

## BOTANY

**The Ferns and Allied Plants of New England**

By Alice F. Tryon and Robbin C. Moran with photographs by Robert L. Coffin. 1997. Center for Biological Conservation, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, Massachusetts. xv + 325 pp., illus. U.S. \$49.95 + shipping.

The six New England States in northeastern United States, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, are surrounded by Quebec and New Brunswick in the north, New York on the south and west, and the Atlantic Ocean in the east. Their area of 66 608 square miles is only a small portion of the 3 022 387 square miles of mainland United States. In this relatively small area there are 92 native species of ferns and allied plants. This is a high number when compared to California, which has eighty-seven, Texas, which has 107 and Florida which is close to the fern-rich tropics and has 125 native species. Of the 92 species about one-third are restricted to eastern North America, seven extend southward into the American tropics, two extend southward to Central and South America, one southward to Guatemala, 10 occur in eastern Asia, two occur in eastern Asia and Europe, 10 are circumpolar and about one-third are circumboreal.

The presentation of these ferns and fern allies is excellent. There is an initial list of families, genera and species together with common names followed by a key to genera and then a General Plan of the Genetic Treatments. Each genus has at least a page devoted to it under the headings of Characteristics, Distribution, Chromosome Number, and Remarks. The latter section contains a myriad of most interesting comments. Each species has two pages devoted to it — on the left an excellent black-and-white photograph taken in the wild together with a small

world, wide map and a dot map depicting the New England States — on the right is the common name, scientific name with some synonymy, and again, Characteristics, Habitat, New England Range, World Range, Chromosome Number, Spores, and Remarks which are again extremely interesting. Generic keys are accompanied by excellent black frond shapes and line drawings of particular features such as sori, indusia, and stem characteristics in the genus *Equisetum*. It is of particular interest to know that the majority of the photographs of the ferns were taken mostly in the vicinity of Amherst, Massachusetts, by Robert L. Coffin, a naturalist and photographer about fifty years ago. His eye for this extremely interesting group of plants was most impressive, especially at a time when he had to carry a large 9 by 12 centimeter Zeiss Icon Maxima view camera together with a heavy wooden tripod into the woods and over the hills.

In the final pages of this volume are a series of Scanning Electron Micrographs of Spores, information on Geology and Climate, suggestions of Ferns for the Gardens, a glossary, references, and index.

The authors have not just given another book on ferns and fern allies of a small region but have produced a tremendous work which will be invaluable to teachers, their students, and naturalists not only in northeastern United States, but beyond. They are to be congratulated.

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**Revised Checklist of New York State Plants**

By Richard S. Mitchell and Gordon C. Tucker. 1997. Bulletin No. 490, New York State Museum, The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Albany, New York 12230, vii + 400 pp. U.S. \$16.50.

This volume contains a wealth of information not only for the possible publication of a new flora of New York State but also invaluable to all groups interested in natural history, conservation, and especially rare and endangered species in the state. The last publication of *A Checklist of New York State Plants* was by R. S. Mitchell in 1986. The present

publication in which the pteridophytes follow the format of *Flora of North America*, Volume 2 (1993) and the phylogenetic system for angiosperms is that proposed by Arthur Cronquist (1981), treats 2078 native and 1117 non-native species plus 84 native and 324 non-native extirpated or non-persistent species. In addition 171 native and 42 non-native plus 18 native and one extirpated hybrid are included together with 176 native and 33 non-native subspecies and varieties. Common names are provided for species primarily when they have been used in 20th century publications. Synonyms for species and





Cody, William J. 1998. "The Ferns and Allied Plants of New England, by Alice F. Tryon and Robbin C. Moran [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 112(3), 568–568. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.358476>.

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.358476>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/358476>

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