

Smith, Jeremy M.B. 1999. *Australian Driftseeds* - A Compendium of Seeds and Fruits Commonly Found on Australian Beaches. 123 pp. (including black and white disseminules drawings, maps, and charts) ISBN 186389 537 X.

For orders from the United States: Make personal check payable to the University of New England for \$14.00 US, to cover book cost and airmail postage, and mail to the Map Librarian, School of Human & Environmental Studies, University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales 2351, Australia. For other countries: Convert \$Aus 20.00 to your money and mail personal check to the above address for air mail shipment.



Above: Author Jeremy Smith of Australia

Fortunately for us Smith decided to pursue the collection and study of drift disseminules found on Australian beaches. Over the years he collected both on beaches and from the knowledge of others, and he kept accurate records. He also pursued his drift studies at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji and with Charles Nelson at Trinity College, Dublin. He has taken these data and welded them into a remarkable book: A major valuable contribution to our knowledge of drift disseminules. I expect that most of us will have a difficult time opening this paperback book, because of its cover: Barbara Waterhouse is shown on a Bingil Bay beach so rich in drift disseminules that she had to walk on them to be centered in the color photograph! (But then I think about how sore my back would be after just an hour of bending and picking on this beach, let alone all day.)

The text is bipartite. **Part One:** Biogeography and Beachcombing covers folklore, science, sources, evolution, mechanisms, and winds and currents. Bird dissemination also is discussed. Included in this part is Figure 1 which is the front page of the Drifting Seed volume 2, number 2. **Part Two:** An illustrated Inventory of Common and Interesting Australian Driftseeds perfectly summarizes the data and drawings covered by this part. After identifying and locating the studied beaches, the catalog starts on page 26 and runs to page 100. The text for each disseminule with a distribution map (both whether present or absent from studied beaches) faces the plate page, so that the reader can see and read about one or more disseminules without having to turn pages. To accomplish this neat presentation, the illustrations by Jill Kinnear are large and the text is reduced but easily-readable. The disseminules in the catalog are arranged by size from largest to smallest: Coconut to Vere (*Colubrina asiatica*, Rhamnaceae).

I first turned to my favorite Australian drift disseminule, Moreton Bay-chestnut, a legume. The typical text contains these data: Scientific name with authors, family, common names, habit and habitat, distribution, disseminule description, location of stranded disseminules, uses of plant, drift disseminule category, and specimen citation of depicted disseminule. A comprehensive list of references, an index by family names with taxa pages noted, and a complete index conclude the book. This book is a must for collectors and libraries. A joy to read and use. You will meet new disseminules and revisit some familiar ones.

I have not seen this book, but based on reviews and knowing the author for many years, I would call your attention to a major contribution to our knowledge of the plants of Florida. R.P. Wunderlin. 1998. *A Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida*. 704 pages. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL. \$35.00. ISBN 0-8130-1556. Over 4000 taxa are covered from the Panhandle to the Keys. The taxa are fully keyed and indexed. A bargain for those interested in plants of Florida.

We didn't receive Cathy Yow's just-published book in time for review (*Jewelry From Nature: 45 Great Projects Using Sticks and Stones, Seeds and Bones*; \$18.95, ISBN 1579901077), so we'll include it in the next newsletter. Her book can be ordered from most U.S. bookstores or online through amazon.com and barnes&noble.com.