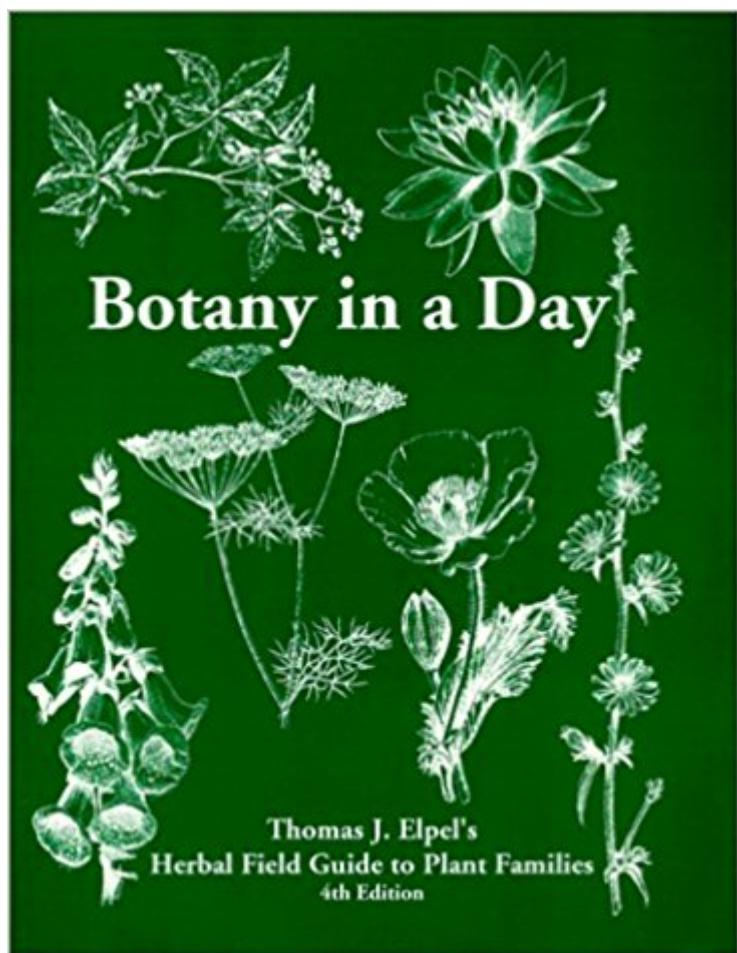


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# Botany In A Day: Thomas J. Elpel's Herbal Field Guide To Plant Families, 4th Ed.



## Synopsis

Now you can cut years off the process of learning about plants. Learn how related plants have similar features for identification. Discover how they often have similar properties and similar uses. Toms book takes you beyond the details towards a greater understanding of the patterns among plants. Most plant books cover only one or two hundred species. Botany in a Day includes more than 100 plant families and over 700 genera including edible and medicinal uses applicable to many thousands of species. With this book you will be able to recognize patterns in plants everywhere you go in the wild, in your garden, among house plants, even at the florist. Understand the magic of patterns among plants, and the world will never look the same again! Many people recognize plants from the Mint family because they have square stalks, opposite leaves and most of them smell minty. I like to start my classes with a discussion of the Mints because this pattern is so well known. What people don't realize is that similar patterns exist for other families of plants as well. Simply put, the study of botany is the study of patterns in plants! Learning patterns in plants is fun, and you only need to learn about 100 broad patterns to recognize something about virtually every plant from coast to coast across the northern latitudes. In a two hour plant walk we typically start with the Mint Family, then progress through the Mustard, Pea, Parsley, Borage, Lily and Aster Families, so that every student can easily recognize these common families representing several thousand species. I've had people tell me they learned more in that two hour walk than in an entire semester of botany in college. Thomas J. Elpel, *Botany in a Day* AUTHORBIO: Thomas J. Elpel had the rare opportunity as a child to spend hundreds of hours with his grandmother, exploring the hills and meadows of Montana. Tom's grandmother helped him to learn about the native plants and their uses, igniting a passion for nature that has inspired Tom ever since. Tom is now the director of Hollowtop Outdoor Primitive School (HOPS) in Pony, Montana where he teaches classes on stone age skills, including botany. *Botany in a Day* grew from Tom's desire to provide an easy means for other people to discover a closer connection with the natural world. Tom is also the author of three other books inspired by nature, including: *Participating in Nature*, *Direct Pointing to Real Wealth* and *Living Homes*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tom Elpel's book, Botany in a Day, exposes the world of plants for what it truly is -approachable and easy to get to know, no longer intimidating and overwhelming like the aloof hotty on the other side of the room. By reading his book(over and over), I reamed an understanding of a few basic properties and trends, and the world of plants and their uses opened before me. His secret is to teach the plant families first, laying down a solid foundation which can then be piled high with individual species. By the end of just one season with Botany in a Day, I began to recognize the majority of the plants I sniffed or stepped on. I even gained the confidence to pop certain plants, which I had not yet met, in my mouth and swallow, understanding their family traits and knowing they were safe without ever naming the species. I feel I've been given a valuable, wonderful gift, one that I doubt I will ever be able to repay.

