

Illustrations of Common French Flowers (review).—This set of illustrations* represents yet another attempt to meet the demand of elementary students for a simple means of recognizing and naming the plants they encounter on their field excursions; in this case it is designed to be used in conjunction with Bonnier & Layens, *Nouvelle Flore de la Région Parisienne*, which has dictated the general arrangement and nomenclature. Whether the demand for easy recognition is reasonable is very doubtful. Students must study, and the intention (avowed in the introduction) to avoid the use of the lens when in the field will never lead to a proper understanding of plants. Nor will the provision of sketches for recognition do anything to stimulate or maintain the students' interest.

However, if the objectives be accepted as valid, can they be said to be attained? The illustrations (to which brief annotations are added) cannot be called pleasing, on account of the coarse shading and rough draughtsmanship, but there is no doubt that most of the more distinctive species are easily recognized. Nevertheless there are a good many unsatisfactory pictures. For instance, the lack of any indication of scale suggests that *Potentilla sterilis* (pl. 62) has flowers as large as those of *P. reptans* and only a fraction smaller than those of *P. anserina*. On the other hand those of *Epilobium hirsutum* (pl. 69) are too small relative to the other species illustrated. The picture of *Sanicula europaea* (pl. 75) gives the impression of a far heavier, more robust inflorescence than this species really has, while it is surely misleading to have *Aegopodium podagraria* characterised as a waterside plant. Few grasses are shown, but it increases difficulties to draw only a flowering culm of *Poa annua* and *P. pratensis*, without indicating that the one is usually annual the other perennial. The figure of *Dactylis* would probably defy an expert, not to mention a student, while the student's problems in the Monocotyledons are not helped by having only *Juncus effusus* to represent the rushes, nor by the entire absence of *Carex*, *Scirpus*, *Agrostis* and *Festuca*. At least one plate each to give an idea of these genera should have been the minimum representation.

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* Atlas pour la reconnaissance directe des plantes les plus communes. Madeleine Fourcroy. Paris, Editions N. Boubée & Cie, 1956. 190 planches. 1500 francs.