

Book Reviews

The growing world of Duncan and Davies:

A horticultural history 1899–2010

By Alan Jellyman

Edited by Susette Goldsmith

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Reviewed by Peter Arthur, Touchwood Books



This book is the story of this most influential New Plymouth nursery. Duncan and Davies is famous not only for the plants, both native and exotic that it introduced to the gardening world, but also for the training it gave to so many involved in horticulture.

James Robertson Duncan, whose family had a seed and nursery business in Christchurch, started the business at Westown, New Plymouth in 1899 after having seen camellias growing from cuttings outside and trees producing beautiful rooted layers in one year that would normally take two years in Christchurch. The volcanic Taranaki soil, weather and rainfall have always been a great advantage to the nursery.

In 1903 he engaged the 15 year-old Victor Caddy Davies as an apprentice and in 1910 the two of them went into partnership. James Duncan was profoundly deaf so the young Victor dealt with the public and acted as salesman, as well as being nursery foreman managing a winter staff of 12 at that time.

James Duncan died of pneumonia in 1914, aged 45. Business however continued and in 1915 or 1916 a 56-page catalogue was issued, 20 pages devoted to trees and shrubs, two pages to climbing plants, seven pages to herbaceous and rock plants, four pages to bulbs, two pages to hedge and shelter, six pages to fruit trees, eight pages to roses, eight pages to vegetable and flower seeds and four pages to horticultural sundries. There were 126 varieties of roses listed.

One early native plant introduction was the purple-leafed form of rangiora *Brachyglottis rangiora purpurea* (now called *Brachyglottis repanda* 'Purpurea'). In a taped interview with Graham Miller in 1971, Victor Davies explained that a scrub-cutter working inland from Wanganui noticed the colour of the rangiora he had just cut down. He took some shoots back to Wanganui in his lunch box and they ultimately reached the nursery for propagation and distribution as a rare plant of the day.

Victor Davies served abroad during World War One and during this time his brother Mr Bob Davies and his secretary Miss Dorothy Ruebe managed the business. In 1922 he married Dorothy Ruebe and they had five children: Brenda, Colleen, Trevor, Ngaire and Neville. In 1945 they purchased the Duncan family shares in the business and became the sole owners.

The export trade was always a strong feature of the business and in the 1920s the firm got an order for a massive three tons of *Pinus radiata* seed from the French firm Messrs Vilmorin Andrieux and Co. Pine forests in Australia, South Africa and many other parts of the world were raised from this record consignment. Some of the seed was collected from 35 mature pines that were being felled at Pukekura Park.

In 1924 the new, rare 'Chinese Gooseberry' (kiwifruit) was first listed in the Duncan and Davies catalogue. Principal of Wanganui Girls College, Isabel Fraser brought kiwifruit seeds to New Zealand in 1904 following a visit to her missionary teacher sister in Yichang in China. Seed was raised by Thomas Allison, a Wanganui orchardist who had vines fruiting on his property by 1910, and by 1917

Frank Mason, a Feilding nurseryman was selling plants.

In 1934 the nursery promoted the use of the native kumerahou (*Pomaderris kumeraho*) as a cure for asthma and chest complaints with the following advice:

"Obtain the leaves and young shoots of Kumerahou [sic.], a Maori herb also called Poverty Plant and Soap Plant found in poor land. Boil a large double handful in a saucepan of water for two hours. Strain and bottle. Always shake the bottle. Best taken slightly warm. Dose for adults two tablespoons taken three times a day and again if attack occurs. Dried leaves are quite as good as fresh."

Mail order was always an important part of the business and in 1930 they distributed 15,000 copies of their catalogue of 190 pages in length.

The growing world of Duncan and Davies is full of interesting stories about many of the staff that worked there over the years. For example:

"George Huthnance was a skilled propagator but very secretive about his methods, especially cold-frame grafting, and he hid things from view. Douglas Elliot and David Reston built a kit-set glasshouse specifically for the grafting programme and produced a sign over the door that read, 'Huthy's Hush Hush'".

"George Huthnance suffered the ignominy of a grand mix-up in grafting. Apples and wisterias were grafted on to bare root stocks. Somehow the two root stocks were mixed and apples were grafted onto wisteria and vice versa. After they were planted out in the Back Valley the total failure of both crops revealed the error, much to the annoyance of management and the embarrassment of George."

Mr Huthnance went on to establish his own nursery specialising in rhododendrons. He was one of hundreds who trained at Duncan and Davies, many of whom set up their own nurseries, often in competition with the company. Some who have gone on to have influential careers in the public domain include Phil

Jew (Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens), Lawrie Metcalf (Director of Parks for Invercargill), George Fuller (Pukekura Park), Ralph Boggust (Parks, Manukau City Council), Douglas Field (Dunedin's Chinese Garden), Richard Nanson (Wellington Botanic Garden), Ron Lycette (Waikato University grounds) and the author of this book, Alan Jellyman (New Plymouth Parks and Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust).

The book recounts a nice story about the introduction into horticulture of the golden-flowered pōhutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa* 'Aurea'). Over the years Duncan and Davies have introduced numerous new plant selections and they led the way in the development and introduction of new technology.

Expansion continued under son Trevor Davies, who took over the reins from his father in 1957, mostly in export, and in 1970 the company moved from the suburb of Westown in New Plymouth to Brixton near Waitara where they acquired 130 hectares of land in total. By 1980 the 5000 square metre packing shed was processing 1.5 million plants a year of 1000 different selections of trees and shrubs. There were 176 full time staff and 50 casuals.

In the early 1980s the company passed into corporate ownership with various owners including Feltex, Kupe, Dermot Malley (the current owner of tabloid newspaper *NZ Truth*) and finally in 2005 to the current owners Elliot and Peter Groves who already owned and operated the successful export tree business Stepping Stones Nursery on an adjacent site. They specialise in maples, magnolias and various other deciduous trees. The Duncan and Davies name has been retained for the New Zealand market.

The author, Alan Jellyman, began his career as an apprentice with Duncan and Davies in 1957, and encouraged by Trevor Davies completed his National Diploma in Horticulture. In 1962 he secured a position at Pukekura Park under John Goodwin and over time progressed to become Director of Parks for New Plymouth. After serving with the Council in various roles for 38 years, he retired in 2000. In 2003 he was awarded the prestigious Gold Veitch Memorial Medal by the Royal Horticultural

Society (UK) in recognition of his role in public horticulture.

Susette Goldsmith edited this book, which is fittingly published by the Sir Victor Davies Foundation for Research into Ornamental Horticulture.

The growing world of Duncan and Davies:

A horticultural history 1899–2010

By Alan Jellyman

Reviewed by Ross Ferguson and Murray Dawson

There have been very few accounts of nurserymen and women or of the business of commercial ornamental horticulture in New Zealand¹. *The growing world of Duncan and Davies* is therefore most welcome.

