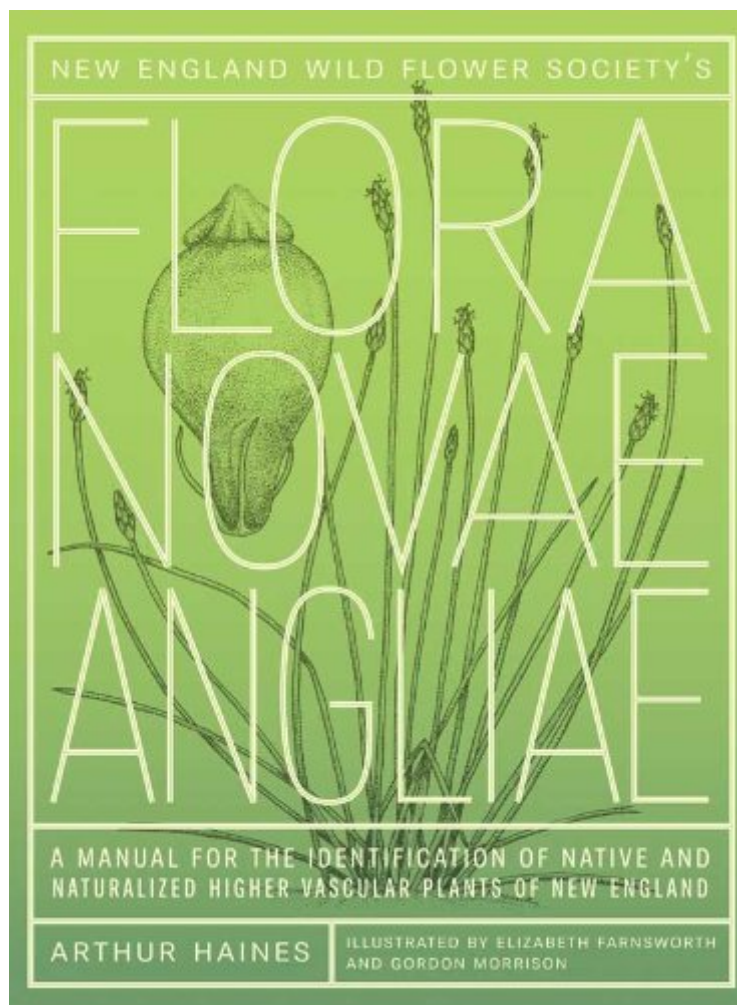


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New England Wild Flower Society's Flora Novae Angliae: A Manual For The Identification Of Native And Naturalized Higher Vascular Plants Of New England



Synopsis

This comprehensive manual offers accurate, up-to-date, and clear information for identifying New England's remarkable array of tracheophytes (vascular plants, excluding mosses). With fully researched entries on some 3,500 native and nonnative species, the book is the first in decades to provide a complete and correct botanical reference for the region's noncultivated plants. The volume includes many new species not documented in New England before, while also excluding many species that have erroneously appeared in earlier manuals. Focusing on the taxonomy and distribution of New England plants, the manual is largely dedicated to identification keys and to species entries that provide scientific name, origin, regional conservation ranking, common name, synonyms, distribution, ecology, and other miscellaneous items of interest. Nearly one-third of the entries are accompanied by helpful black-and-white line illustrations.

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Customer Reviews

Flora Novae Angliae - A Manual for the Identification of Native and Naturalized Higher Vascular Plants of New England by Arthur Haines, 2011, is a welcome addition to any one's botanical library. This publication covers the states of Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New

Hampshire and Maine. This manual provides dichotomous keys for each genus, lists some common synonyms, and identifies the states in which the plant has been observed. This is followed by a brief description of the community type in which it grows. Arthur Haines also presents a listing of the various species with which a plant may hybridize. This is especially useful when identifying the ferns, willows, sedges and oak trees. He describes the main characters which are used to identify the hybrids. Most pages have additional line drawings along the sides, which highlight a feature which is useful to separate out similar species. It would have been nice if more of these could have been included for comparison to other species in the same genus. A welcome feature is the updated nomenclature, which is in line with many botanical databases found on the internet. This is a worthwhile addition to any naturalist library.

While this guide has proven useful for me in Rhode Island, the more I use it the more I am getting frustrated with the keys. When I first started using this guide I was stumbling through (unnecessary) terminology. Voss and Reznicek have demonstrated that quality keys can be made without superfluous terminology in the Field Manual of Michigan Flora. Once I learned most of the terminology (not always a bad thing to learn such things), I still found myself stumbling through keys and backtracking. I can usually get to the right plant (eventually) but on a few occasions I have given up with this field guide and tried another... with which I find my plant quickly. Keys within genera seem to be fine for the most part, but the keys to the families is where I have trouble. For example, Cistaceae is only accessible through group 5 (woody plants with alternate leaves)... but *Crocanthemum canadense* is an herbaceous plant and thus cannot be keyed to the correct family. As another example, I was keying out *Lobelia dortmanna*, and in the key to the families Campanulaceae was under a heading something along the lines of 'not usually found in water'. Of course I went with the other heading, as my specimen was clearly growing in the water. These are the types of things I do NOT want in a field guide. On the positive side: the keys to varieties and subspecies are nice, I like the illustrations, and the Poaceae key is pretty good. TL;DR: Spend way too much time fumbling around in the keys, while other field guides tend to get me to the right plant without issue.

This is really a listing of New England plants well keyed. Descriptions are not very detailed once you leave the key and go to the description. One should be knowledgeable about plants in order to profit from this compendium. As we have often heard "it is easier to key a plant if its identity is known in advance".

Arthur Haines' *Flora Novae-Angliae* is the culmination of years of painstaking herbarium and field research on the distribution and taxonomy of higher plants in New England. It represents the latest thinking on the systematics of over 3400 species that occur in the six-state region, however it is very useful throughout the entire Northeast. The keys are deliberative and exacting, focusing on subtle differences that separate the species, sub-species and varieties, as well as the many hybrids found across certain species groups. Although non-diagnostic features are not described, these can be accessed in previous, out-dated floras that we have been limping along with for many years. Kudos to Arthur and his team at the New England Wildflower Society, notably Elizabeth Farnsworth and Gordon Morrison, their outstanding illustrators!

This book is up-to-date from nomenclatural standpoint. The description of editorial policies is among the best in any regional flora. The coverage includes the part of New York State where I will mainly use it, the Adirondacks.

This is the book used by botanists these days, supplanting those by Ahles and Fernald. Weighs a lot. Useful illustrations.

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