

BOOK REVIEW

Wayside Plants

WAYSIDE PLANTS OF THE ISLANDS. Whistler, W. Arthur. 1995. Isle Botanica, Honolulu, Hi. 202p. ISBN 0-9645426-1-7 Hardbound; 0-9645426-0-09 pb. \$27.00 Hardbound.

This is another of a series of plants of the Pacific Islands authored by Art Whistler, and this covers weeds, which for better or worse are being transported to the most distant places of the Pacific. There are 169 plant species illustrated by very clear, useful color photographs taken by the author; closely related species are often discussed in the text even if they are not pictured. There is one page of appropriate references, an 8-page glossary and 7 pages of index materials; one set for scientific names and another for common names. As this book covers Polynesian and Micronesian plants, the number of local names is particularly noteworthy, although it is somewhat surprising that plants of such fairly recent introduction have any local names!

A species list showing distribution over the island groups occupies 8 pages following the 8 page Introduction, and a map showing the "culture areas of the Pacific" occupies the inside front and back covers. As with all Whistler's books, a metric scale is placed on the back cover, so that plant dimensions can be checked on the spot. The book is "field-friendly" and can be taken along on hikes as well as being used in libraries or homes.

The only negative about the book is that Whistler does not cite the authorities for the scientific names [the "namer(s)"], but this is a complaint that would be made by the professional botanist, and not by most people, who want to know the name of a plant and something about its characteristics, distribution and usual habitat. This book will be a useful addition to the traveller's library, as well as to the residents of Pacific islands.

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