Because of the long-standing existence and achievements of Duncan and Davies (often better known as D & D), the story of the nursery's history is one that simply had to be told, especially while former staff are available to recount details first-hand.

For most of last century Duncan and Davies was New Zealand's leading nursery. At its peak it employed nearly 250 staff, with many hectares devoted to stock plants, propagation facilities and the area required for packing and shipping more than a million plants each year. The firm produced comprehensive catalogues and led the way in exporting.

Not surprisingly, much of the book reads as a biography of Sir Victor Davies, leader of the firm for so many years. Sir Victor was an extraordinary plantsman with an impressive knowledge. He also had determination and drive. His approach was accurately summed up by two mottos that hung in his office: "If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing well" and "If you have a job to do, do it now". It was appropriate that, shortly before his death he was appointed Knight Bachelor for his "services to horticulture in New Zealand and to the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture". Sir Victor is probably the only New Zealander to be knighted for his contributions to horticulture.

Sir Victor was clearly patriarch of the firm even if he was not always the easiest of bosses and it could be difficult for his successors. Alan Jellyman does not hide the tensions or difficulties, but neither does he

dwell on them. It is particularly pleasing to see Trevor Davies receive overdue recognition for his knowledge of plants, his managerial skills and his commitment to horticulture.

Much of the book is upbeat, recording the many successes and steady advancement of the firm. This makes the last parts rather sad, as Duncan and Davies became the victim of corporate manoeuvring, with retrenchment following retrenchment and the waves of redundancies that followed. Many of those then in charge may have had managerial skills but lacked an empathy for plants or an understanding of what customers and staff wanted. Jellyman is optimistic that the new owners with their nursery background will be more successful.

Alan Jellyman is well placed to write a history of Duncan and Davies. He started as an apprentice with the firm in 1957 as a 17 year old, he spent essentially all his distinguished horticultural career at New Plymouth, and he knows everybody in the world of horticulture. He therefore writes with authority and personal knowledge. He has interviewed many of the Davies family and former staff and he has also done much detailed research, quoting extensively from old catalogues and local newspapers. One major reservation is that he does not give explicit references for most quotes – they could be retrieved but only with some searching.

The treatment of plant names throughout the book follows what was used in the original nursery catalogues rather than current practices. For example, *Brachyglottis rangiora purpurea* (pp. 21, 23) is used as it would have appeared in early catalogues rather than adopting the current species name and style for cultivar names – in this case *Brachyglottis repanda* 'Purpurea'.

Relatively few of the numerous plant selections raised by Duncan and Davies are mentioned. However, it is understandable that a full list of plant introductions with names, dates and origins was outside the scope of this book. Perhaps this is a worthy project for the future.

Origins stated for some of the *Leptospermum* selections are incorrect. Jellyman has undoubtedly relayed details sourced from a taped recording of Victor

¹ One exception is provided by Catherine Ballard's *Oswald Blumhardt: New Zealand plant pioneer*, reviewed in the *New Zealand Garden Journal*, 2007, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 26.

Davies talking about native plant introductions faithfully, but he has not independently verified them. Hence, the origin of *L. scoparium* 'Keatleyi' was not "near Auckland" as stated by Jellyman (p. 47), or "Hokianga Harbour" as given in an early Duncan & Davies Nursery Catalogue (no. 15, 1928–30). The most likely correct location is between Parengarenga Harbour and North Cape. Also, the Californian breeder W.E. Lammerts did not use "chemicals to produce double flowers" in *Leptospermum* as reported by Victor Davies and repeated in the book (p. 103). Instead, Lammerts (1945) obtained his new double flowered cultivars by crossing *L. 'Nichollsii'* and a plant he called *L. 'Rose Double'* and then screening the progeny for double flowers and other characteristics. The origins of these leptospermums are discussed in detail by Dawson (2009, 2010).

Victor Davies was directly responsible for introducing *Metrosideros excelsa* 'Aurea' into horticulture. The account given by Jellyman (pp. 100–102),

using the older name *Metrosideros tomentosa aurea*, is consistent with that given earlier by Elliott (1968).

There are a few typographic errors in this book. For example, notable plantsman Lawrie Metcalf should not have his surname spelt "Metcalf" (p. 92). The errors and inconsistencies are minor and detract little from the overall achievement of producing this work.

There are about 80 colour photographs and numerous historic black and white photographs. Those of the nursery at its heyday are particularly interesting.

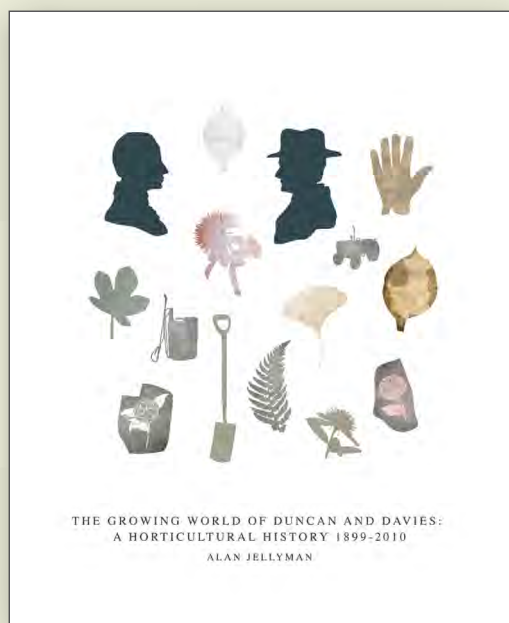
The growing world of Duncan and Davies is a comprehensive, well written and well researched account of arguably the most important nursery in New Zealand. This is probably not a book for the average home gardener. Rather, it is more appropriate for those with an interest in New Zealand horticultural history, business history or Taranaki local history. For such people, this book will be rewarding, indeed essential, reading.

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- This review is based on a shorter version published by Ross Ferguson in *Weekend Gardener* magazine (Issue 323, 2011, p. 32).**

Sir Victor Davies Foundation for Research into Ornamental Horticulture is proud to publish

THE GROWING WORLD OF DUNCAN & DAVIES: A HORTICULTURAL HISTORY 1899–2010



In 1910 young Victor Davies, fresh out of his apprenticeship, signed a partnership agreement with New Plymouth nurseryman James Duncan and began a career that would make Duncan & Davies Nursery a household name in New Zealand and a much respected brand overseas.

