

Connecticut Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

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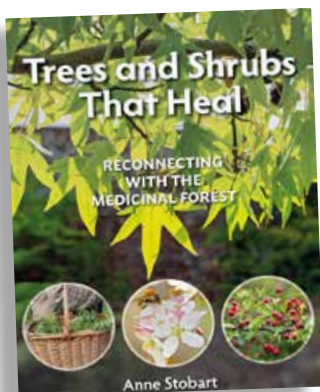
2024 Review of Gardening Books

by Karla Dalley, CT Hort member and blogger & Tracey Weiss, CT Hort Communications Director

Whenever we pull together our annual review of books, a theme will suddenly present itself, whether we meant it to or not. This year is no different. This year's collection of books are about expressing appreciation. Bunny Williams shares that feeling in *Life in the Garden*; Jennifer Jewell delivers her love for seeds in *What We Sow*; Jackie Bennett offers a look inside the gardens that inspired some of the world's most famous authors in *The Writer's Garden*.

Some of our books serve as guides for the curious gardener. Layering edible garden, working with herbs on a number of levels, growing bulbs, and learning how to garden like a forager are just some of the publications reviewed by our amazing group of reader-reviewers. Our thanks to them, and to you for reading.

Enjoy, and happy holidays.



Trees and Shrubs that Heal: Reconnecting with the Medicinal Forest

By Anne Stobart
Paperback: 304 pages
Publisher: Permanent
Publications

Reviewer: Zellene Sandler

I have a shelf of medicinal plant books, but none specifically reference trees and shrubs, so this book was a surprise. Packed with practical, scientific and sustainability actions, this book is a wealth of information for tree lovers and those who seek the healing potential of woody plants.

The book is divided into two sections. Part One, *Trees and Shrubs that Heal*, covers topics such as identification, sustainable harvesting and how trees and shrubs can counteract infection, soothe anxiety, reduce pain, aid digestion and boost health. Information on their chemical components such as polysaccharides, polyphenols, and alkaloids are given in an understandable way.

Part Two is in a more traditional herbal format, with excellent photos of 80 woody plants chosen for their healing qualities. Each plant includes a description of the plant with its hardiness zone, parts used, and harvest time. Included are traditional uses, indications and research, and active chemical constituents. Included for each is an herbal recipe; for example, a recipe for Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) lotion is included in its write-up. Even the dreaded Barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) is included as a liver and gallbladder tonic. Berberine, derived from the shrub, is used to lower blood sugar, improve blood lipids, and help lose weight. Barberries can be made into jelly or used in savoury and sweet dishes in Iranian cooking. Included is a recipe for Barberry tea. Nice to know this shrub has some redeeming value!

The appendices are filled with useful information. *Medicinal Trees and Shrubs by Common Names A to Z* condenses the information in the book into a quick reference guide. Other appendices include a listing of bodily complaints with trees and shrubs that may be useful, and a listing of when to harvest medicinal parts.

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New trip to Italy!

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Connecticut Horticultural Society
P.O. Box 330966
West Hartford, CT 06133-0966
(860) 529-8713

email: office@cthort.org
website: www.cthort.org

Phone Hours
Tuesday & Thursday
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ashley Stewart
Executive Director
exec@cthort.org

Tracey Weiss
CT Hort Director of Communications
news@cthort.org

*All announcements, advertising news
and articles for publication should be
sent to: news@cthort.org.*

Send Membership Information
& Direct General Questions To:
Mary Anna Martell
Office Administrator
P.O. Box 330966
West Hartford, CT 06133-0966

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From the Executive Director

Dear CT Hort Family,

We are in a season of giving thanks! I am thankful for the chance to witness New England's peak foliage and the heavenly warm days that we received in early October!

And while we are giving thanks, I want to give a huge shout out to Cheryl Whalen and White Flower Farm for providing such a generous variety of bulbs for our Annual Bulb Sale. So far, a little over \$2,000 was raised to support the CT Hort Scholarship and Civic Grants fund—woo hoo!

This month at our upcoming speaker meeting, we will resume selling bulbs to ensure no bulb is left behind! To everyone that has and will volunteer, please know that your helping hand is essential to our success.

Speaking of success, Marta McDowell's presentation on Frederick Law Olmsted was just that! Marta presented at the Elmwood Community Center, and provided a stellar overview of Olmsted's family history, career and game changing contributions to horticulture. She captured the in-person and online audience with her wit and keen understanding of Olmsted's lived experiences.

Later this month, at our next speaker meeting, we will be taking a deeper dive into learning about invasives with Christian Allyn. With last month's event being so well attended, let's be sure to show up in even greater numbers this time to learn and be in community together.

Programmatically, CT Hort staff, board and committee members are busy planning for the Winter and Spring season. Family friendly workshops, new school partnerships, program spotlights and board development underway.

Be sure to stay engaged with us along the way. As always, I am looking forward to learning and growing with you all!

Warm regards,
Ashley

Thank you to our generous business members and supporters!



