designed for gardeners and naturalists, deals with two topics: the principles of botanical nomenclature, and the origins and meanings of plant names.

The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature did not exist when this book was first published. Some parts of Lindsay's discussion of the rules of nomenclature, based on the Vienna Rules of 1905, still apply, but other parts are no longer correct, e.g., "There is no accepted law as to names of varieties (i.e., cultivars). But botanists heed them not." In 1923, the Primulales could correctly be designated by the now-obsolete term "cohort," but even then the Primulaceae should not have been called a "division," nor was the recognition of botanical varieties considered to violate the principle of binary nomenclature. Those

seeking an introduction to botanical nomenclature must look to more authoritatively written and more modern works.

The names of plant genera, whether Latin or English, for which derivations are given are few, and appear to have been selected almost at random. Indexed under G, for example, there are only 21 Latin and 9 English names. Derivations of 10 of the Latin and 6 of the English names are scattered through the text; the others are merely classified as "commemorative" or according to their linguistic origins. The chances are, therefore, that a generic or common name which one might wish to look up will not be included. Fortunately, several books that provide more extensive lists of meanings and derivations for botanical and common names are now available. Even a dictionary is a superior reference for this purpose.



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