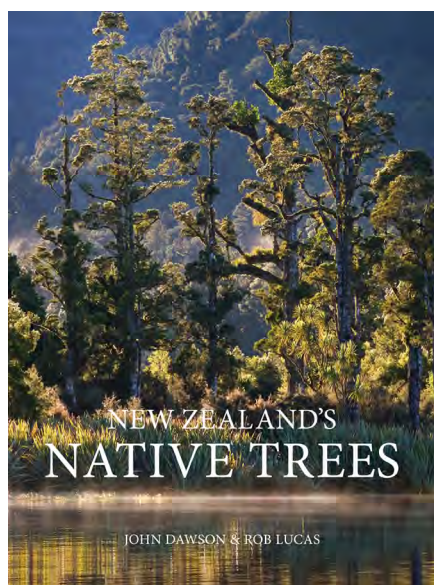
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New Zealand's Native Trees

By John Dawson and Rob Lucas

Published by Craig Potton Publishing, 2011

Hardback, 576 pages, 310 × 229 mm

\$NZ120.00 (Standard Edition; ISBN

978-1-877517-01-3)

\$NZ180.00 (Deluxe Limited Edition;

ISBN 978-1-877517-65-5)

Reviewed by Peter Arthur, Touchwood Books

This fabulous new book by John Dawson and Rob Lucas is not only comprehensive, but the most beautifully presented tree book I have ever seen. After 25 years of selling new and second-hand books about trees from around the world I cannot praise it more.

With 2300 razor sharp colour photos by eminent nature photographer Rob Lucas, an artist with a camera, and detailed text by Dr John Dawson, all put together by Jane Connor at Craig Potton Publishing, this book is a must have for anyone interested in trees.

It has taken the team more than seven years of hard slog to complete. It covers more than 320 species, subspecies and varieties in 85 genera and 51 families.

Beginning with the conifers and tree ferns *Cyathea* and *Dicksonia*, and giving full treatment to the numerous flowering species including the distinctive southern beeches (*Nothofagus*), the often-overlooked coprosmas and the curious tree daisies (*Olearia*), this book is no once-over lightly. The text for each species describes each botanical feature in detail, along with habitat, ecology and key relationships with other plants and animals.

The photos show the full tree, often the tree and its companions, the

leaves, the bark, flowers, and fruit, with lots of the shots being magnified close-ups of the various parts. Scale-bars have not been included alongside illustrations because of the variability within species, but by referring to the measurements given in the text, readers will be able to ascertain the approximate sizes of the features being illustrated. However, where a number of leaves have been shown together on a page, as for *Coprosma*, their relative sizes are correct and their relationship to actual size is indicated. Brilliantly clear-cut photos of leaves are included for each species with both the upper and lower surfaces being shown. The upper surface picture is indicated with an upwards-pointing arrow, the underside with a downward pointing arrow.

Locations and the month when the photo was taken are given where it is deemed useful, either so examples of trees may be seen in situ, often in botanic gardens, parks or conservation areas with good public access, or so flowering and fruiting times can be related to geographic locations. There is a full-page map for both the North and South Islands showing the locations of the various trees photographed.

New Zealand's native trees are unique. They look, smell and feel like no other forests which is not surprising as more than eighty per cent of the 2300 native species of conifers, flowering plants and ferns in the New Zealand flora as a whole occur nowhere else in the world.

There are 54 side-boxed features giving interesting stories of the lifestyles of our trees, answering questions such as Why do we have so many trees with juvenile forms?, How do trees survive in waterlogged environments?, and Why is rimu so important to the survival of the kākāpō?

This book to all intents and purposes replaces John Salmon's *The Native Trees of New Zealand* which has been a best seller since it was first published nearly 30 years ago and is now out of print.

New Zealand's Native Trees is the perfect book for identification, and learning about the botany, ecology and habitats of our various native trees, from the massive kauri, the third largest tree in the world, the showy pōhutukawa and rātā, and cabbage tree to rare and endangered

species found only on our offshore islands.

The standard edition is \$NZ120.00 RRP and there is also a deluxe special edition in a cloth covered presentation box limited to 500 copies at \$NZ180.00.

New Zealand's Native Trees

By John Dawson and Rob Lucas

Reviewed by Peter Heenan

This book is a valuable addition to the library of anyone interested in our native trees, whether they are a gardener, student, amateur botanist, or with a stronger scientific background. While it is the first book on this subject by John Dawson and Rob Lucas, it is essentially a successor to the well-known *The Native Trees of New Zealand* (Salmon, 1996: 220 species and 1500 illustrations). It significantly expands on Salmon's book by including 320 species, subspecies and varieties and 2300 photographs.

New Zealand's Native Trees is divided into four main sections, Introduction, Conifers, Tree Ferns, and Flowering Trees. The Introduction provides an overview of the main features of New Zealand plants, forest types, and ecosystems. For each of the sections on Conifers, Tree Ferns, and Flowering Trees there is a general overview, followed by genera and species entries arranged alphabetically; all are easy to read, up-to-date, and informative.

Likewise, the entries for each of the species covered in this book have a layout that begins with a brief introduction of the genus and an overview of species within that genus (shrubs as well as trees). For each tree species, a wealth of information is provided in a well-presented and concisely written style on distribution and habitats, morphological characters, and distinguishing features.

The pictures in this book are absolutely outstanding. They are remarkable for their clarity, depth of field in the close-ups, and the effective use of light to emphasise features and for contrast. Most species have a minimum of six and up to about 16 photographs that show the plant in a natural setting, growth habit, leaves, and usually close-ups of flowers and fruit. Not all plants are photographed in the wild and the authors have also drawn upon cultivated material.

Considerable attention has been given to the layout of the pictures. For example, the pictures of single leaves provided for most species are oriented either vertically with the petiole (leaf stalk) at bottom, or the leaves are horizontal and with the petiole pointing to the spine of the book from either the left or right page.

There are also 54 coloured text boxes that include illustrations to elaborate on interesting or unusual aspects of the species being treated, and they often include more specific details of identification and biology. There is some irregularity of style with the illustrations, captions and formatting in the boxes departing from the high standard throughout the rest of the book. Some of the illustrations within the boxes have numbered captions but the corresponding numbers are missing from the plates (e.g., p. 171), some have no captions (e.g., pp. 229, 379, 521), and some have a caption but use “left” and “right” instead of numbers (e.g., pp. 107, 533).

Another issue that is probably deliberate, but rather appears as an inconsistency, is the cross-referencing within the book. When a tree species is mentioned in the text there is often a page number given for the main species entry. But this isn't always the case, and often when 2–3 tree species are mentioned together only one cross-reference will be given (e.g., p. 126). It may have been better to either cross-reference all names or none at all.

