

## REVIEWS

**EUCALYPTS FOR WOOD PRODUCTION**, edited by W. E. Hillis and A. G. Brown, 434 pp. CSIRO, Australia, 1978. (A\$28.50.) Obtainable from CSIRO Division of Forest Research, P.O. Box 4008, Canberra, A.C.T. 2600, Australia.

This book is in 23 chapters with 33 individual contributors. It covers eucalypt ecology, choice of species, pests and diseases, silviculture, management, economics, and wood utilisation. Most chapters have the format of a technical review of the literature with plenty of references interwoven with the authors' own views on the subject. Clear writing, careful editing, and interesting material combine to make this a most worthwhile book.

While most attention is given to the Australian scene, gaps in local knowledge have frequently been filled by reference to overseas eucalypt experience, including that in New Zealand. A fair balance is struck in most chapters between the virtues and failings of the genus for forestry purposes. Eucalypt enthusiasts in New Zealand will be particularly disillusioned by some of the information presented on the problems of sawing and using timber from fast-grown logs, namely, growth stresses, kino veins and collapse.

The technical information in the book will be valuable to eucalypt growers and wood processors the world over. Forest planners, especially those in the various states of Australia, and in New Zealand, should find the book helpful in deciding what effort should be devoted to eucalypt growing.

M. D. WILCOX

**THE OXFORD BOOK OF NEW ZEALAND PLANTS**, by L. B. Moore and J. B. Irwin, xxii + 234 pp., including 32 colour and 79 black and white plates. Oxford University Press, Wellington, 1978. (\$40.)

This is a beautiful book which it is a pleasure to browse through. The artist and author combine to present superbly accurate drawings, many in true colour, and a clear and extremely informative text.

Something of the innate modesty of the author, Dr Lucy Moore, one of New Zealand's foremost botanists, comes out in the preface. Of the artist, Bruce Irwin, the book tells us little, but we are left in no doubt of his ability to depict plants in perfect detail.

The book is directed less at the professional botanist than at the interested amateur. The intent is to enable the keen

observer to classify for himself, at least to family, unknown native plant specimens. Only plants indigenous to New Zealand are described, as is clearly indicated in the title.

The inclusion of short sections on algae, fungi, lichens, bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) and pteridophytes (ferns and fern allies), as well as a more extensive coverage of angiosperms and gymnosperms, introduces the reader to the entire plant kingdom within one book. The descriptions of these different plant groups are clear and concise. In particular, the Guide to Dicotyledones is an easy-to-use key to the New Zealand families. The book can be used to identify most native seed plants to genus level, but as few examples of each genus are included it is less useful for classifying to species level.

A dictionary is included giving the meanings of the Latin names of all plants mentioned. This is an unusual feature and a useful one, as knowing the meaning of a plant name often helps one to remember it.

Only one aspect of this book puzzles me, and that is the arrangement of the plant groups. While algae, fungi and lichens are the first groups described and illustrated, mosses and liverworts are left to the end, following fern allies and ferns. Even the seed plants are organised in an unusual way, Dicotyledones following straight on from lichens, with Monocotyledones next and then gymnosperms, which precede fern allies.

While the illustrations are delightful and very accurate in detail, somewhat reminiscent of W. Keble Martin's *The Concise British Flora in Colour*, perhaps a more pleasing effect would have been to have small groups of colour plates scattered throughout, rather than large groups of black and white plates interspersed with large groups of coloured ones. The sections without coloured illustrations become a little monotonous and, although each drawing is superb, I think I would have preferred them on a plain white background for clarity.

As is usual in a book of this kind, many illustrations have to be fitted on to each page and in some cases the numbering is a little difficult to follow. Although each illustration is described on the facing page, where its magnification is also given, it might have been less confusing if the magnification (e.g.,  $\times 5.0$ ) had been printed close to the drawing itself.

This is a book I am proud to own. It would grace any coffee table or home library and should be helpful to most foresters in identifying native plants. *The Oxford Book of New Zealand Plants* attests to a true labour of love by both author and artist.

W. MARY McEWEN