I was looking forward to reviewing this book because I hoped it would be a complete treatment of the lichens of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP), but sadly I found it fell short of that goal. The title is a misnomer as the book is really a preliminary checklist and a vehicle to publish some new taxa. Readers expecting to find a thorough presentation of a flora will be disappointed.

The table of contents lists a foreword by Keith Langdon of the park staff, an author preface, acknowledgements, a summary of taxonomic changes, introduction, methodological summary, discussion, results (eight sections), literature cited, and an index of scientific names.

At over 500,000 acres, GSMNP is the largest national park in the eastern U. S. and contains the highest vascular plant diversity. It is reasonable to expect the lichen diversity to be high as well. Given the area of the park and its’ rugged terrain one would expect more than “...three years of limited field work...” would be needed to inventory the park, yet that is what the authors admit to doing. In addition, no dates are given for collecting periods (other than in the selected specimen lists), and there is no list or map of the localities. There is a map at the very end of the book, probably added as an afterthought, with no collecting localities marked. It is customary to include a collecting locality map near the front as part of the methods.

There is no presentation of the substrates in the park, which are critical to understanding what lichens to expect. For example, from the species section dolomite is mentioned a few times, yet there are none of the typical limestone loving species listed (e.g., Lichinella sp., Lecanora muralis, Xanthoria elegans). The coverage of the park is not presented so the reader has no idea how well-studied the park is, even though there is a section on how well-known it is (and this question is left unanswered). The authors admit in the species list that they have verified 84% of the 804 taxa they report, saying they have been unable to study the high elevation areas of the park or collect taxonomic groups that are not easy to find, giving the Caliciales as the example. The question of how many species are in the park remains unclear: is it 672 or 804?

Identification methods are not described at all. Knowing two of the authors, I don’t doubt their identifications but what about other readers in the future? How will they know how the identifications were made?

The species list is strangely limited to the authors’ work and the inclusion of some previous lists, which is good for a start, but I did a search in the Consortium of North American Lichen Herbaria (CNALH) database which produced a list of 251 taxa in the park, including 28 that are not in the book. Leaving these out seems short-sighted. Other species I expected to find but didn’t include Julelia fallacirosa (collected by the first author north and south of the park), Teloschistes chrysophthalmus (expected in the coves and lowlands), and other species of Acarospora on acidic rocks, for examples.

An example of a premature declaration is where the authors claim they have found the first confirmed