Another minor irregularity is that some shrub species that are closely related to the tree species are mentioned either in the introduction of the genus (e.g., *Aristotelia fruticosa* mentioned under *Aristotelia*, p. 144; *Pseudowintera traversii* under *Pseudowintera*, p. 498) or in the main text of a particular species entry (e.g., *Lepidothamnus laxifolius* mentioned under *L. intermedius*, p. 73). Another example is the dwarf *Cordyline pumilio* being mentioned under *C. obtecta* (p. 228) rather than under the *Cordyline* heading (p. 220). It would have been better to have included all this information under the genus heading rather than the mixed approach adopted.

The taxonomy in the book is generally up-to-date and follows recently published literature. One minor error is the statement that Alseuosmiaceae is an endemic family (p. 140). This is incorrect as this family also includes *Crispiloba* and *Wittstenia*

from New Guinea, New Caledonia and Australia (Kårehed et al., 1999), and the statement also contradicts Phil Garnock-Jones (p. 124) that New Zealand has no endemic flowering plant families. The name *Melicytus novae-zelandiae* (p. 332) is also used, but to be correct this should be the full autonym *Melicytus novae-zelandiae* subsp. *novae-zelandiae*, since *M. novae-zelandiae* subsp. *centurionis* is the accepted name for a subspecies from Lord Howe Island – this related subspecies would have been worth mentioning in the book. There is also a minor mix up of names with mātaī (p. 39, caption to picture 2), where the scientific name is given as *Prumnopitys ferruginea* (miro) instead of *P. taxifolia*.

Another minor issue is *Olearia angulata* being accepted at species rank, rather than as a variety of *O. albida* following Allan (1961). While the authors are probably correct that *O. angulata* should be recognised at species rank the presentation of information is not entirely correct. The text for *O. angulata* (p. 398) states that it was “previously treated as a variety of *O. albida*, but it is now a separate species.” It was actually described as *O. angulata* by Thomas Kirk in 1881, reduced to a variety of *O. albida* by Allan (1961), but today is generally considered to be a distinct species; this history is important as recognition at species rank was originally by Kirk (1881). Since it is being recognised in this book at species rank it would have been good to have had mention of some diagnostic characters that separate *O. albida* and *O. angulata*.

There is a smattering of typographic errors throughout the book. While it is good practice to include macrons for Māori plant names, their usage throughout the book is inconsistent (e.g., “nikau” and “nīkau”, pp. 30, 510; “puriri” and “pūriri”, p. 510). There are missing full-stops (e.g., “var” instead of “var.” for variety, pp. 28, 30), hyphens instead of en-rules (e.g., text box, p. 78), stray spaces, lack of spaces and so forth. The publisher rightfully acknowledges (p. 10) the difficulty of obtaining perfection with a book of this magnitude but these basic inconsistencies should have been picked up by editorial proof-reading.

This book is especially valuable as it bridges the gap between scientific and popular literature, and its strength is that it brings together much

recent and up-to-date information that is often dispersed in scientific publications. This, however, raises another issue, the balance between brevity for general readership and fully acknowledging the original sources of information.

I scrutinised the bibliography section (pp. 565–569) closely as a professional botanist and author of botanical research papers. In addition to acknowledging the primary literature that some parts of the book were clearly based on, a complete bibliography is of great value to academic readers of the book so they too can read the same original literature as the writers of the book. This is especially important for several recently described species, as readers of the book may want further information on these. The bibliographic section is well laid out and does include some key references, but it is incomplete. There are several omissions with which I am well-familiar from my own writings and co-authorships. In *Olearia*, for example, it is clear that information was used from at least four published papers, and this is excellent as it shows the book authors are familiar with the botanical literature. However, none of these papers are cited in the bibliography, including taxonomic discussion on *Olearia* hybrids (p. 399; Heenan, 2005), *O. crebra* (p. 408; Heenan and Cameron, 2002), *O. telmatica* and *O. traversiorum* (p. 430 and p. 432 respectively; Heenan et al., 2008) and *O. virgata* (p. 434; Heenan, 2001). The recently named and described *Myoporum semotum* (p. 356) and *Pseudowintera insperata* (p. 501) provide other examples where the information provided could have only come from Heenan and de Lange (2006, 2011), but there is no mention of these papers in the bibliography. Other recent papers have been referred to in the bibliography (e.g., *Myrsine*; Heenan and de Lange, 1998, 2004), but this highlights the lack of consistency in preparing the bibliography. There will no doubt be many other authors whose research publications have been drawn on in preparing the book, but are also not cited in the bibliographic section and that would have been important and useful to include.

In conclusion, *New Zealand's Native Trees* is very readable, highly informative and beautifully illustrated, and contains an absolute wealth

of information on the native trees of New Zealand. Aside from the relatively minor errors and omissions mentioned above, it should be considered as a landmark botanical publication on New Zealand trees, and would make a valuable addition to the library of any New Zealand native plant enthusiast. I have no hesitation highly recommending it.

Acknowledgements

I thank Brian Molloy for discussion and Murray Dawson for editing and contributing to this book review.

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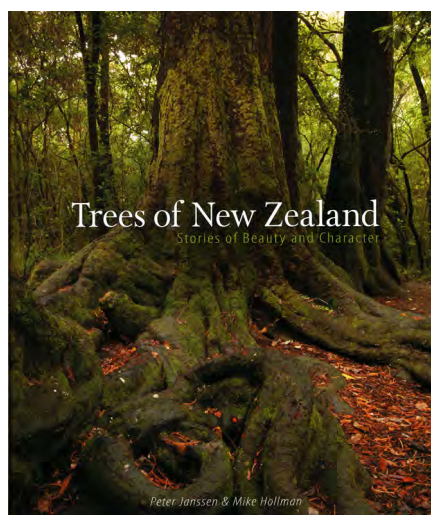
Trees of New Zealand:

Stories of beauty and character

By Peter Janssen and Mike Hollman
Published by Hodder Moa, 2011
Hardback, 208 pages, 297 × 245 mm
ISBN 978-1-869-71219-8

\$NZ70.00

Reviewed by Mark Roberts,
Academic Manager for
Thoughtplanters NZ Ltd, Dunedin



Trees of New Zealand is a photographic guide to some of New Zealand's most beautiful and interesting trees. The book is a collection of beautiful photographs and stories of more than a hundred free-standing, grove or remnant trees. Trees, not necessarily selected for scientific reasons or aesthetic beauty but because of their story; how they got there, who planted them and why they remain.

Mike Hollman is a freelance photographer specialising in landscapes. He has a gift for capturing beauty and extracting the essence of the subject matter.

Peter Janssen has a relaxed and informative writing style. He has written a selection of interesting

and revealing books about things to see and do in New Zealand. These include, *Excellent short walks*, *1001 best things to see and do*, *Touring the natural wonders of New Zealand* and the highly regarded book *Worth a detour. Trees of New Zealand: stories of beauty and character* fits seamlessly into this collection.

