Paleobiogeography: Using Fossils to Study Global Change, Plate Tectonics, and Evolution. Bruce S. Lieberman. 2000. Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York, NY. 208 pp. $92, hardcover, ISBN 030646277X. An in-depth look at the geographical distribution of organisms through time. Lieberman bridges the fields of biology and geology with this integration of paleobiogeography and biogeography. The distinction between phylogenetic or historical biogeography and ecological biogeography (evolutionary vs. ecological patterns and processes) and its significance is made. Current debates in the field are presented within a historical context. Recent revolutions in geology and biology and their impact on paleobiogeography are discussed. The final chapters outline techniques and provide case studies about how paleobiogeographic data are analyzed and how paleobiogeography can enhance our understanding of the current biodiversity crisis. Fascinating! C.R.

Canada’s Boreal Forest. J. David Henry. 2002. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC. 175 pp. $34.95, hardcover, ISBN 1588340570. Part of the Smithsonian Natural History Series, this volume explores the role of snow, fire, and muskeg in shaping the ecology of the boreal region. Each is examined in one or more chapters. A discussion of the unique geology, vegetation, and wildlife of the region and their interaction is provided. The Nordic Challenge, a chapter offering alternatives to “cut, scrape, rape, and run,” uses examples by First Nation communities and others in northern Sweden and Finland. The final chapter gives a brief description of each Canadian province and lists some parks, protected areas, and museums for the traveler to the boreal forest. C.R.

Betrayal of Science and Reason: How Anti-environmental Rhetoric Threatens our Future. Paul R. Ehrlich and Anne H. Ehrlich. 1996. Island Press, Washington, DC. 335 pp. $18, paperback, ISBN1559634847. In favor of business as usual, “brownlash” is the backlash against environmental policies based on denial of the importance of science in identifying current environmental problems. Myths propagated about the insignificance of issues such as biodiversity loss, population growth, global climate change, acid rain, and release of toxic substances are stated or quoted and systematically debunked by the Ehrlichs, with well referenced arguments. A chapter addressing the media’s role in brownlash and another entitled “How can good science become good policy” give the reader a better understanding about how to affect change. An appendix discusses the premises of three books the authors have deemed “brownlash literature,” highlighting points of agreement and contention between the scientific community and the anti-environmentalists. C.R.

How to Identify Flowering Plant Families: A Practical Guide for Horticulturists and Plant Lovers. John Philip Baumgardt. 1982. Timber Press, Inc., Portland, OR. 269 pp. $22.95, paperback, ISBN 0917304217. Geared toward the gardener, horticulturist, and student, this handy volume emphasizes the techniques of flower analysis. Families covered include those native to North America, mainly east of the Rocky Mountains and those used ornamentally. A general description of the family along with characters readily identified in the field are included. Line drawings of a representative member of each family include a floral diagram and floral formula. C.R.