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Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut
The Garden Barn Nursery

Garden Solutions
Go Organic LLC
Grace Farms
Mountainview Landscaping LLC



Christian Allyn

Invasive Plants in Connecticut: A Winnable War with Christian Allyn

Thursday, November 21 • 7 pm

1106 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford, CT and via Zoom (you'll be sent the link on the Sunday before the talk). Set your GPS to Burgoyne Street, West Hartford. The entrance to the community center is off Burgoyne Street.

It's easy for one to throw up their hands and say invasive plants cannot be managed, but by working together and doing what is hard we all can work together to solve this daunting task.

Christian Allyn has made a career of managing invasive plants across Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York. His company, Invasive Plant Solutions, has managed invasive plants from land trusts to backyards. He'll share with us the ways we call can all be a part of the solution.

Christian graduated from the University of Connecticut in 2017 with a Horticulture Resource Economics double major. Christian started Invasive Plant Solutions while at UConn and now has a staff of eight, executing management throughout Connecticut, western Massachusetts and Eastern New York.

We hope you'll join us in person, as we honor John O'Brien and Diane Erling for their award-winning work. John O'Brien is the winner of the 2024 Gustav A.L. Mehlquist Award; Diane Erling is this year's winner of the Service Award.



Coming January 18th!

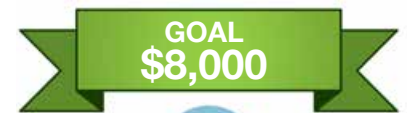
Propagating Native Plants from Seed

Workshop with Jim Sirch

Zion Church, North Branford

Details and registration coming to your inbox soon!

2024-2025 Scholarship Fund



The 2024-2025 season has begun and so has our goal to raise \$8,000 to provide scholarships to students. We hope you'll consider helping us reach that goal!

Go to cthort.org/donate to learn how to give. Thank you!

\$1,088



Coming Up

The Wonders of the
Winter Landscape
with Vincent Simeone
Thurs., Jan. 16 at 7pm

Zoom only



**Congratulation to
the 2024-2025
CT Hort Scholarship
recipients!**

UCONN

Mya Julian
Ella May



**Naugatuck Valley
Community College**
Nell Acosta
Monica Faust

Go to <https://cthort.org/support/other-ways-to-give/> for more information about these winners and their studies.



Coming soon!

Local greens workshop
for the holidays!

Check your inbox for details!



**ORGANIC LAWN,
GARDEN AND
LAND CARE**

*Organic Lawn
Lawn Maintenance
Lawn Seeding & Renovations*

*Perennial Plant Care
Organic Vegetable Garden
Organic Tick Control*



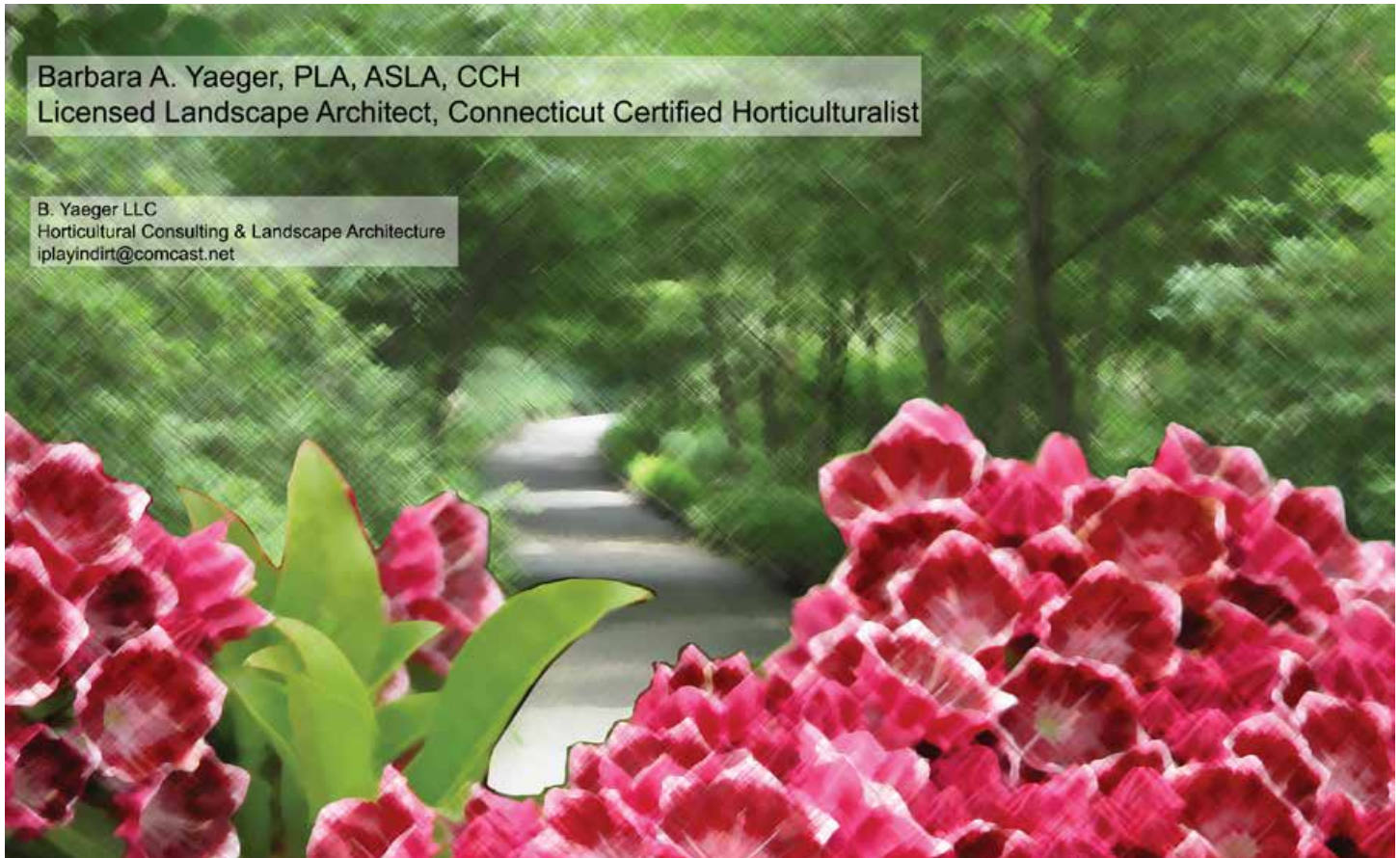
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Barbara A. Yaeger, PLA, ASLA, CCH
Licensed Landscape Architect, Connecticut Certified Horticulturalist