What I like about the book is that it is effectively a 'prequel', the story before the story, the story behind the tree. Growing innocently in the grounds of Saint Luke's Church, Greytown, is a gum tree that is more than 150 years old. The tree that grows there was stolen from Samuel Oates while he was 'resting' at a local hotel. It seems poor Samuel was pushing a cart laden with supplies and ten trees from Wellington to Masterton. While he was 'resting', kind locals saw to lighten his load and removed three of the trees. The gum in the church grounds is the only one of those three left today.

We plant trees to commemorate events and often the event is forgotten but the tree remains. In 1861 Queen Victoria sent four acorns to New Zealand to commemorate the passing of her husband. By the time the trees were germinated and ready to be planted the need to commemorate the passing of the Queen's husband was replaced by a royal wedding – her son Prince Albert to Princess Alexandra of Denmark. Of the four royal acorns, three royal oaks remain today; one in Rotorua, one in Christchurch and the other in Dunedin.

There is the 'Lovelock Oak', growing in the grounds of Timaru Boys High School. This tree was presented to Jack Lovelock for winning gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Others are the butterfly tree of Hawera (the overwintering spot for hundreds of monarch butterflies) and the fossilised trees of Curio Bay.

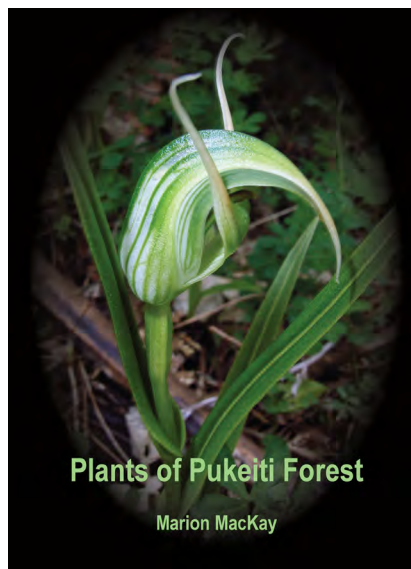
No collection could be complete without the inclusion of Te Aroha – the Spirit Tree. Clinging to the side of Cape Reinga is a pōhutukawa pointing out at the ocean. It is said that the spirits of the dead depart at this point on their return journey to the ancestral homeland of Hawaiki.

Trees of New Zealand is an interesting and eclectic mix of trees, varied and expansive as the people listed in the acknowledgements. It brings to life the stories behind some of our most impressive but often

overlooked trees. With coverage from Northland to Bluff and everywhere in between, *Trees of New Zealand* is a storybook for people that love trees and people that love the stories of New Zealand.

Plants of Pukeiti Forest

By Marion MacKay
Fantails Publishing, Manawatu, 2011
Paperback, 585 pages,
296 × 208 mm (A4)
ISBN 978-0-473-18489-6
\$NZ185.00
Reviewed by Murray Dawson



Plants of Pukeiti Forest is a comprehensive pictorial account of Dr Marion MacKay's and her field assistant's botanical fieldwork in the 350 ha conservation forest at Pukeiti. The forest is located in the North Island, on the slopes of Mt Taranaki and flanked by Mt Egmont National Park¹.

This publication provides an excellent visual botanical record of the region in its current state of regeneration from earlier forest clearances. The species illustrated are not confined to Pukeiti, so the book is of wider use to those interested in the native and naturalised flora of New Zealand as a whole.

As a larger (A4) format photographic record, this book sets itself apart from smaller format field guides of other regions, such as de Lange et al.'s 2007 *Wild Orchids of the Lower North Island* and Wilson's 1996 *Wild plants of Mount Cook National Park*.

Some 275 native and exotic species are illustrated and the book is divided into chapters according to plant group

– Ferns and Fern Allies (57), Orchids (20), Perennial herbs (42 monocots and 79 dicots), Trees and Shrubs (65) and Climbers (12). Of these, 76% are native species and the remainder are exotics and weeds. Each chapter has useful introductory text and summary tables of the particular plant group covered. Genera and species are arranged alphabetically within each group.

It's good to see that the botanical names largely follow the Landcare Research plant names database, Ngā Tipu o Aotearoa (<http://nzflora.landcareresearch.co.nz>); this is the most authoritative data source for the New Zealand flora. Species headings throughout the book include major synonyms in brackets where relevant. Common names are also provided in these headings.

Plants of Pukeiti Forest showcases what is now achievable with digital photography. Each species is illustrated with a near even split of scanned herbarium samples and photographs. In combination, these convey a real sense of what each plant looks like. There are more than 1100 images in total and they are outstanding, with many showing the smaller details of identification of each species.

Notes on identifications are provided. At times, doubts are expressed over several identifications. This is a perfectly acceptable and honest approach, and typical of the difficulties of identifying botanical survey material from plots. Collected material may lack crucial diagnostic features such as floral characters.

Plot numbers and date of collection are recorded in the figure captions, but herbarium specimen numbers are not included as they had not been deposited at the time of writing. This is a pity as it would have directly linked the photographs in the book with their herbarium specimens. The Introduction does state that herbarium samples will be deposited in due course.

The book concludes with useful maps showing the localities of the plots surveyed, the tracks, and the place names referred to in the figure captions.

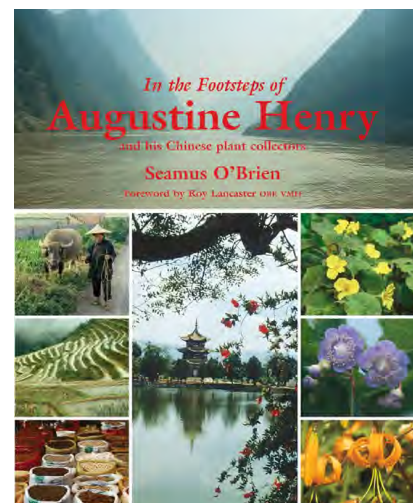
The bibliography of relevant botanical literature is also useful, although I consider the first reference

superfluous (Allan's *Flora of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, reprinted 1982 without amendment to the 1961 reference that follows).

Plants of Pukeiti Forest could be considered pricey at nearly \$200, but bear in mind that this work approaches 600 pages in length, has numerous high quality plant images, and that this first print run was limited to only 70 copies. It definitely deserves a place on the bookshelves of plant enthusiasts.

In the footsteps of Augustine Henry and his Chinese plant collectors

By Seamus O'Brien
Published by Garden Art Press,
Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, UK, 2011
Hardback, 367 pages, 305 × 245 mm,
maps, B&W and colour photographs
ISBN-13: 978-1-87067-373-0
\$NZ125.00
Reviewed by Ross Ferguson



"He was the first to reveal by his travels and collections the surpassing richness and interest of the flora of western China." These words on his tombstone succinctly summarise the importance of Dr Augustine Henry to botany and to horticulture.

