A QUICK TUTORIAL FOR USING FLORA ID

THIS CD IS NOT TO BE LOADED ON YOUR HARD DRIVE

Professional or backyard botanist, you'll enjoy using Flora ID. This guide demonstrates its main features. Also, you'll find in the Help menu a quick reference guide and more complete, printable tutorial. Put the disk in your CD drive and wait for it to come up. Click **Flowering Plants**, then **Open XID Database**. From your hard drive, click the plus in front of XID and proceed as above. You will select attributes in the upper left window. The lower left contains a list of all flowering plants on the version you have. Photos and data will appear in the right window. If you have the Northwest version, click the + in front of **Menu Structure**. Click **Geographic Location** and double-click your state (or right-click and Mark yes). This generates the same list as on the respective state CD. This tutorial uses the Idaho version, so be aware that numbers on the short list will vary from state to state.

A SUMMER ID: ***yellow starthistle*** (our nastiest weed in Idaho's Salmon River country).
In the submenus, you will select the target plant's distinctive attributes. For the most obvious feature of starthistle, click **Flowers** and **Flower color**, and then double-click **Yellow** to mark it Yes. Notice that we have reduced the species short list (green names in the lower window) from 2,189 to 902 flowering plants (on the Idaho key). We have eliminated the plants that do not have yellow flowers. Eliminated species appear in red, below the green short list. To clear working space, click the minus sign in front of **Flowers.** Now open the submenus **General and Spines or Thorns.** Double click the attribute **Thorns on flower head**. We're down to 58 species. Notice that some of the submenus or attributes are red, meaning none of the species on our short list have these traits. Numbers in the blue boxes show how many species will remain if you mark those attributes. Looking at yellowstar's stem cross section, you see that it's **Winged.** Marking that attribute Yes identifies the plant! While you're there, right-click any of these cross-section attributes and click **Report**. Line drawings will appear to help you understand what is meant by the terms. Such drawings are available for all relevant attributes. Click the brush icon to **clear all marks** and begin another ID.

A WINTER ID: ***red osier dogwood***.
Let's say that we see a red-twigged shrub up some creek bottom. It looks to be 12 feet tall. Click **General,** then **Plant Height at Maturity.** Double-click **9.8-13.1 feet** to mark it Yes. Continuing in the **General** submenu, we notice that our target plant's **Habit** is **Woody**, and it could be called an **erect shrub** (**mark each Yes**). Our short list is at 153. Marking **Location in Idaho as North,** puts it at 51. Looking closer, we see that this plant exhibits opposite branching. Open the submenus **Leaves, Flowering stem leaves**, and **Stem leaf arrangement**. Mark **Yes** for **Opposite** and our list goes to six species.

The **Gallery** can help when your list gets short. Click the four-square graphic on the icon bar. Thumbnail photos will appear of the short-list species. If we've been correct marking attributes, red osier dogwood will be one. Indeed it is, but the summer photo provided doesn't help. Notice that you can hold the pointer over any image to see its name, or click it to do other things.

Perhaps we don't know how to proceed. At any time, we can use a powerful tool called the **Analyze** feature. Each icon on the icon bar accesses a system feature (you can also get to them from menus along the top). Click the "**eye**" icon. The Analyze feature sets up a prioritized list of attributes which are, from top to bottom, the most-to-least likely to help you ID your plant (based on already-marked attributes). If you can't use the top item, move down the list until you find one you can use. In this case let's try the first one: **Leaf Shape**. When you click it the appropriate submenu opens at left for your selection. It's winter, but let's say you find an old leaf on the ground, and the shape appears **Elliptic or Oval**. Marking this attribute **Yes** identifies the target plant! If that doesn't get you there, try the Analyze feature again, perhaps selecting **Leaf margin, entire**. Notice that we haven't even used the more technical attributes such as flower parts. Yet, they're all available to help you identify a target plant.

To access the **Item/Species List**, click the appropriate icon. Here you can sort by common or scientific name (be careful using common names; for example, red osier dogwood is entered as "dogwood, red osier.") Or double-click a species name in the list and select the information you want to see by checking boxes. If you check every box, you'll get all information Flora ID offers about this plant. If some data is off the screen, drag the vertical separator left. Visible from top are the image(s), taxonomy (including old names), range, description, references, and attributes**. References** cite, for each species, several scientific works, with page numbers where you can find more information about this plant. Scroll down the **Attributes.** The many bulleted items, taken together, characterize this species. Notice the marked range in **Plant height at maturity**. It shows that we would have kept red osier dogwood on our short list by marking any height from about 4′feet to 20 feet. Flora ID accounts for natural variation.

OLD NAMES. Sometimes you know the name of a plant and just want to see a picture or check its attributes. Find your plant's name on the main list and double click. The names of many plants have been changed. If you happen to be working with an old name, you won't find it on the main list, which contains current names. In the **Family/Genus** submenu, find the genus name that you know. Old names are cross-referenced there; that is, clicking on an old name will identify your plant under its new name.

FLORA ID NORTHWEST 208-839-2625