B. Yaeger LLC
Horticultural Consulting & Landscape Architecture
iplayindirt@comcast.net

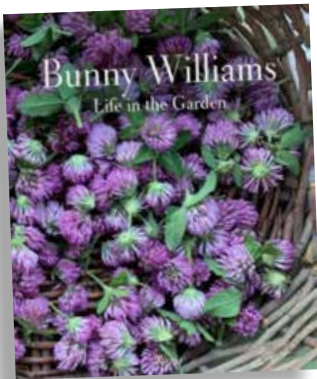


Book Reviews

from page 1

Of special interest is the chapter on *Reconnecting with the Medicinal Forest*, in which the author describes techniques such as green forest bathing (Shinrin -yoku.) I have done this meditative walking through the forest and highly recommend it for stress reduction, improved mental health, immune responses, and experiencing a connection to nature.

The author expresses her deep concern for forest conservation and how the loss of trees impacts everyone worldwide. She has dedicated this book “to the three trillion trees on the planet.” I highly recommend this book as a great addition to the herbalist’s library.

**Life in the Garden**

By Bunny Williams

Hardcover: 408 pages

Publisher: Rizzoli

Reviewer: Celeste Gianni

Life in the Garden is the eighth book authored by noted interior/garden designer and entrepreneur Bunny Williams. In the vividly

illustrated 407 page book the author reminisces about how her creative philosophy and cumulative knowledge embellished the 22 acres of gardens surrounding her 18th century Connecticut country house. The reader views Williams’ life’s work through her reflective writing underscored by photographs taken by Annie Schlechter.

Williams credits her life-long interest in nature to her formative childhood living on a Virginia farm with a gardener mother. She travels with her mother to famous European gardens and will continue it as an annual practice into adulthood. After Williams completes her formal education in interior design she joins a prestigious firm and distinguishes herself in that field. At the same time Williams is eager to meld her design abilities with her love of gardens. She begins with a small vegetable and cutting garden at a rented weekend house. Once she purchases her current house and extensive property she starts in earnest to learn from the land—by trial and error—lessons about color, placement, and sensitivity to season.

Four decades later, Williams has been successful as an interior and garden designer and business co-owner of a popular gardening store in mid-town Manhattan with her antique dealer husband. The current book reflects on her knowledge of both house and garden design. Five of the 14 sections highlight a specific adjoining and intersecting “room,” the parterre, the sunken garden, shaded woodland garden with a fishpond, working garden with its conservatory, barn and chicken “pavilion,” and the fruit orchard near the swimming pool with its temple-like log pool house “folly.” Each section concludes with lists of

specific plantings and/or tips for seasonal maintenance of the garden. Five additional sections cover the art of flower arranging, container planting, entertaining and decorating for Christmas. The book ends with two pages of resources for supplies related to garden ornaments and plants.

Throughout Williams graciously expresses gratitude to her husband, support staff who maintain the extensive grounds, and colleagues and friends who contribute to stimulating ongoing creativity. Any gardener, novice or expert, would appreciate receiving this adult story book with Bunny Williams’ wisdom throughout. For those of us who suffer from seasonal affective disorder or garden separation anxiety regular re-reading may be the cure for getting us through the winter doldrums.

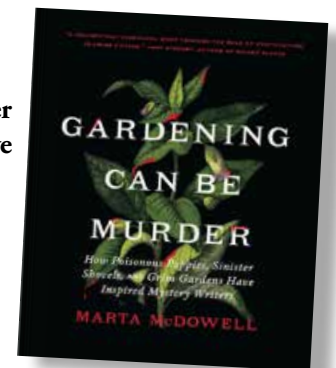
Gardening Can Be Murder: How Poisonous Poppies, Sinister Shovels, and Grim Gardens Have Inspired Mystery Writers

By Marta McDowell

Hardcover: 216 pages

Publisher: Timber Press

Reviewer: Clare Meade



All gardeners know of the murderous intent one has in demolishing bindweed or spiny thistle in our gardens. Razor-edged tools, toxic chemicals and a good bit of obsession, gardens can be a place of life or death. Small wonder that many mystery writers have found inspiration in the darker side of gardens. Marta McDowell, a writer and gardener, takes readers on a spin through gardening mysteries.

