

Book Reviews

Garden Smart Colorado: A Guide to Non-Invasive Plants for Your Garden. Shonle, Irene, et al. Centennial, CO: Colorado Weed Management Association, 2007. \$1.00.

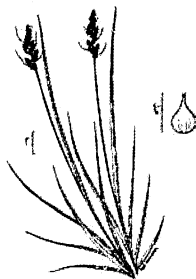
Reviewed by Jan Loechell Turner

Featuring 15 plants on the Colorado noxious weed list, *Garden Smart Colorado* is a colorful booklet providing the gardener with alternatives to invasive garden plants. Each two page spread discusses a noxious weed, such as Russian-olive, and provides native and horticultural substitutes.

Myrtle spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*) is a featured weed from the Colorado Noxious Weed List "A" (List A species are designated by the Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Agriculture for eradication). The common and scientific name of the plant, a color photo, and information about threats posed by the weed are followed by photos and descriptions of native and cultivated plants that could be used instead. As native alternatives to myrtle spurge, Kinnickinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) is recommended for high elevation gardens and creeping mahonia (*Mahonia repens*) for lower elevations. Creeping sedum (*Sedum* spp.) and white horehound (*Marrubium rotundifolium*) are proposed as the high and lower elevation cultivated options. Icons indicate whether the plants are invasive, whether they are Colorado natives, their sun/shade requirements, and water needs. Each entry concludes with a list of additional recommended plants.

The cover illustration is by Mary Ann Bonnell, who gave a humorous and informative presentation at the 2007 CONPS Annual Meeting. A good feature is the inclusion of an index by common name. Other items that should be considered for future editions of this guide are a reference to CONPS and its web address for access to the online list, *Suggested Native Plants for Horticultural Use on the Front Range of Colorado*, a bibliography including recommended books and web sites for more information, and scientific names in the index.

Jan Loechell Turner is the Co-President of CONPS and an Associate Professor at Regis University Library.



Grasses of Colorado Robert B. Shaw. Hard Cover. Pages: 662. Illustrations: 12 b/w photos, 345 line drawings, 345 maps, 3 tbls. Suggested price \$75.

Reviewed by Pat Murphy

When you want a complete flora, you would like it to have a key, plant descriptions, line drawings, distribution maps, habitat preferences, and useful, interesting comments... while being waterproof and weightless. *Grasses of Colorado* has it all, except the waterproof and weightless features. At 2.2 pounds this may be a little heavy for the fanny pack, but easy to keep in the car, and quite light compared to Harrington or the *Intermountain Flora* (Volume 6) weighing in at four pounds. There are a lot of grasses in Colorado's diverse terrain, and it is nice to have them so well presented in one book.

Robert Shaw is currently a professor at Texas A&M, but spent many years at Colorado State University. He has compiled a real "keeper," which he acknowledges has been built on a long history of previous works that have helped us to "see" the grasses. The introductory information is superb and includes a discussion of the importance of grasses, the physiography and ecoregions of Colorado, and an excellent discussion of grass anatomy and plant structure with line drawings. I have already listed the completeness of the actual contents of the flora, but there is also a glossary of terms and an index that lets you find species using either the old or new nomenclature. Isn't that nice!

We will surely carry this book at CONPS, so you may be able to look it over at book sale events. Of course I haven't had a chance to test the key, but the time for that has arrived. So, back to the weight issue — at only 0.11 ounce per species, this book will always be with me, at least in the car. Oh, and the waterproof issue — it should fit in a gallon size ziplock, no problem.

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Pat Murphy is a botanist/plant ecologist and is President of Ecotone Corporation and member of the CONPS Sales Committee.