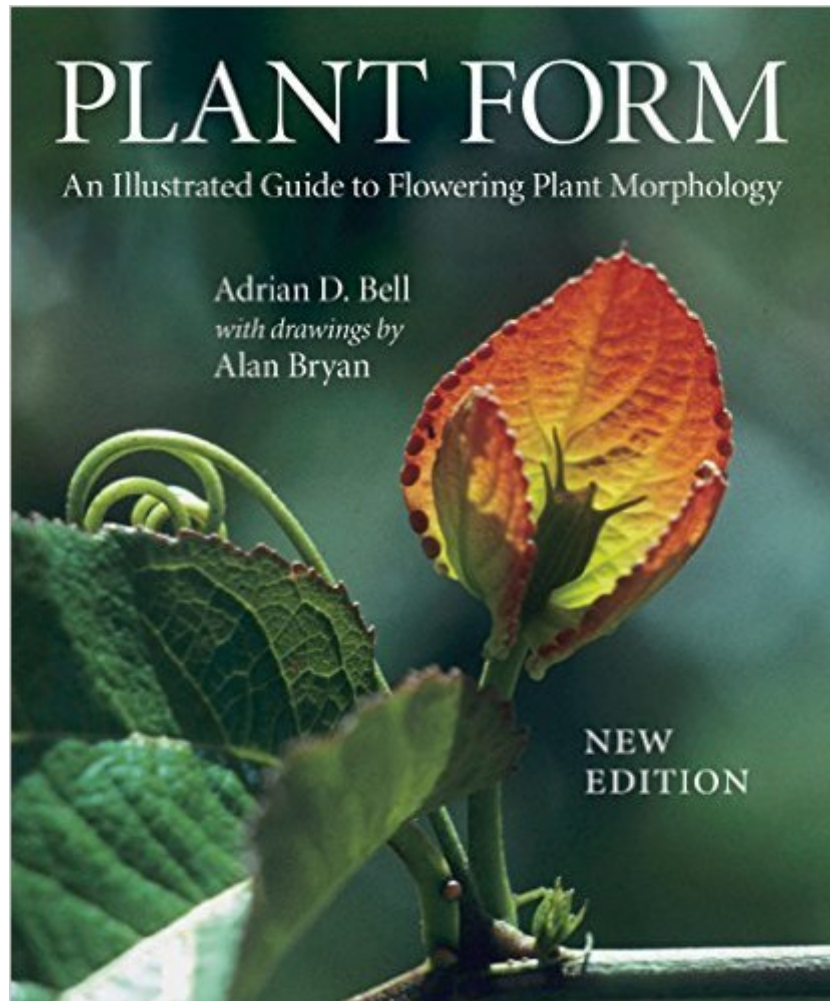


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Plant Form: An Illustrated Guide To Flowering Plant Morphology



Synopsis

The ideal reference for students of botany and horticulture, gardeners, and naturalists. The diverse external shapes and structures that make up flowering plants can be bewildering and even daunting, as can the terminology used to describe them. An understanding of plant formâ "plant morphologyâ "is essential to appreciating the wonders of the plant world and to the study of botany and horticulture at every level. In this ingeniously designed volume, the complex subject becomes both accessible and manageable. The first part of the book describes and clearly illustrates the major plant structures that can be seen with the naked eye or a hand lens. The second part focuses on how plants grow: bud development, the growth of reproductive organs, leaf arrangement, branching patterns, and the accumulation and loss of structures. Aimed at students of botany and horticulture, enthusiastic gardeners, and amateur naturalists, it functions as an illustrated dictionary, a basic course in plant morphology, and an intriguing and enlightening book to dip into.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (19 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Plant Form has been out of print for a long time, so I was excited to see it released as a new edition (2008). I have been wanting to get a copy of this book for a while, and was thoroughly impressed when I finally got my hands on the new edition. Why have I been wanting to get a copy of this book for so long? First, this book is unique in its approach describing flowering plant morphology (i.e., comparative anatomy) according to the "big picture." This book does not include the typical cellular structures and details typical of so many college textbooks on morphology. Instead, one is

immersed in the vegetative characters one finds when actually walking up to a plant. This book focuses from the perspective of a hand lens all the way up to tree architecture. Plant Form is as required for to those interested in plant systematics as for those in plant ecology. Second; the plants used for examples in this book are exceptional. This book is not a dry categorization of plant parts; stems, leaves, ... No, this book includes examples of curiosities and odd-balls from all across the botanical world, which really serves to elucidate the subtleties of plant morphology. Many of these fascinating topics I have found only in specialized courses on tropical plant morphology, all of which lacked textbooks. Third; Plant Form, while potentially useful for a specialized course in botany, is interesting to everyone. Literally, everyone. No formal or technical knowledge is necessary; no small feat as the science of botany is famous for its vast lexicon based on Latin and Greek. What really makes this book so interesting is its great drawings and photographs which immediately draws one into the diverse world of plants.

Great illustrations, horrible organization of text. I bought this book as a plant enthusiast, someone who has never taken botany or plant physiology classes (beyond what's covered in general and cell biology). I was attracted to the book because it is supposed to be an illustrated guide to morphology, thus I figured it would be a good place to start to learn about plant anatomy. While there are illustrations or photos on nearly every page, the author does a TERRIBLE job labeling/describing/explaining the illustrations. Many illustrations do not have descriptions (neither below nor in the accompanying text). This is my primary complaint. The other major problem is that the author seemed to be more focused on citing different page numbers and cross referencing than actually explaining terms, illustrations or concepts. This was quite frustrating in the beginning, because I was not familiar with lot of the terms and I had no idea what the numbers in parentheses were referring to. For example: on page 143 "Leaf production may be out of phase with stem elongation (329K)", 329K is referring to page 329, illustration K. Having over 10 references to different pages in the book on almost every page makes it a little overwhelming. As I mentioned, the organization of the text leaves something to be desired and it is frustrating when I can not find explanations to illustrations (at least not where one would expect them: in the text of the same section or below the illustration). For example, on page 129 there is an image of different types of tree root architecture. There are 12 illustrations, labelled A-K. Illustrations B, I, J and L are completely lacking descriptions - therefore I see the illustration, but I have no idea what is being illustrated.

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