From Wilkie Collins and the first horticulturally inclined investigator in *Moonstone* to 21st century writers like Louise Penny and Elizabeth George, McDowell has researched and catalogued the intersection of gardening and murder. I discovered the murder mystery genre early in my life in a stack of old *Nancy Drew* books. McDowell tells me that even Nancy has a horticultural side. McDowell writes that in *Password to Larkspur Lane*, Nancy entered a flower show, picking her best purple larkspur. Larkspur and bluebells function as both plants and keys to the mystery.

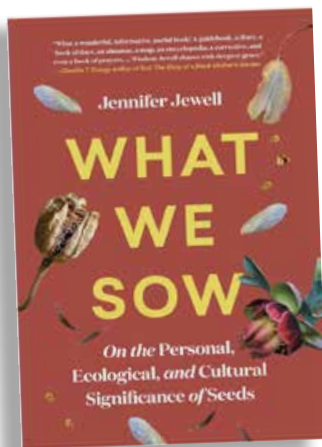
Following the arc of a well-constructed mystery novel, the book’s chapters include detective, setting, motive, means, clues and suspects, all through the lens of gardens and murder. Each chapter is packed with information. Gardening detectives and characters, murders in gardens or gardens used to hide murders, plants used as means or clues, McDowell gives example after informative example.

I came away with a long reading—and re-reading—list of fascinating books. McDowell does her best not to give away the

mystery! The final chapter looks at mystery writers and their own gardens. How interesting to see behind the “poison pen and trowel”, as McDowell writes, and learn about Agatha Christie’s gardens on the River Dart, Rex Stout’s orchids, or Naomi Hirahara’s Japanese style gardens. This chapter particularly lets me know familiar authors in a new way.

The gothic, black and white, wood-cut-style illustrations by Yolanda Fundora are gorgeous and a perfect foil for the text. McDowell has included a detailed index and book list, which is invaluable for finding all the factual details.

The book is great fun on the first read and will be part of my bookshelf to dip into again and again as I come across more gardeners and murder!



What We Sow: On the Personal, Ecological, and Cultural Significance of Seeds

By Jennifer Jewell

Hardcover: 392 pages

Publisher: Timber Press

Reviewer: *Beth Ann Loveland Sennett*

Seed is the source of all life. Consider how amazing it is that a tiny dust-like speck can produce incredibly beautiful flowers, cereals, or grains.

Larger seeds that produce bean plants can yield hundreds more beans to feed us. With water and sunlight, and sometimes fire, seeds are able to grow into green plants and trees that clean our air. When those same plants wither and decay, they become the compost that improves soil quality. Healthy soil, in turn, filters our precious water supplies to remove impurities. And even that small speck barely recognizable as a seed has a role in the human experience and the power to evoke emotion and meaning. The power of seeds is woven into our language and culture, exemplified by phrases such as “planting a seed of hope” and “seeds of success,” in Jennifer Jewell’s *What We Sow: On the Personal, Ecological, and Cultural Significance of Seeds*.

Jewell’s text is an intricately constructed and comprehensive compendium of seed-related information, data, description, and personal observation. She sees parallels between seasons of life and seasons in the garden. Jewell also considers the historic marginalization of groups of indigenous peoples and destruction of their seed-related heritage; histories of seed saving, seed use, seed banks, and seed’s significance in many cultures; the geopolitical, scientific, and economic importance of seed; as well as the current corporate greed and intense legislative pressures to regulate seed access and seed treatment, that threaten to harm us.

Jennifer Jewell’s experiences through a growing season provide the overriding structure of this book, beginning with late

October journal entries, close to her birthday. From each reflective journal entry, she jumps into a seed-related joy, concern, or other seedy topic. For example, her description of the amazingly diverse containers seeds come in, from the acorn to the peach pit, was fascinating.

In *What We Sow*, Jewell details the positive efforts of many individuals, companies, gardening groups, and non-profits, to continue to supply untreated, often organic, seeds, and seed supplies. Seed suppliers such as Baker Creek Seed Company, High Mowing Seeds, Fedco, and Johnny’s, provide untainted, untreated, open-pollinated seed. In addition, Jewell highlights the work of the Wild Ones, National Wildlife Federation, Xerces, Perfect Earth, Seed Savers Network, Indigenous Seed Keepers Network, and others, for steadfast effort. She also writes about many individuals who have made a difference in healthy seed sustainability directly or indirectly, including Douglas Tallamy, E. O. Wilson, Edwina von Gal, Rachel Carson, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Aldo Leopold.

