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**Review of *Wildflowers of Alberta: A Guide to Common
Wildflowers and Other Herbaceous Plants* by Kathleen Wilkinson**

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Wildflowers of Alberta: A Guide to Common Wildflowers and Other Herbaceous Plants. Kathleen Wilkinson. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1999. xix + 364 pp. Figures, map, glossary, references, index. C\$26.95 paper.

This field guide, in a size and format useful for educators, naturalists, and life-long learners, is illustrated with excellent photographs, some artistically back lit, and line drawings. Appendices offer keys to the major families, comparisons of new and old taxonomy, selected references, an alphabetized species index by flower color, and a species index. There is also a good glossary, which includes page references back to species and diagrams. Corners help maintain the guide's shape even when repeatedly pulled out of a pack in the field.

The book's intent is not merely to identify Alberta plants but to encourage readers to further their self-education. Larger families are introduced with a descriptive paragraph, often providing information such as the function of rhizobial fungus in orchids and thus why such plants must not be transplanted. Greek or Latin name derivations offer descriptive meanings, usually relating to a plant's anatomy, growth habits, and habitat. Particularly useful are entries accompanied by two photos, one a close-up, the other a growth habit example. Highlighting in the text draws the eye to important or distinguishing features, convenient when one is in a hurry. Examples of the many uses to which Indigenous people have put these plants augment the text's compass.

Suggestions for subsequent reprints would include enlarging the font, which currently taxes aging eyes, especially in poor light, such as a campfire's. The line drawings could also benefit from a scale. The western wood lily (22), Saskatchewan's provincial flower, is known as the western red lily, which ought to be included in the trivial names. Owl-clover (218) is known as owl's-clover in *Budd's Flora of the Canadian Prairie Provinces* (1979) and in Vance, Jowsey, and McLean's *Wildflowers Across the Prairies* (1989), though perhaps this is just a typo.

The color of some of the purple flowers is too red, including prairie clover (121) and purple loosestrife (138). Dotted blazing star (275) shows an unusual growth habit unlike the more upright, columnar structure of my experience. Several photos—white sweet clover (119), skeleton weed (276), coral roots (38), and green false hellebore (29), for example—require enlargement to be useful. These are minor blemishes, however, in a fine and reasonably priced book. I would recommend it highly to Albertans and anyone Alberta-bound. **Melanie Elliott**, *Nature Programs and Tours, Extension Division, Environment, Science and Technology, University of Saskatchewan.*