There is no doubt who is the hero of *In the footsteps of Augustine Henry and his Chinese plant collectors*. And what a hero! Henry was a man of great intellectual distinction with an astonishing range of interests and achievements: medical doctor, lawyer, administrator, linguist, botanist, forester. He was also, by all accounts, a most engaging companion. E.H. Wilson, the most successful of the plant explorers in China wrote, after meeting Henry for the first

¹ Note that the cultivated rhododendron collection at Pukeiti is outside the scope of MacKay's survey. For an overview of this collection readers should refer to the 1997 book *Pukeiti: New Zealand's finest rhododendron garden* by Pat Greenfield.

time, "I found Dr Henry a splendid fellow, full of knowledge of all kinds. A more genial man I have never met" (Wilson, 1900). Later he wrote, "I have been fortunate in many ways, but in none more so than in meeting this gentleman, and thus being able to profit by his sage counsel" (Wilson, 1905).

There have been several previous accounts of Henry's life and work. Sheila Pim (1984) wrote a biography, *The wood and the trees. Augustine Henry: a biography*, but did not describe in detail the botanical work that was so important to Henry – "collecting is my exercise, and it keeps me in health, bodily and mental ..." (Henry, 1896). Aspects of his collecting were described more fully by his contemporary Emil Bretschneider (1898) and much more recently by Brian Morley (1979) and Charles Nelson (1983), both originally from Glasnevin, a garden that was so important in Henry's later life. Seamus O'Brien's is the first really comprehensive account of both Henry's life and his collecting in China. Between 1885 and 1900, Henry collected more than 158,000 herbarium specimens, comprising some 6000 species, about 20% of the Chinese flora. His collections included five families of flowering plants, 37 genera and 1338 species previously undescribed, as well as many varieties and formae. An indication of his importance is that more than 300 taxa were named for him. No mean achievement for a man with no formal botanical training. He was primarily a collector although he did also send to Kew seed, which the nursery staff, with depressing regularity, failed to raise.

Henry was undoubtedly lucky in that he was amongst the first Europeans to study seriously the rich flora of western China. O'Brien quotes a later collector, George Farrer, who rather snidely commented, "I could not help envying early collectors, the fame they acquired so comfortably and easily, boating up the Yang-dz and mooring here and there, and exploring (often vicariously) these pleasant ravines and chines. And in those far-off golden days too, when everything that every coolie brought home to you, basking over a book in your boat, was either a new species or a new genus: till you could not step ashore into a back-yard without the merest hideous little weed there being

a novelty." What nonsense! Henry in his own writings and O'Brien make it clear just how much hard work was involved in collecting those 158,000 specimens. Those of us who have ever prepared herbarium specimens know the effort required, even with good facilities and drying equipment. Henry was working in areas of high rainfall and very broken topography. Drying the specimens required constant attention if they were not to be lost as a sodden mess. Henry did not collect all these specimens by himself. He trained large gangs of Chinese collectors and it is clear that he developed strong links with them and it is appropriate that they are included in the title of this book. Many of the best of them around Yichang, Henry's headquarters for many years, were later employed by E.H. Wilson when he returned to areas previously botanised by Henry.

In the footsteps of Augustine Henry and his Chinese plant collectors is a handsome book that has been prepared with careful attention to detail. I did not notice any obvious misprints or errors. There is a comprehensive index of plants as well as an index of places and people. In addition, there are appendices including a list of plants named for Henry, a chronology of his life and a list of place names in both Pinyin and the transliterations used in the nineteenth century. The bibliography is reasonably comprehensive although some important details of journals are often missing: in many instances the volume and part numbers are given but not the pagination.

The illustrations are apposite, including a splendid front endpaper of the fabled *Davidia involucrata* and the back cover illustration of *Emmenopterys henryi*. There is a pleasing mix of both older photographs, many from E.H. Wilson, and more recent photographs of plants, mostly of very good quality.

I was less convinced by the structure of the book, oscillating as it does between accounts of Henry's expeditions and descriptions of the trips following in his footsteps more than a century later. I am probably biased because I am more interested in Henry than in the recent expeditions. I would also have preferred a clearer account of the itinerary of the two Glasnevin expeditions. The relevance of the

chapter on Antwerp Pratt seemed rather tenuous, even if it is interesting, although Pratt did use Henry's collectors.

Henry was a "great talker and would sit for many hours by the fire in my study during the long winter evenings telling of his many and varied experiences" (Moore, 1942). He also wrote well, but not, unfortunately, his planned account of his times in China. Nevertheless, his diary of his time in Yichang and his many letters to Kew, to the Arnold Arboretum and to his lifelong friend, Evelyn Gleason, are compelling reading and could have been quoted at greater length.

These are minor doubts about what is really a very good book. Botanists visiting China will find the descriptions of plants most useful and those of us who join O'Brien in considering Henry as a hero will find much to please them. This is a book I am happy to recommend.

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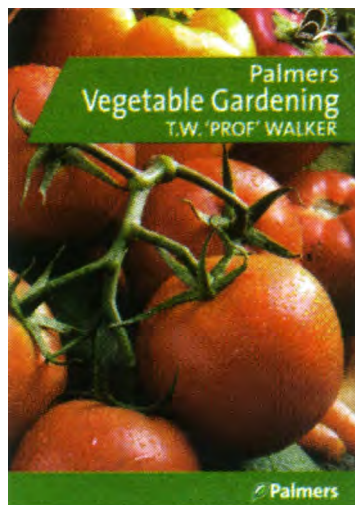
A selection of book reviews courtesy of the *Weekend Gardener* magazine

Palmer's Vegetable Gardening

T.W. 'Prof' Walker

Published by David Bateman

\$NZ19.95



This edition is the fifth reprint since it was first published 15 years ago, which provides testament to the little book's worth.

The reprint comes with a new cover and is otherwise the same tried-and-true original that has sold more than 12,000 copies.

'Prof' Walker has been something of a gardening celebrity for 20 years, following the enormous success of *Maggie's Garden Show*.

His book, while a straightforward guide for Kiwi gardeners wanting to grow fresh, healthy vegetables, keeps his trusted reputation alive, despite the demise of real, local, television gardening shows.

It has simple, practical advice on maintaining good soil fertility.

Prof Walker also covers a wide range of vegetables. It is the ideal small guide for beginner vegetable gardeners and more experienced gardeners wanting to improve their crops.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 253, 2008, Page 32

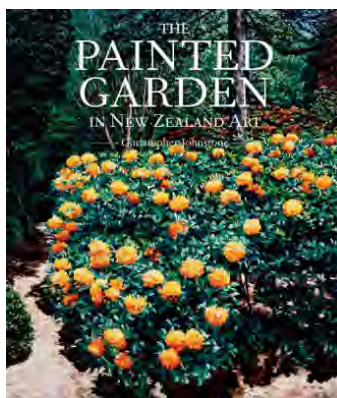
The Painted Garden in New Zealand Art

Christopher Johnstone

Published by Random House

\$NZ75.00

This large format hardback presents a collection of 100 works selected by Christopher Johnstone, author of *Landscape Paintings of New Zealand: A Journey from North to South*, reflects some gardening history through art.



