

Naturalist's Big Bend: An Introduction to the Trees and Shrubs, Wildflowers, Cacti, Mammals, Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians, Fish, and Insects. By Roland H. Wauer. (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1980. Reprint of 1973 ed. Pp. vi + 149. Photographs (some in color), illustrations, bibliography. Cloth \$10.45; paper \$5.95.)

Mr. Wauer's updated version of a 1973 book is designed to provide the reader with a smorgasbord of facts about the natural resources of Big Bend National Park. Its greatest value will be to the uninitiated as an "appetizer of knowledge" about the unique nature of the plants and animals and their interactions in one of the United States' most esthetic places. The book is composed of eleven chapters including: 1. Within the Big Bend, 2. Man—A User of the Land, 3. The Living Scene Today, 4. Trees and Shrubs, 5. Wildflowers, 6. The Cacti, 7. Mammals, 8. Birds, 9. Reptiles and Amphibians, 10. Fish, 11. Insects and other Invertebrates, and an extensive bibliography.

I found the chapters to be well composed, providing a good balance of fact, color, and interpretation. It is not necessary to read very far in this book to discover that the author is not only very knowledgeable about Big Bend National Park, but that he also has a deep love and concern for the park. These qualities in the author blend into the book in such a fashion that the chapters are pleasant reading.

The *Naturalist's Big Bend* will be most valuable and entertaining to the person (or perhaps family) who is visiting the park for the first or second time. The book provides the type of historical and biological fact that should allow a person to receive maximum enjoyment from a visit to Big Bend. In this book the author has succeeded in sharing his knowledge of the park in such a manner that many people can also share his love of Big Bend. The 15 color plates have been carefully chosen to provide a sample of the visual delights one can anticipate when visiting the park. The composition and reproduction of the color plates is excellent. The book also contains 118 black and white illustrations or photographs including scenic landscapes, animals, plants, plus plant identification plates for ninety of the native

wild flowers. The quality of many of the black and white photographs is diminished by their lack of contrast.

I found the bibliography to be somewhat "out of phase" with the aim and purpose of the remainder of the book. Many articles listed are highly-technical and of interest only to specialists (who are not likely to buy the book). Many articles (such as typed reports) are not available in any library that I am aware of and, therefore, are not available to the general public or scientist. In my opinion, the bibliography should not have been included as the cost it must add to an otherwise excellent book is not justified by its value to the audience for which the book was designed.

The bibliography, notwithstanding, I congratulate Mr. Wauer on a fine production that should bring enjoyment to many.

Robert J. Baker
Texas Tech University