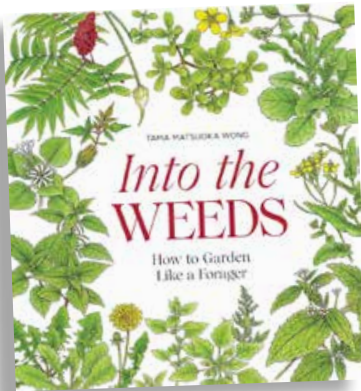
On the other hand, echoing those who support ecological gardening, sustainability, and climate resilient actions, Jewell calls attention to the dangers posed by the work of Monsanto and Bayer, who joined forces at the forefront of seed patents. With their merger in 2018, pressure on farmers and others to use sterile hybrid and GMO seed, and seeds pre-treated with pesticides and fungicides, has increased significantly. It was alarming to read these words: “The same four multinational corporations (Bayer-Monsanto, Syngenta, BASF, and DowDuPont) control 75% of plant breeding research, 60% of the commercial seed market, and 76% of global agrochemical sales.” What happens when the corporations that own 60% of the seed market in the USA also produce most of the biocides (pesticides, herbicides, fungicides) available today? One answer: they find new uses for it. Is there anything we can do as a force for change to turn their direction?

Humans have saved seeds for thousands of years to grow and store food required for survival. Throughout known history, destruction of saved seed and crops has been used as a weapon when lands have been invaded. Destroying people’s food and seed also destroys community and culture. I have grown Elena’s Rojo amaranth for a number of years. Named for an indigenous Guatemalan farmer who was responsible for the recovery of this rare local variety. Elena carried the seed with her when she had to flee. There are countless stories told of individuals who have hidden seed, even sewing saved seed into their own garments when uprooted, in hopes of growing their elemental crops in the future.

Due to the foresight and dedication of others, seeds have been saved in places like the Svalbard Global Seed Vault to ensure that genetic diversity is preserved. Importantly, at the individual level there is also an increased interest in seed saving. Many gardeners understand that planting open-pollinated non-hybridized seed contributes to biodiversity and sustainability, and in future seasons their plants will be better adapted to locally changing

weather and climate patterns. Other gardeners just enjoy the process of collecting their own seed to sow and enjoy the cycle of growth and reproduction.

When Jewell wrote this book during the pandemic, seeds and gardening materials were difficult to obtain. Supply chains had been disrupted and store shelves were empty. People realized it would make sense to grow some of their own food. This is fundamental to survival. Jennifer Jewell has brought together a wealth of information and resources that provide an understanding of where we have been and the current landscape for seeds, the foundation of life. *What We Sow* is worth reading.



Into the Weeds: How to Garden Like a Forager

by Tama Matsuoka Wong

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Hardie Grant North America

Reviewer: Karla Dalley

Many of us, in our own way, have “wild” gardens. My patch of goldenrod, asters and white snakeroot—grown strictly for

late pollinators and called weeds by my husband—is by no means a forager’s garden unless you are an insect.

I don’t forage, even on my organic property. This book, with its descriptions of edible plants that can be found growing in our yards, or nearby places like strip malls or parking lots (so long as they are pesticide free) is enough to make me re-think this.

Ms. Wong quickly realized that a manicured garden was not for her. She tells of planting a rosebush—and each weekend finding it overcome by weeds. Soon frustrated by this situation, she decided “the wild and weedy plants had a certain charm.... Now, instead of feeling like a failed gardener, I feel alive and rejuvenated. I have learned to appreciate what I have and to live in the moment.

The book moves in a natural progression from how to structure the garden using natural materials (stone, twig and wood fencing, a wild wood gate, paths, managing water) to naming and studying plants and then to using and cooking with “weeds and wildflowers.”

There are recipes for salad, soda, syrups, shrubs, mocktails and even one for knotweed pickles! Imagine using knotweed for something tasty!

This is a book for so much more than just foraging; it is about lifestyle as well. It is a fascinating read even if you never intend to eat a dandelion leaf, or pickle something invasive.

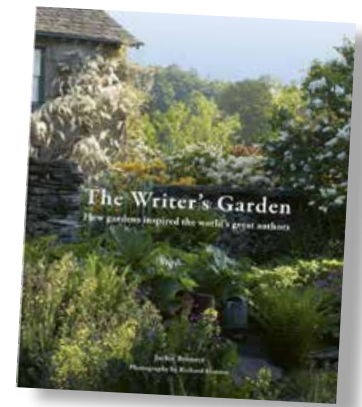
The Writer’s Garden: How gardens inspired the world’s great authors

By Jackie Bennett

Hardcover: 240 Pages

Publisher: Frances Lincoln

Reviewer: Roger Desmond



This book will not help you manage, design or cultivate a garden; instead, it will guide you to an understanding of how gardens enriched the lives of many of the greatest writers of the last three centuries. With the help of superb photographs by Richard Hanson as well as archived pictures and the impressive narratives of Ms. Bennett, it becomes clear that gardens were central to a gallery of literary masters.

Travel to the organic gardens of Thomas Hardy who wrote in *Under the Greenwood Tree* about his love for the unique personalities of trees. He planted 2,000 Australian pines, numerous varieties of apples and refused to kill animals who visited. And there is Hermann Hesse, designing his garden in Germany, who sometimes spoke of his wish to work outdoors instead of writing his mysterious but celebrated *Steppenwolf* or *Siddhartha*.

