BOOK REVIEWS

Some Island Trees. Between the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean lie the island of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, variously owned by America and Britain. This comparatively small area covering just over 3600 square miles contains 547 native tree species and over 203 introduced species. Such information may be found in the introduction to Volume II of the *Trees of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.**

The second volume, containing details of 500 species—369 native and 131 introduced—completes the work, and of the total 750 species dealt with in the two volumes, 710 are illustrated. The introduction, slightly revised for Volume II, is full of facts and figures, including a particularly interesting part on endemism in the Islands, and makes for informative reading before reaching the main work.

The key to families is broken down into four major divisions based on leaves alternate or opposite and simple or compound, and within these divisions easily observed characters make the further key stages fairly simple to use. For this purpose the two volumes can be used independently. Keys to genera and species are also provided where necessary and these are well backed up by full-page line drawings for each species. On the page facing the illustration is the species description together with notes on its outstanding features, distribution, common names and synonymy. Introduced species are denoted by an asterisk after the scientific name.

The print-size and lay-out make this a very useful book in spite of its bulk. If I went to the Islands I would certainly welcome a copy and would derive great satisfaction from using it.

L. A. LAUENER

* Trees of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Vol. II. By Elbert L. Little, Jr, Roy O. Woodbury & Frank H. Wadsworth. 1974. 1024 pp. 500 plates, maps. 10″. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook No. 449. U.S.A. Price $13.45.

Keys to Western Australian Plants. In 1948 the manuscript for a series of illustrated keys to the Western Australian flora, the brain-child of the late Dr W. E. Blackall, was presented for publication to the University of Western Australia. So far three parts have been published (1954, 1956 and 1965) with Dr B. J. Grieve as editor of the first and co-author of the later two. Because of 'public and academic demand' the three parts are now reprinted as one volume† with various omissions.

With no preamble whatever the reprint plunges straight into the key to the families. This is followed by photographically reproduced manuscript keys covering genera and species. Succinct remarks and minute though distinctive line drawings serve to separate the species. A glossary and index to scientific names follow.

The original introductory pages gave instructions on how to use the keys. As Dr Blackall's intention was primarily to aid amateur botanists and people with no botanical knowledge to name their plants in the field, the omission of these instructions in the reprint is to be regretted. Lack of reproduction of the prefaces leads to less than justice being done to the different graphic artists.

Although originally intended for use in the field, the keys have proved most useful in naming Western Australian specimens in the herbarium. When first issued in 1954 no comprehensive Flora of the area existed and the fact that in 1975 this is still the case amply justifies their original publication while the demand which has caused their reprinting proves their worth. It is to be hoped that publication of the remaining families will not be delayed too long.

J. M. LAMOND

† William E. Blackall & Brian J. Grieve. How to know Western Australian Wildflowers, parts I, II, III. Reprinted in 1 volume, Perth, University of Western Australia Press, 1974 and distributed in UK and Europe by The Richmond Publishing Co. Ltd, Richmond, Surrey. cxviii, 595 pp. Price £6.60.