



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN



Springer

Review: [untitled]

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Source: *Economic Botany*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1987), p. 463

Published by: Springer on behalf of New York Botanical Garden Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4255008>

Accessed: 12/08/2010 17:55

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remains are not detailed, many useful plants are discussed throughout, especially in three chapters: The Natural Environment, The Archaic Period, and The Adoption of Agricultural Strategies. Cordell provides an excellent overview of the cultural changes associated with cultivated plants and agriculture from the Archaic Period through the Late Prehistoric Aggregated Villages.

Two basic archaeological themes of the Southwest draw the attention of economic botanists. One theme centers on why and when domesticated plants and agriculture were accepted. Archaeological records suggest that even though Mesoamerican cultigens were available as early as 1500 BC, they were not adopted as an agricultural system until 1,500 years later. The author suggests that some plants, such as *Amaranthus hypochondriacus* and *Phaseolus lunatus*, may have been domesticated in the region.

The second theme is that of the abandonment of large areas of the Southwest by prehistoric inhabitants. It is suggested that a conceptual failure has plagued the resolution of this problem. Distinguishing different orders of abandonment will be useful in testing the hypothesis that there was a shift to a dispersed, less-intensive agriculture along with increased hunting and gathering after a period of intensive agricultural production rather than depopulation of large areas.

The introductory chapter along with various maps define the Southwest as a natural and cultural region. The maps together with the bibliography reveal that the development of the many fascinating themes in the book is obstructed by an unbalanced source of critical information. The concentration of archaeological sites and plant remains is in the U.S., while relatively little archaeological data exist in the Mexican sector of the Southwest through which the Mesoamerican domesticates had to move.

This book serves as a general reference for those seeking a summary of the importance of cultivated plants in the cultural evolution of the Southwest during archaeological time. Researchers entering the field of archaeoethnobotany will find *Prehistory of the Southwest* most helpful in identifying a conceptual framework within which to formulate specific questions and investigations.

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Rice: Chemistry and Technology, ed. 2. B. O. Juliano (ed.). American Association of Cereal Chemists, 3340 Pilot Knob Rd., St. Paul, MN. 1986. 774 pp. \$69.00 (non-member \$87.00).

This most valuable compendium is an up-date of a previously successful volume. It is revised and has several new chapters.

Of the 500,000 species of plants in the world, rice is the most important carbohydrate source for human support. Millions each day depend on their supply of rice. Consequently, any volume—like the present one—that attempts to keep us current on various aspects of this important grain must rank high in our economic botany libraries.

As the flyer for this volume states: “. . . the last decade has seen significant progress on rice research developments in the 1970's and 1980's.” The contents are evidence of the inclusiveness of coverage: the chapters cover a broad spectrum from production and utilization; nutrient composition of the rice grain; processing mechanisms; culinary utilisation; rice products; brewing; to other uses of rice.

The material is superbly published in easily readable type and the volume is handsomely and durably bound.

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