Frances Hodgson Burnett returned to her roots in England in mid-life after achieving success in America. She took up gardening on a large scale in a country house in Kent following the death of a son and a divorce. She found the healing power in plants and later recalled her own walled gardens in *The Secret Garden*, delighting future generations with the healing power of roses.

The author’s brief texts reveal the paths of inspiration that gardens provide. Some found solace and escape from worry as they walked in their paths while others discovered that they were the ideal place to write free of distractions (other than the music of birds sounds).

Some authors saw their garden as a canvas upon which to paint new ideas. The relatively unfamiliar poet and novelist Edward James exemplifies this tendency. He inherited a large amount of money as a youth and became a patron of surrealist artists including Salvador Dali and Rene` Magritte. He later found the European art environment tiresome and built a home and a garden of tropical plants in Northern Mexico called “Las Pozas” A freak snowstorm destroyed his orchids, so he built a colossal empire of plants and sculpture based on a vision he had. Hundreds of laborers created winding towers using concrete and stone with native plants enveloping. The photographs show a construction that could be a set for a science fiction movie; James commented that he wanted the garden to be mistaken for an extinct civilization by travelers who happened upon it.

The author reminds us that gardens are a moment; ephemeral

creations constantly altering and decaying as their creators no longer breathe. Some of the gardens she describes are gone, victims of new owners, construction or natural causes. But the fact that many are still alive and open to the public is reassuring. Ms. Bennett provides an index of gardens which can be visited and their websites, another instance of her tireless research.



A Year Full of Pots: Container Flowers for All Seasons

By Sarah Raven

Hardcover: 416 pages

Publisher: Bloomsbury Publishing

Reviewer: *Janet Leonberger*

“Sumptuous” is an understatement to describe this beguiling guide to container gardens. Whether by necessity, limitation, or passion,

the use of containers to show off favorite flowers has recently exploded, even beyond its past popularity. This year has brought forth dozens of good on-line courses, live presentations, whole catalogs of potential plant choices, video productions and TV shows. This is one of the best.

From the moment you open the book to find end papers printed in charming English cottage-style containers you know you are in the hands of a thoughtful specialist. The full color eye-pleasing photos will tempt eager beginners, but this is best for gardeners whose enthusiasm is based on some experience, good practices and high hopes for full creative expression. The sensibility is more sophisticated than sweet and charming. You’ll see a range from flaming and burnished colors to quiet, romantic statements, all just right. It is not a familiar (and useful) type of “how-to” guide such as a ‘Reader’s Digest Guide to Container Gardening’ complete with lots of diagrams, supply notes and short tips which can launch a beginner with all the basic facts and skills. It is more like a long visit with a seasoned artist-gardener. Don’t get me wrong. Raven is a well-established English gardener with almost 400 pots in her garden. As a garden center owner and online seller (Sraraven.com), she wants her followers to succeed. Her practical guidance is plentiful, but is focused more on next-level issues such as the need for advance designing, planning quantities, pinching, supports, feeding, use of plant toppers, etc. and she relies on Latin names throughout, although the photos translate the plant types well.

Her approach stresses color combinations, plant form, placement and plant selections for monthly show-stoppers. Raven introduces four basic color palettes (“Dark and Rich,” “Boiled Sweet Brilliant,” “Soft and Warm,” and “Soft and Cool”) for artful selections. Her combinations are varied, such as dahlias interplanted with grasses and tender perennial climbers, but also include many single-variety pots. She includes stunning

photos of almost every plant she mentions. Basic is the need to think ahead so that you have the plants on hand to achieve your plans, especially for her reliance on the tulips, which require fall planting. No last-minute plant grabs at the box store. The plants are available at her website, but also most good catalogs and the better local garden centers. You know where they are. Most are appropriate for Connecticut with some adaptation for our colder, lingering winters.

Monthly articles include “Best of” lists with a gorgeous color photo of each single plant to help you visualize plant choices. “Best of” lists cover primulas, hyacinths, early tulips, narcissi, main season tulips, dahlias, scented plants, nemesias, pelargoniums, petunias, calibrachos, amaryllis, salvias, pot-toppers, drought-tolerant, long and late performers, plants for pollinators and shade tolerant plants.

While Raven is blessed with rich amenities such as plenty of pots, the option of closing her business in May to dismantle and replant tulip pots, a wildly romantic ancient garden site, greenhouses and a talented eye, with this book and some determination we can all start soon to plan our own elevation to “Pot Master” status for 2025. Buy it for yourself or give it as a welcome gift.

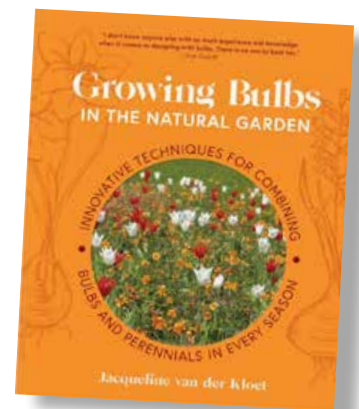
Growing Bulbs in the Natural Garden

by Jacqueline van der Kloet

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Timber Press

Reviewer: *Kathy Niver*



Just when you think you know something with years of gardening and planting countless bulbs, you stumble onto a book like *Growing Bulbs in the Natural Garden* and are reminded how little you know and how much there is to learn. I was inspired after reading the preface where you meet the author. Jacqueline van der Kloet clearly knows her stuff and I wanted to learn more.

