

## Richard B. Pearce Flora of the Driftless Area

Richard Bowman Pearce (1950-2018) was a cell biologist, immunologist, writer, and botanist with a particular focus on documenting plants in the southern Driftless Area and pioneering the use of a high-resolution scanner for image production. Dr. Pearce was born in Denver, CO to William and Lucille (Bowman) Pearce. Pearce graduated from the University of Colorado (1971) and received a PhD from University of California – Santa Barbara (1979). His thesis titled *Mechanisms of Osmoregulation in Animals* was published by John Wiley and Sons Publishing Co. He spent almost ten years on Kaposi Sarcoma/HIV/AIDS research at San Francisco (1980-1989), during which time he was a bell ringer to the gay community on stopping the spread of AIDS and worked tirelessly to publicize the epidemic. He was a leader in the discovery of parasites as a role in transmission of HIV and was instrumental in the early research of what became AIDS. Dr. Pearce was recommended for Post-Doctoral research (1988-1990) by the twice winner of the Nobel Prize, Dr. Linus Pauling. He co-authored the book *AIDS Principles, Practices and Politics* (1989). Following his death, his early AIDS research was donated to the AIDS Research Institute. Pearce left the field of AIDS and focused on diabetes research at Santa Barbara, CA (1990-1999). He published over thirty scientific papers and many general publications. He became an early advocate of the dangers of climate change beginning in the 1990's. He was a Life Member of American Association for the Advancement of Science.

After his retirement from medical research, Dr. Pearce retired to Galena, Illinois where he discovered the plant scanning process. Pearce devoted substantial effort toward documenting rare plants of the Driftless region, including those of algific slopes and other rare habitats. He was known for his *in-situ* scanning method and attentive care taken to not harm his plant and insect subjects. Dr. Pearce began documenting wild plants with a flatbed scanner in 2002. Pearce was an active and well-known presence in the area during his work on the *Flora of the Driftless Area* (2002 – 2018). The *Flora of the Driftless Area* was his most passionate work which he devoted much time and devotion towards. In 2009 restoration ecologist Cory Ritterbusch began to serve as his assistant on the project. In addition to the flora, Dr. Pearce published videos on entomology, stories on peculiar plant names and an homage to early nature writer Neltje Blanchan (1865-1918). In 2017, he published *Joe Pye, Joe Pye's Law, and Joe Pye Weed: The History and Eponymy of the Common Name Joe Pye Weed for Eutrochium Species (Asteraceae)* in *The Great Lakes Botanist*. During his tenure in Galena, Pearce continued to advocate for the awareness of climate change. His business, Arras Images, provided Giclee services to many artists in the Galena area as well as marketing pieces, website design and book publishing. His high-quality scanned images were sold in galleries, displayed in commercial establishments, and were showcased during professional presentations. In 2018 when Dr. Pearce died, he left the *Flora of the Driftless Area* incomplete with finishing over 350 species. His most noteworthy images were that of *asclepias verticillata*, *sanguinaria canadensis*, *nymphaea odorata*, and *equisetum hyemale*.

The materials in this collection include botanical scans, videos, proof pages for the *Flora of the Driftless Area*, papers, and other documents from Dr. Pearce's collection.

*Written by Cory Ritterbusch*