A coffee table book, *The Painted Garden* includes New Zealand early artists, 1830–1860, later 19th century works, the early modern, 1940–1970 and contemporary, 1970–2008.

Thus the content – from a work before 1832 by an unknown artist of the Bay of Islands settlement Rangihoua to the contemporaries – is diverse.

The “moderns” featured represent a range of styles and approaches to garden painting: Don Binney, Rita Angus, Pat Hanly, Colin McCahon, John Holmwood, Lois White and others are represented here. Among the “contemporaries”, such artists as Karl Maughan, Nigel Brown, Susan Wilson and Peter Siddell feature.

The book includes paintings of some of New Zealand's finest and historic gardens, private gardens and the gardens of some of the artists.

The Painted Garden is well researched, includes substantial artist biographies and is beautifully presented and a quite fascinating read.

This book provides a treasure trove of “garden” art from the first years of European settlement here to the present day – a contrast of images with the gardening theme over almost 200 years.

A superb gift for the art-appreciating gardener.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 254, 2008, Page 33

Companion Planting in New Zealand

Brenda Little

Illustrated by Ken Gilroy

Published by New Holland

\$NZ24.99

Alphabetically arranged, this little gem, for the most a compilation of very valuable tips, allows the reader to easily search for a particular plant or garden pest.



The author offers a method for encouraging a healthy crop, or discouraging a nuisance to the gardener: parsley for instance, grows well with chives, but away from mint; while a light spray of seaweed solution will help to combat mildew.

Her summary of good and bad garden companions is a useful quick reference for gardeners planting beds or containers of vegetables or herbs.

Sample tips:

Banana skins: The skin of the banana is surprisingly rich in calcium, sodium, silica, sulphur, magnesium and phosphates. Tucked under the top soil around rose bushes or geraniums it is one of the simplest and quickest ways of providing valuable plant food.

Asters: Pests find the leaves of perennial asters disagreeable to the smell and bitter to the taste, so they are good flowers to grow both for massing and cutting.

Rhubarb: If your rhubarb starts flowering there's something wrong. The plants are either short of water or food.

Sunflowers: The sunflower makes a spectacular display and attracts bees to the garden. Squash and cucumbers grow well in the shade of the tall plants. Sunflowers should be kept well away from potatoes as they stunt each other's growth.

The book has a Good Companions Chart (e.g., onions – carrots, beetroot, silver-beet, lettuce, chamomile, kohlrabi and summer savory) and a Bad Companions Chart: (e.g., cabbages – rue, strawberries, tomatoes and garlic).

Lovely little book, first published in the 1980s, and a must have for gardeners.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 255, 2008, Page 22

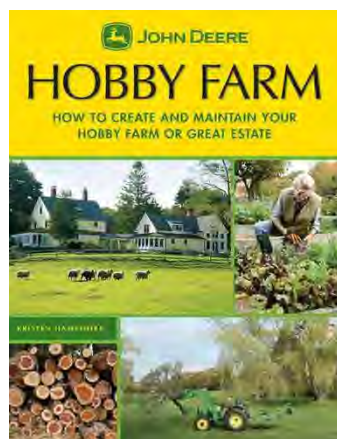
Hobby Farm

How to create and maintain your hobby farm or great estate

Kristen Hampshire

Published by Creative Publishing

\$NZ39.99



This limpack in the John Deere series is ideal for those venturing to a hobby farm or garden estate.

The American book focuses on improving the land; maintaining your land; gardens & growing; and raising animals.

Well illustrated, with many step-by-step projects and tips, the book has plenty on gardening.

Chapters on tilling and mending the soil; compost clinic and organic options are topical right now with the accent on vegetable growing.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 257, 2009, Page 30

Basic Gardening Skills

Jane McMorland Hunter & Chris Kelly

Published by Hachette Livre

\$NZ27.99



One of the vast Teach Yourself series from Britain, this paperback is designed for the complete gardening beginner, the clueless and those needing general guidance in this vegetable growing era.

Basic Gardening Skills shows how to turn a patch of muddy ground into an easily manageable, sustainable garden, whatever the size of your plot and however busy you are. From creating patios and growing vegetables to dealing with drought, it is packed with easy-to-follow, practical advice.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 257, 2009, Page 30

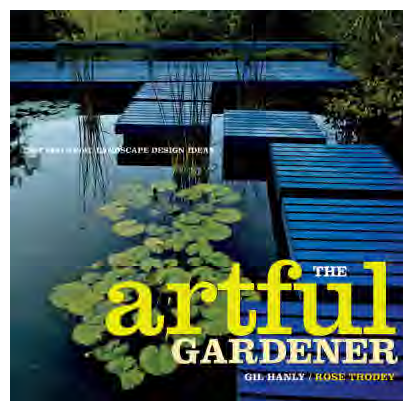
The Artful Gardener

Inspirational landscape design ideas

Gil Hanly & Rose Thodey

Published by Godwit / Random House

\$NZ59.99



This book is almost 300 pages of pure garden inspiration.

Its author Rose Thodey and photographer Gil Hanly need no introduction in New Zealand garden circles. Rose is a long-time gardening writer and author, and former Ellerslie Flower Show judge; while Gil is a veteran photographer (including 15 gardening books).

This book is a credit to them and publishers Random House as they inspire people to "approach their property with an artful eye."

It takes you on a journey through the garden from the entrance at the beginning; the walls that surround it, and the groundwork.

They look at outdoor living spaces, sculpture, live plant material, the use of water, pots and structures, rustic material and the effects of illusion.

With more than 450 fabulous images from gardens around the country and the world, *The Artful Gardener* is well presented and provides a huge range of wonderful ideas.

I loved the chapters Welcome, with its artistic examples of gates and entrances, and Walls which the authors say present an unrivalled canvas for artistic expression.

Really recommended.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 258, 2009, Page 33

The Star Garden Book

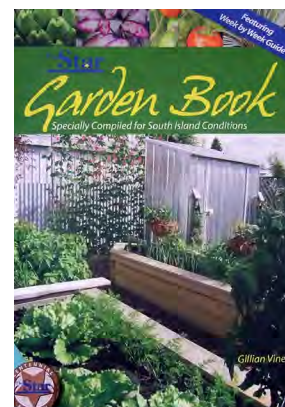
Specially compiled for South Island conditions

Gillian Vine

Published by Allied Press Ltd,

Dunedin

\$NZ35.00



Something of an institution, at least in the south, this book celebrates going to colour for its 100 years with a 236 page bumper centennial edition.