This book provides information on using bulbs as well as a better understanding of design and color combinations for perennial gardening in general. Although the author focuses on natural garden design, the concepts apply to all garden styles (containers, rooftops, borders, you name it).

What gardener doesn’t want color and interest as early as possible in the season and more dynamic floral displays? This book guides you in which bulbs to use as well as how, when and where to plant them. There are design samples to get you started and many success tips. For example, I learned to plant *Fritillaria Crown Imperial* it on its side to avoid rot from water buildup in the center of the bulb. For the eco-conscious, bulbs

for bees and pollinators are included.

The chapter on designing with bulbs around the world is insightful on tackling large projects and will invoke an urge to travel and see gardens of other parts of the world.

The final section of the book is a glossary of favorite bulbs for all seasons and an excellent resource. This book is a valuable addition to any gardener's library.

Growing Herbs for Health, Wellness, Cooking, and Crafts: Includes 51 Culinary Herbs & Spices, 25 Recipes, and 18 Crafts
By Kim Roman
Paperback: 526 pages
Publisher: Creative Homeowner
Reviewer: Tracey Weiss

Kim Roman's *Growing Herbs for Health, Wellness, Cooking, and Crafts* is a botanical bible you'll use and refer to for years.

It's more than a reference guide. The book also includes recipes for using your harvest of herbs, wellness tips, and an amazingly comprehensive list of each herb's usefulness in helping with your health. I was impressed with the 10 pages of at-a-glance charts that offer basic and useful information on each herb's preference for growing methods, soil type, light, water and temperature. Author Kim Roman then goes into "Plant Profiles," which expounds even more on each herb, pointing out the differences between growing the herbs indoors or outdoors; common pests and diseases; and harvesting.

She's included a number of sidebars featuring interesting professionals and businesses. One offers information from a fertilizer expert; another showcases a lavender farm; a third offers advice from an urban farmer on how to protect plants.

Following an incredibly helpful section on harvesting, Roman's on to some creative and interesting ways to use what you've now got. There are recipes for everything from vinaigrette salad dressing and herb butter to fruit and sage gin & tonic and a spicy cinnamon whiskey. She includes recipes and advice on brewing teas and shares recipes for making body scrubs, lip balms, hair rinses, and even mouthwash! If you're the crafty type, herbs are beautiful when turned into art, and there's an extensive section on how to make place cards, flower art, wreaths, and sachets. The book includes a small section on wellness, and features an interview with Michelle Guerrero Denison, an herbalist who shares an incredibly comprehensive list of how each herb aids the body and mind.

I also appreciate the resource guide in the back of the book, and the comprehensive index.

Kim Roman is an air force veteran who has been teaching small-space herb and vegetable gardening since 2010, and spends time working with the homeless, wounded veterans, and at-risk youth. She is passionate about what she does, and it shows in this thoughtful book that will appeal to the beginning herb grower as well as the seasoned gardener.

The Layered Edible Garden: A Beginner's Guide to Creating a Productive Food Garden Layer by Layer – From Ground Covers to Trees and Everything in Between

By Christina Chung
Paperback: 562 pages
Publisher: Cool Springs Press
Reviewer: Stephanie Woodlock



The Layered Edible Garden by Christina Chung is a complete guide to turning an ordinary home yard containing perhaps a tree or two and some foundation plantings into a full-fledged edible plant community. The idea is to break down the silos of vegetable garden, lawn, foundation plants, trees and shrub borders. It also invites us to breakdown the silos between what is edible and ornamental. It's an ostrich fern bed that beautifies that soggy patch of yard and provides fiddleheads in early spring, a linden tree whose leaves taste like lettuce when young or a stand of perennial sunflowers that yield sunchokes in the fall. Young Hosta leaf tempura, anyone? A layered edible garden is an all of the above idea for how to landscape and grow food, how to make a beautiful place that nurtures to all of the life it contains.

At the heart of this approach is the notion of a plant community. A plant community is a collection of plants growing together, each occupying a layer in the community and contributing to the well-being and stability of the whole. The layers discussed here include canopy tree, understory tree, shrub, perennial, ground cover and root crop. For example, why weed bare earth between rows of vegetables when a groundcover can occupy that niche, holding at bay the too vigorous, weed population? This idea is borrowed from observing how plants grow in nature. Speaking of which, in a natural system, the bugs, birds and animals also have roles to play. An edible layered garden can both benefit from and nurture pollinators and other bugs who in turn help feed the birds keeping the cycle of life going in the garden.

What does a layered edible garden look like? A lovely cottage garden, a meadow, a hedgerow, a beautiful potage, a woodland, a collection of pots or any or all of the above. *The Layered Edible Garden* contains many beautiful illustrations of these ideas.

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Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis. To submit an event, send details to news@cthort.org. Please format the announcement to resemble the entries below. Deadline for the January issue is December 16.

