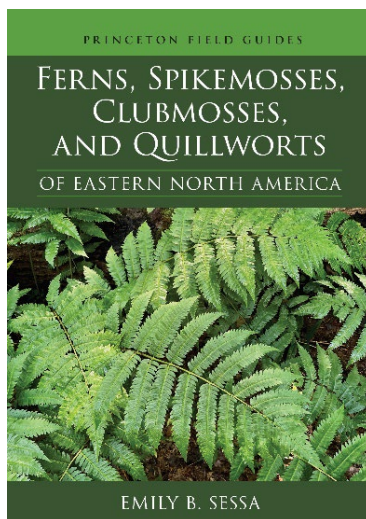


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NYBG Scientist Publishes a Comprehensive Photographic Guide to Eastern North America's Ferns and Three Related Plant Families

Ferns, Spikemosses, Clubmosses, and Quillworts of Eastern North America by Emily B. Sessa, Ph.D., Is Now Available from Princeton University Press



Bronx, NY—*Ferns, Spikemosses, Clubmosses, and Quillworts of Eastern North America*, a comprehensive photographic field guide to ferns and lycophytes by Emily B. Sessa, Ph.D., the Patricia K. Holmgren Director of the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium at The New York Botanical Garden, is now available (Princeton University Press, \$29.95). Accessible yet scientifically accurate, the book will appeal to beginners and experts alike and enhance the field experience of any user.

Ferns, spikemosses, clubmosses, and quillworts are similar in that they reproduce via spores, setting them apart from the vast majority of plants that reproduce via seeds, and, as Dr. Sessa notes in her introduction, they have existed for many millions of years. “The earliest ancestors of these plants are known from the fossil record nearly 500 million years ago, and at various times during the history of our planet, members of these groups have been among the most diverse and abundant plants on Earth,” she writes.

Despite their similarities, however, DNA-based analyses in recent decades have shown that ferns are most closely related to seed plants, and the spikemosses, clubmosses, and quillworts make up another large group called the lycophytes, which are “sister” to, or equally related to, the group made up of ferns and seed plants. “This clarification of the relationships among the ferns, the three lycophyte lineages, and the seed plants has been one of the great advances in our scientific understanding of plant evolution in the last few decades,” Dr. Sessa writes.

The new guide to these fascinating plants includes keys, range maps, detailed color photographs, and facing-page species descriptions to aid exploration and allow reliable identification of all 305 species of ferns (244 species) and lycophytes (61 species) found in the area covered by the book—the United States east of the Mississippi and contiguous Canada, except for extreme northern and northeastern Canada. The introduction provides an easy-to-understand overview of identifying characteristics, life cycles, and evolutionary history. Checklists allow readers to record species they have seen in the four subregions into which the guide divides eastern North America. Indexes feature a complete list of common and scientific names, including synonyms, ensuring that users can find the plants they are looking for and keep track of changes in taxonomy. In addition, information about hybrids and other combinations of species is provided, illuminating the fascinating processes that have led to such a rich diversity of species.

Modern and innovative, this is the definitive guide to the ferns and lycophytes of eastern North America.

About the Author

Emily B. Sessa, Ph.D., is a botanist with more than 15 years of experience studying the ecology and evolution of ferns and lycophytes. She is the Patricia K. Holmgren Director of the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium at The New York Botanical Garden, the largest herbarium in the Western Hemisphere, and a former president of the American Fern Society.

Praise for *Ferns, Spikemosses, Clubmosses, and Quillworts of Eastern North America*

“The science is impeccable, the narrative superb, the pictures magnificent. . . [*Ferns, Spikemosses, Clubmosses, and Quillworts of Eastern North America*] is a very fine treatment of a complex group of plants that command our attention; indeed our affection. I commend this book to all who love nature in its glorious and often prolific diversity; be sure to use it well—and often!”

—David M. Gascoigne, *Travels with Birds*

Ordering Information: *Ferns, Spikemosses, Clubmosses, and Quillworts of Eastern North America* is available in person or [online](#) at NYBG Shop as well as in bookstores and through online booksellers (\$29.95, paperback).

About The New York Botanical Garden

The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) has been a connective hub among people, plants, and the shared planet since 1891. For more than 130 years, NYBG has been rooted in the cultural fabric of New York City, in the heart of the Bronx, its greenest borough. NYBG has invited millions of visitors to make the Garden a part of their lives, exploring the joy, beauty, and respite of nature. NYBG's 250 acres are home to renowned exhibitions, immersive botanical experiences, art and music, and events with some of the most influential figures in plant and fungal science, horticulture, and the humanities. NYBG is also a steward of globally significant research collections, from the LuEsther T. Mertz Library collection to the plant and fungal specimens in the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, the largest such collection in the Western Hemisphere.

The plant people of NYBG—dedicated horticulturists, enthusiastic educators, and scientific adventurers—are committed to helping nature thrive so that humanity can thrive. They believe in their ability to make things better, teaching tens of thousands of kids and families each year about the importance of safeguarding the environment and healthy eating. Expert scientists work across the city, the nation, and the globe to document the plants and fungi of the world—and find actionable, nature-based solutions to the planet's dual climate and biodiversity crises. With eyes always looking forward, they train the next generation of botanists, gardeners, landscape designers, and environmental stewards, ensuring a green future for all. At NYBG, it's nature—or nowhere.

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The New York Botanical Garden is located at 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458. For more information, visit nybg.org

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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