

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and  
Social Sciences

Great Plains Studies, Center for

---

Fall 2001

**Review of *Communities Perennial Weeds: Characteristics and Identification of Selected Herbaceous Species* by Wood Powell Anderson**

Stephan L. Hatch

*Texas A & M University-College Station*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch>



Part of the [Other International and Area Studies Commons](#)

---

Hatch, Stephan L., "Review of *Communities Perennial Weeds: Characteristics and Identification of Selected Herbaceous Species* by Wood Powell Anderson" (2001). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 589.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch/589>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Great Plains Studies, Center for at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

**Perennial Weeds: Characteristics and Identification of Selected Herbaceous Species.** Wood Powell Anderson. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1999. x+228 pp. Figures, notes, references, index. \$64.99 cloth (ISBN 0813825202).

This illustrated text focuses on the characteristics and identification of twenty-eight selected herbaceous weed species. (Its author is silent about his criteria for including specific taxa.) The book's objectives, poorly stated, are to present knowledge on the identification of weeds, their propagation, and how

propagation characteristics influence weed control efforts. The book explains the principles of weed control using a small sample of species and then leaves the reader to determine how these principles apply to the hundreds of other weeds in the United States. Satisfactory as a supplemental text in an introductory weeds course, it treats only a small number of taxa—and, given the book's price, a bit expensively.

In chapter 1, Anderson discusses perennial weed propagation, spread, perennating organs, horizontal roots, rhizomes, tubers, bulbs, modified stems, literature inaccuracies, winter kill and drought, and dormancy. His treatment, which is not well organized, leaves the reader uncertain of the meaning of such terms as rhizomes, roots, crowns. The text and definitions in the glossary are often open to broad interpretation.

Chapter 2 discusses the control of perennial weeds. Though well written, its examples of control fail to mention any of the weeds' scientific names. To find these, one must consult later chapters or the appendix.

In the bulk of the book, chapters 3 through 22, species are organized by grasses, grass-like weeds, and broadleaf perennials. In each chapter the discussion includes scientific and common name, distribution (accompanied by a general US distribution map), visual illustration, common vegetative and floral characteristics, reproduction, varieties and hybrids, spread, and perennation. Each species is described in lay terminology and compared with similar taxa. Specific internal references are not included in the text, but listed at the end of each chapter.

Several of the illustrations have errors in their legends. For example, illustration part B for johnsongrass (figure 3.1) is of a panicle branch of sessile and pedicellate spikelets, not a spikelet; part D is a spikelet, not florets. Part B for bermudagrass (figure 5.1) shows a panicle branch, not a spike; one spikelet shows an awn that is incorrect for this genus; part C right to left are floret (palea view), floret (lemma view), floret (lemma side view). Part B for Canada thistle (figure 11.1) represents a head inflorescence, not a flower. The figures themselves are of adequate quality.

Several errors also appear in the glossary, such as "acute—ending in a sharp point." That definition includes other apices—attenuate, acuminate, or aristate, for instance. Acute is a term used to describe an apex; it is sharp pointed and has a 45-90° angle. Although the terms in the glossary are loosely defined in several cases, the book is nonetheless a valuable contribution for teaching selected weed taxa and their management. **Stephan L. Hatch**, *S. M. Tracy Herbarium, Department of Rangeland Ecology and Management, Texas A&M University-College Station.*