Plains Apache Ethnobotany. Julia Jordan. 2008. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. Pp. 240, b&w illustrations, map. $34.95 (cloth). ISBN 9780806139685.

This book honors the traditional use of plant materials of the Plains Apache. It is based on fieldwork (notes and collected plants) by the author while doing graduate work at the University of Oklahoma during the summers of 1963 and 1964 when the elders' memories reached back much further than today. This book details plant uses of a southern Great Plains Apache tribe, currently living in western Oklahoma, and is an excellent regional addition to a surprisingly understudied topic. It documents with considerable detail more than 110 plant species. It will have popular appeal to those interested in traditional use of plants for food and medicine.

The book opens with a 14-page introduction to the elders the author worked with in the 1960s. It includes chapters on History and Culture, the Plains Apache Plant World, Edible Plants, Ritual and Medicinal Plants and chapters on two unusual and interesting topics: Material Culture and Firewood and Personal Care and Adornment. Overall, the book honors traditional knowledge and fills some important knowledge gaps on specific plant uses. It is also a wonderful addition to the limited number of tribal ethnobotany works. The manuscript is an important contribution to several fields, including ethnobotany, anthropology, Native American studies, and Great Plains history.

There are no comparable books on Plains Apache's or any Oklahoma tribe's ethnobotany, nor any books focused on one tribe's ethnobotany in the southern Great Plains. The most similar recent book is the late Alma Snell's *A Taste of Heritage: Crow Indian Recipes and Herbal Medicines* (2006) about her Montana tribe. These works complement each other, but the 1960s information in Jordan's book is particularly rich and insightful.

The book is also important in that the ethnobotany of other Apache groups (the Chiricahua, Mescalero, Western, San Carlos and White Mountain) has been written about, but this is the first published work on the Plains Apache, who occupied the eastern portion of the tribe's range. They were the only portion of the tribe that made such extensive use of Great Plains prairie plants, but they still had other uses reflecting the flora of the Rocky Mountains and the Southwest.

It is important that Jordan has published this work from her Master's thesis because it was obscure and not well-known, but used by some of us ethnobotanists in our compilations of regional and national plants lists (Kindscher 1992, but not in Moerman 1998). It is even more important that this work is updated from her thesis, bringing in additional information from her field notes, updating botanical nomenclature and, with help, identifying ***osha*** (*Ligusticum porteri* Coult. & Rose) and red-berry juniper (*Juniperus pinchottii* Sudw.), which were unknowns in her previous work. The use of ***osha***, similar to the use as a smudge in sweat lodges that I have participated with the Lakota elders on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, shows an important link of Great Plains Indians with Rocky Mountain plant materials and their widespread travels to get plants. Another example is the use of frosted mint (*Poliomintha incana* (Torr.) A. Gray) collected for use in a smoking mix by the author and tribal elders on a trip to visit their Mescalero Apache relatives in New Mexico. The use of *Juniperus pinchottii* was in addition to the use of red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana* L.) and illustrates again the details of plant knowledge and use. The book also discusses two plants used for horse medicine and has a nice section on peyote and collection of it in south Texas. Other food plants that are unusual or for which there is unique detail in ethnobotanical information include yucca flowers and roots. The roots listings include groundnuts (*Apios americana* Medik.) and prairie turnips (*Pediomelum esculentum* (Pursh) Rydb.). Teas that are described include roundhead lespedeza (*Lepedeza capitata* Michx.). Fruits that Jordan describes include several species of plums and grapes.

Medicinal plants were a very important part of the Plains Apache plant usage and some of the more interesting were: buffalo gourd (*Cucurbita foetidissima* Kunth), dodder (*Cuscuta* spp.), purple coneflower (*Echinacea*

angustifolia DC), bush morning glory (*Ipomoea leptophylla* Torr.), puccoon (*Lithospermum incisum* Lehm.), star milkvine (*Matelea biflora* Aubl.), oaks (*Quercus* spp.), goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), and American germander (*Teucrium canadense* L.).

The section on material culture and firewood reflects an understudied ethnobotanical topic—the specific uses of wood for material culture and fire. The favorite wood for cooking meat was black-jack oak (*Quercus marilandica* Münchh.), although other hard woods were all valuable for use. And although osage orange or bow wood (*Maclura pomifera* (Raf.) C.K. Schneid.) was the most highly prized wood for making bows for hunting, other species were also used, including ash (*Fraxinus* sp.), mulberry (*Morus rubra* L.), and red elm (*Ulmus rubra* Muhl.). The depth of detail provided for all these plant uses are an honor to Jordan's work and especially to the Plains Apache long-term use of the plants in their daily lives, and to the elders who were willing to share this information.

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