BOOK REVIEW

Flora of the Marquesas Islands, Volumes 1 and 2. By David H. Lorence and Warren L. Wagner. The National Tropical Botanical Garden, 3530 Papalina Road, Kalaheo, HI 96741. Volume 1: ISBN 978-0-915809-01-1, 2019. Pp. 1–412. \$60.00 (hardbound); Volume 2: ISBN 978-0-915809-02-8, 2020. Pp. 413–1135. \$70.00 (hardbound).

In a world extremely concerned with biodiversity loss and the need for its conservation, the value of floristic treatments can be immense. They guide us in understanding the diversity and distribution of plant species, and can help in establishing nature reserves and other protected areas, as well as identifying individual species at risk of extinction. This recently published two-volume floristic work on the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia is an example of that value. This remote island group is a volcanic archipelago with 12 main islands and numerous smaller islands, most of which have been impacted by anthropogenic forces. The Marquesan people live in a biodiversity dependent culture, with fishing, hunting and farming being the main sources of their sustenance. The first volume, the introduction and treatment of lycophytes, ferns and monocots, also contains very useful and fascinating chapters on conservation and assessments of the indigenous and endemic flora, along with specific recommendations for critical conservation areas within nine of the islands. The second volume is devoted to

treatments of the dicots. The native vascular flora of the Marquesas Islands comprises ca. 331 species, with an astonishing rate of 47% endemism and with non-native species included, the flora totals 826 species. Family treatments are introduced by a summary of the genera locally and worldwide, followed by treatments of genera and dichotomous keys that are clearly written and easy to use. Each species has information on local names, its description, followed by information on distribution and habitat. There are beautifully drawn black and white illustrations and numerous color photographs throughout the book, making this work an essential guide to the Marquesan flora as well as helpful for plant identification in surrounding areas of Polynesia. This flora was a collaboration between a number of institutions and individuals all of whom are acknowledged in the text and through color photographs that chronicle the history of the project and make it even more interesting. The authors are to be congratulated for producing a modern treatment of the plants of this fascinating and important region of the Pacific. It is a model for other studies, one I would describe as a triumph in its scope, precision and presentation. Not to be forgotten are the visionary funders and institutions that supported the fieldwork, herbarium studies and writing that produced this impressive contribution to our understanding of Pacific Island biodiversity.—Michael J. Balick, The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Blvd., Bronx, NY 10458–5126, USA.