

Review by Steve Helms, ND

# Plant Medicine in Practice: Using the Teachings of John Bastyr

*William A. Mitchell, ND*

*Churchill Livingstone Publishing; Edinburgh, Scotland*

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Compendiums of botanical medicine can be as complex for the master as for the novice. For the overwhelmed newcomer it can often be the multi-functionality of a single herb that compels immediate humility. Even the more seasoned herbalist can be challenged by the multitude of biochemicals offered to explain the diverse therapeutics of a plant. For practitioners on either end of the spectrum, the latest work by William A. Mitchell, ND, conveys a unity of balanced experience and perception that will call practitioners to return again and again to mine its insights, whether researching or formulating.

*Plant Medicine in Practice: Using the Teachings of John Bastyr* provides a clinically specific resource that covers hundreds of botanicals – in paragraph format – allowing the unique application of each medicine to be appreciated. Organized by eclectic function, the book's 73 chapters range from adaptogens to vulneraries, and include distinctive titles such as "Intestinal Tract Sedatives and Antispasmodics," "Genitourinary Sedatives and Stimulants," and "Cholesterol-Lowering Medicines." A number of botanicals are included in each chapter. For example, 19 herbs are covered in the chapter on "Cardiac Remedies" and 25 more in "Expectorants." Throughout this reference, medicines are described with varying dosages (mostly drop dosages), accompanied by numerous associated clinical pearls. Although less focused on biochemistry than his previous works, Mitchell has created a pivotal reference to aid the clinician's selection of the most appropriate botanical medicine.

Dr. Mitchell, in a tribute to his mentor John Bastyr, ND, has brought botanical medicine into the 21st century, presenting 80 years of combined clinical experience of these two masters. With a never-ending onslaught of herbal texts on the market, few are based on clinical experience, and many are simply transcripts of earlier works, affording little new information to the practitioner. Like most great books on botanical medicine, *Plant Medicine in Practice* will be remembered by generations of practitioners who use these medicines and need a reliable reference.