

Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West

Revised and Expanded Edition

MICHAEL MOORE

Museum of New Mexico, \$24.95 paper, ISBN 0-89013-454-5

I love packing a field guide and going out into the woods, something I learned from my father. But field guides for the eastern United States have always been more plentiful than those for the western United States. Now we in the West have Michael Moore's *Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West*. This second edition is just in time to replace my tattered first edition bought 21 years ago when I moved from the eastern to the western U.S. and was awed by the unfamiliar plants I saw. It served as my companion on many outdoor trips as I learned to identify western plants such as penstemon and uva ursi.

Michael Moore has long been a well-respected herbalist and is founder of the Southwest School of Botanical Medicine. He has written several plant guides and clinical herb manuals. This new updated edition of *Medicinal Plants* is twice the size of the old one, has 12 plants not found in the first edition, and contains 16 pages of colored plates in addition to the illustrations.

Each plant profile includes the genus and a variety of species found, common names, the plant's habitat, maps to indicate the plant's range, instructions on when to collect medicinal material and from what part of the plant, medicinal uses, and cultivation information. In this new edition, sections on chemical constituents and ecological information have been added as well as more detailed information on habitat, medicinal uses, and cultivation. Although many of the plants in this book are unique to the western United States, it also contains information on weeds found throughout the country such as dandelion and red clover, as well as common garden plants.

This is not a taxonomy book, which makes it friendly, easy to read, and enjoyable. Although this book can be kept at home and read, the second edition of *Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West* will accompany me on many more campouts and hikes to help both me and my children continue to learn to identify the plants of the Mountain West. ■

Medicinal Plants of the World

BEN-ERIK VAN WYK & MICHAEL WINK

Timber Press, \$39.95 cloth, ISBN 0-88192-602-7

Medicinal Plants of the World by Ben-Erik van Wyk of South Africa and Michael Wink of Germany is a great plant book that is maybe not so much a field guide as a scientific guide to medicinal plants. The title may intimidate those of us who are not world travelers, but you will recognize many of the plants in this book as common garden plants and herbs, such as oats, yarrow, sages, and thyme. You will also find other familiar plants like *Camellia sinensis* (tea), *Cannabis sativa* (marijuana), and *Cinnamomum verum* (cinnamon bark tree). Each entry includes a color photo of the plant, a description of the plant, its uses, and its active ingredients. I like this book because of the chemistry section that discusses the secondary plant metabolites and their effects. Here you will see diagrams of monoterpenes, flavonoids, and carbohydrates. So if the weather does not permit you to take a hike with a local field guide, curl up with *Medicinal Plants of the World* and get to know your garden plants better. ■

REVIEWER: **Cindy Jones, Ph.D.** is a scientific consultant, educator, and writer specializing in phytotherapies. She lives in Colorado and is a member of the Herb Society of America. Her website is <http://www.sagescript.com>.