When I started a new hobby of photographing wildflowers, I had no clue on the importance of learning plant families in order to identify them. If I couldn't tell from the picture in a field guide, I was up a creek. "Botany in a Day" was the first book I found that organized the families in a simple, clear way that I could understand and this system has become my main guide for grouping and identification. The herbal information is interesting, but not relevant to my project. I'm very grateful for the help I've received from this book

This book could have been a gem for people interested in botany and healing plants, but it does not manage to fill this void. The text is not read by a professional botanist (I assume) and incorrect or dubious facts are common. Furthermore, the text is filled with typos and misspellings that could easily have been caught in a simple spell-checking program. The figures are from older literature and are not well reproduced. The aim with this book, to explain botany in a day, is highly recommendable, but I cannot recommend this book in its present shape and quality-level. A

completely corrected, re-formatted, and revised edition of this book is needed. For people interested in the plant families of North America I instead recommend the high-quality work of Zomlefer: Guide to Flowering Plant Families.

Though definitely *\*not\** a field guide. This book is intended to be an introduction to plant families, and it does a good job at that. All the vascular plant families present in North America are briefly described and identification tips noted. Very few actual species are thoroughly described, though the "medicinal" properties of many species, mostly collected from other sources, are recounted here. This book would be better titled "Herbalism in a Day" as it's long on lists of medicinal uses and short on detailed botanical information. I'm pleased I purchased it, but it would be an inadequate substitute for an actual field guide or flora.

I love this book because it gives me facts that I can relate to the things I see. He really lays out the book in an easy to understand format. I really learned a lot from this book and it will stay at the front of my book shelf for a long time to come.

Contrary to the old axiom, this book actually delivers what it promises on the cover. By spending just one day with this book you'll get a fairly comprehensive understanding of the evolution of plants, their general classifications, and unique properties. The author writes in a very straightforward, concise, easy-to-read style that lets you absorb the information quickly and easily without being burdened with excessive detail. I also thoroughly enjoyed his Gestalt approach to Botany. I purchased this book as a supplement to my college course in Field Botany and discovered a wonderful resource.

This book is great for a beginner hobby botanist such as myself. What makes it so unique is that it emphasizes recognizable patterns among plants, thus simplifying an infinitely complex subject. By simplifying botany, Tom's book allows one to very quickly gain skills in identifying and using different plants. He also provides some good history of plants and a very useful key in the beginning of the book to really help the reader. The ease and interest in plant identification that this book has encouraged has driven me to continue my plant education. Once you use this book out in the wild and start identifying and using plants, they really come alive. I will walk along an empty lot or see ornamental flowers at a restaurant and start automatically identifying them and thinking about them. Botany in a Day is best used in conjunction with other books that have good color pictures in them.

Most plant books cover a few hundred species: Botany In A Day covers over 100 plant families and over 700 genera, from edible plants to medicinal plants, providing a focus on herbal plant families which users will find easy and important. No color photos; black and white line drawings serve as the illustration for descriptions which are detailed, from the plant's appearance to the author's experiences using the plant in applications. Botany In A Day is simply packed with information and an invaluable reference for aspiring gardeners and neophyte horticulturalists.

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