Sat., Nov. 9, 7:30pm—“Beauty & Logic | la grande ligne,” Grace Farms, 365 Lukes Wood Road, New Canaan. Explore what legendary French composer and teacher Nadia Boulanger described as *la grande ligne*, or “the long line,” with Grace Farms Music Director, saxophonist, and mathematician Marcus G. Miller. Enjoy musical performances by Miller and his band, IWM, while encountering the mathematical structures that make compositions meaningful. Tickets: \$14-\$20. Go to gracefarms.org.

Tues., Nov. 12, 11:00am—The Pomperaug Garden Club presents Foraging Fantastic, Delicious and Glowing Mushrooms, Woodbury Fire House, 25 Quassuk Road, Woodbury. Karen Monger of The 3 Foragers will present this informative presentation on foraging for mushrooms. Guest donation: \$5. Call (203) 673-9005 or email info@pomperaugvalleygc.org.

Thurs., Dec. 5, 6:00pm—Introducing...Bartlett Book Club, Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens, 151 Brookdale Road, Stamford. The inaugural book club’s first selection is the book, *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. It will be led by Bartlett Educator, William Carter. The nature-based club will include themed activities, guest speakers, and wine. Members are free; non-members \$10. Go to bartlettarboretum.org.

Sun., Dec. 8, 1:00-5:00pm—Clinton Arbor Garden Club presents “Festival of Wreaths and Trees,” 50 East Main Street, Clinton. The fundraiser, part of Christmas in Clinton, is visited by the entire shoreline community, who come to see and enjoy Garden Club designed trees, wreaths, swags, and centerpieces. There’s also a vendor fair hosted by the Clinton Chamber of Commerce, streets and shops dressed for the holidays, and refreshments. Free. Go to 914-525-3582 or email lisawickersham@ymail.com.

Visit cthort.org for the MOST CURRENT listings and links.

Book Reviews

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The book is divided into three sections. The first discusses the general approach and gives guidance on how to get started. The second section is a catalog of plants that can be used for each layer, cultural requirements, ecological value, and of course how to make use of its bounty for food. The final section covers maintenance, without which unfortunately, no garden goes on for long without.

Hosta tempura anyone? 🍷



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CT HORT TRAVEL

Trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show, New York Botanical Garden Orchid Show and Longwood Gardens Orchid Extravaganza March 7-9, 2025



With Nancy DuBrule-Clemente,
Author & Founder of Natureworks
Horticultural Services

Trip includes deluxe motor coach, two nights hotel accommodations, tax and baggage, two breakfasts, two dinners, flower show admission, orchid show admission, sightseeing per itinerary, all gratuities, and a Friendship Tour director.

\$975pp double / \$1129pp single • CT Hort members receive a \$55pp discount

Deadline to reserve your spot/deposit is January 5, 2025

**Contact Barbara at Friendship Tours
email barbara@friendshiptours.net
or call 860-243-1630.**



Gardens of Charleston and Savannah

March 26-April 2, 2025

Please join us for an unforgettable journey as we survey the beauty and history of the Lowcountry of South Carolina and Georgia, with our special guest tour guide C. Colston Burrell, garden designer, lecturer, author and photographer.

Highlights include a festive Lowcountry Boil in Susan Epstein's private garden; two wine receptions; tours of six private gardens; Brookgreen Garden's plant collections and sculptures, as well as a pontoon boat trip through rice fields to enjoy local wildlife; stroll through historic of Charleston, Beaufort and Savannah; and more!

\$5,449 per person double / \$ 6,644 per person single

**Call 800-243-1630 or go to
www.friendshiptours.net**



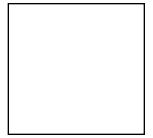
Gardens of Southern Italy and the Amalfi Coast • September 9-19, 2025

Join Garden and Nature Tours with C. Colston Burrell, local guide Guido Gambone, Friendship Tours and Minnesota State Horticulture Society in Naples, Italy to begin exploring both iconic and personal gardens in the historic cities, charming towns and sublime landscapes of Southern Italy and the Amalfi Coast.

This bucket-list trip offers exciting opportunities for exploration, discovery and enjoyment.

\$8,050.00 Land Price, Double Occupancy; \$1,750.00 Single Supplement

Go to <https://www.friendshiptours.net/group-travel> for more information.



Dated Material 🌿 *Please Rush*

CT Hort Calendar at a Glance

Tuesday, Nov. 5 – Board of Directors
Remote Meeting, 7 pm

Thursday, Nov. 21 – Speaker presentation:
*Invasive Plants
in Connecticut:
A Winnable War*
with **Christian Allyn**,
7 pm (In person at
Elmwood Community
Center and on Zoom.)

Tuesday, Dec. 16 – Deadline for our
January Newsletter

Go to CTHort.org for information on these
and all other meetings and programs.

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Frederick Law Olmsted was the subject of gardener and author Marta McDowell's fascinating talk for CT Hort in October. More than 120 people tuned in on Zoom and came to the Elmwood Community Center in West Hartford to hear her discuss Olmsted's incredible accomplishments.

And a lot of members know that we usually have a bulb sale in October, and this year was no different. Special thanks to **Cheryl Whalen** and **White Flower Farm** for their generous donation of bulbs and time. All proceeds go to fund CT Hort's scholarship and grants programs. Thanks to them, we raised more than \$2,000!

October Roundup

