

THE

# North American Sylva;

OR, A DESCRIPTION OF THE

## FOREST TREES

OF THE

UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND NOVA SCOTIA,

NOT DESCRIBED IN THE WORK OF

F. ANDREW MICHAUX,

AND CONTAINING ALL THE

FOREST TREES DISCOVERED IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, THE TERRITORY OF  
OREGON, DOWN TO THE SHORES OF THE PACIFIC, AND INTO THE  
CONFINES OF CALIFORNIA, AS WELL AS IN VARIOUS  
PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

ILLUSTRATED BY 121 COLORED PLATES.

BY

THOMAS NUTTALL, F.L.S.

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, AND OF THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES  
OF PHILADELPHIA, ETC. ETC. ETC.

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TO THE LATE

WILLIAM MACLURE, ESQ.

PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES IN PHILADELPHIA, ETC. ETC.

AS A MEMENTO OF HIS ATTACHMENT TO, AND LIBERAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF, NATURAL  
SCIENCES IN NORTH AMERICA;

ALSO, TO

F. ANDREW MICHAUX,

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, CORRESPONDENT OF THE INSTITUTE  
OF FRANCE, ETC. ETC.,

WHOSE NAME IS IDENTIFIED WITH THE HISTORY AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PRODUCTIONS  
OF THE NORTH AMERICAN FOREST,

*This Work*

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR OF THIS SUPPLEMENT.

## PREFACE.

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THE FOREST TREES OF AMERICA being a subject of such great extent and importance, I felt, consequently, very diffident of undertaking their study, after what has been already done so well by my predecessor, M. MICHAUX. Yet, in offering a new edition of the AMERICAN SYLVA in English, it appeared requisite, in keeping pace with the progress of discovery, that all the forest trees of the extended dominion of the United States should, in some way or other, be included in the present publication; and, I confess, the magnitude of the task appeared, at first, sufficiently appalling, when we reflect on the vast territory now claimed by the United States. Beginning with the arctic limits of all arborescent vegetation, in the wilds of Canada, which we cannot with propriety exclude, forming as it does the boreal boundary of the North American forest, we then follow the extended shores of the Atlantic, until, toward the extremity of East Florida, and its keys or islands, we have attained the very confines of the tropical circle, and make a near approach to the island of Cuba and the Bahamas. Turning westward, we pass over the wide forests of the Mississippi, pursue the Western streams, through vast woodless plains, until we attain the long crests of the Rocky Mountains or Northern Andes. Here, in these alpine regions, we meet with a total change in the features of the forest: resiniferous evergreens, of the family of the Pines, now predominate, and attain the most gigantic dimensions. All the species (and they are numerous) have peculiar traits, and form so many curious and distinct species, of which little is yet known more than their botanical designation. Other remarkable forest trees, also imperfectly known, inhabit this great range of mountains, which continues uninterruptedly into the interior of Mexico in its southern course; while on the north, following the sources of the Missouri and the Oregon, and after thus dividing the waters which flow into the Atlantic and Pacific, it is at length

merged in the "Shining Mountains," which send off their distant tributaries to the Arctic Ocean.

The plains of the Upper Platte, those of the Oregon and of Northern California, a region bereft of summer rains, forming extensive barren steppes, like those of Siberia, present no forests, scarcely an alluvial belt along the larger streams of sufficient magnitude to afford even fuel for the camp-fire of the wandering hunter or the erratic savage. The scanty driftwood borne down from the mountains, the low bitter bushes of the arid plain, even the dry ordure of the bison, is collected for fuel, and barely suffices to prepare a hasty meal for the passing traveller, who, urged by hunger and thirst, hurries over the desert, a region doomed to desolation, and, amid privations the most appalling, lives in the hope of again seeing forests and green fields in lieu of arid plains and bitter weeds, which tantalized our famished animals with the fallacious appearance of food, like the cast-away mariner raging with thirst, though surrounded with water as fatal to the longing appetite as poison.

Toward the shores of the Pacific, and on the banks of the Oregon, we again meet with the agreeable features of the forest:—

"Majestic woods, of every vigorous green,  
Stage above stage, high waving o'er the hills,  
Or to the far horizon wide diffused,  
A boundless, deep immensity of shade."

Transported in idea to the border of the Hudson or the Delaware, we recline beneath the shade of venerable Oaks and spreading Maples; we see, as it were, fringing the streams, the familiar Cottonwood and spreading Willows. On the higher plains, and ascending the hills and mountains to their summits, we see a dark forest of lofty Pines; we hear the light breeze sigh and murmur through their branches as it did to the poets of old. But the botanist, in all this array, fails to recognise one solitary acquaintance of his former scenes: he is emphatically in a strange land; a new creation, even of forest trees, is spread around him, and the tall Andes and wide deserts rise as a barrier betwixt him and his distant home.

My indulgent reader will then excuse me, if I, on this occasion, appear before him only as a botanist; culling those objects which have given him so much delight, he wishes to present them to the