This year there are new sections to the week-by-week guide including a chapter for beginners, one on natives, organics and updated research on specialist topics such as dahlias, sweet peas, potatoes and organic pest control.

The book was first published as a collection of professional gardener Harry Clarke's columns in the *Evening Star* so long ago.

Gillian Vine is just the fourth writer/editor since its first edition in 1909 and her debut features some 200 of her photographs.

Chapters include plenty on dahlias, sweet peas, irises, roses, the value of seaweed, soil preparation, the beginner's garden, vegetables, herbs, potatoes, tomatoes, fruit, flowers, bulbs, trees and shrubs, native plants, organics, pest control.

A Kiwi icon in the vein of the *Yates Gardening Guide* and the *Edmonds Cookbook*, this book looks set to endure another century.

Certainly, this one could have been dubbed a Collector's Edition.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 259, 2009, Page 27

The Intimate Garden

Brian D. Coleman

Photography by William Wright

Published by Gibbs Smith

\$NZ39.95

Intimate gardens from Seattle to Savannah, Manhattan to England, Pasadena to Portland, with its fine photography, this book reveals some beautiful gardens.



There are formal boxwood lined parterres, planted-out beds in high Victorian splendour, and foliage-walled patio rooms – a collection of personal gardens, intimate spaces reflecting their owners' taste as well as their topography and locale.

Each garden is described in detail to provide both inspiration and practical advice for all levels of home gardeners.

An interesting collection of garden studies that should appeal to a wide range of Kiwi gardeners, with information varying from how to care for a cactus garden to the Spanish moss story.

A well-presented watercolour plan of each garden's layout helps you to visualize the garden design.

A nice gift, this book is well presented and certainly provides inspiration and a wealth of ideas.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 259, 2009, Page 27

New Zealand Chili Handbook

Gary Sommerville
Published by David Bateman
\$NZ24.99



This little number from the man who created New Zealand's answer to Tabasco sauce – Kaitaia Fire – details his passion for chilies.

The handbook includes information on the best known varieties and how

to grow, harvest and store them, as well as advice on their beneficial health effects.

Fresh produce markets around New Zealand feature an increasing range of chilies – long and short red, yellow and green peppers, sold as mild, spicy or fiery and recommended for different cooking purposes.

This useful handbook provides information about a good range of easy-to-grow chili peppers in New Zealand.

Each variety is photographed in colour with information about planting, harvesting and storing, as well as any curative properties found in the plant or the fruit. In addition, the book contains recipes.

Detailed information is given about how to temper the heat of the chilies used in any recipe.

A leading exponent of chili industry in New Zealand, Gary spent his early years growing up in Fiji and came to enjoy a blend of Chinese, Fijian and Indian flavours.

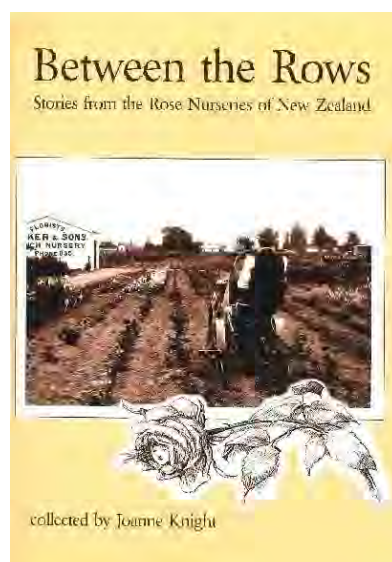
He brings to this book a unique mix of recipes drawn from many different sources around the Pacific.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 259, 2009, Page 27

Between the Rows

Stories from the rose nurseries of New Zealand

Collected by Joanne Knight
Published by Liberty Publications
\$NZ20.00



Here's a little record that rose enthusiasts will love.

Stories of 19 New Zealand rose growers that helps piece together some history of the profession here.

The book has obvious omissions like Trevor Griffiths Roses, of Timaru, who

have told their own stories elsewhere, but Joanne Knight's collection is simply told by a variety of authors and very entertaining.

The book is edited by Fiona Hyland, former editor of the quarterly journal for Heritage Roses NZ Inc., who does well to allow the rose people and their friends their wonderful stories in their own way.

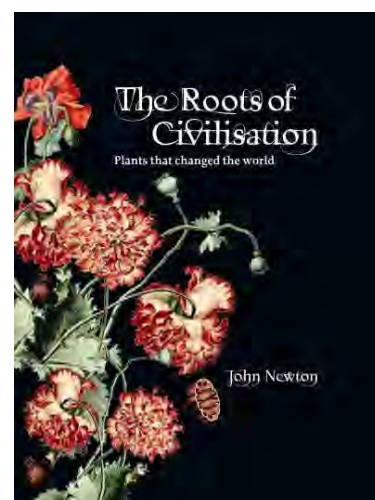
Recommended.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 260, 2009, Page 37

The Roots of Civilisation

Plants that changed the world

John Newton
Published by Allen & Unwin
\$NZ75.00



A well presented hardback of some 270 pages. *The Roots of Civilisation* studies a host of plants that we take for granted – but that have changed the world.

The story of these plants is also the story of human survival and ingenuity. The book looks at plants that are world-changers like opium poppies, cotton, rice and potatoes.

It contains a series of historical botanical plates and the contents include plants for containers, dye plants, plants for fibres, food plants, flowers, medicinal plants, poisonous plants, psychoactive plants, aphrodisiacs, trees and weeds.

Beautifully written and traditionally presented.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 263, 2009, Page 36

Melting Point

New Zealand and the Climate Change Crisis

Eric Dorfman
Published by Penguin Books
\$NZ37.00

This book carries easy-to-follow explanations of the science behind climate change and its predicted

effects on New Zealand, including the environmental, social, human health and economic implications.

What does New Zealand need to change to minimise the harm caused by climate change? Since New Zealand is a farming nation, the focus is on ways of cleaning up our primary production. Methane produced by beef and dairy cattle, contributes the highest component (17.6%) of our greenhouse gas emissions.



A diverse range of possible alternatives are presented, many of which are not adopted because they go against cultural norms. For example, farming ostriches and emus instead of cows because, as birds, they produce no methane and can fare quite happily on completely unimproved rangeland and produce the highest meat per hectare of any commercially farmed species, and a single egg will make an omelette for 10 people.

Similar attention is paid to our horticulture, viticulture, forestry and fisheries industries where the emphasis is placed on the notion of sustainability: biological pest control, stable living soil, companion planting. Organic farming is also plugged as being a positive move.

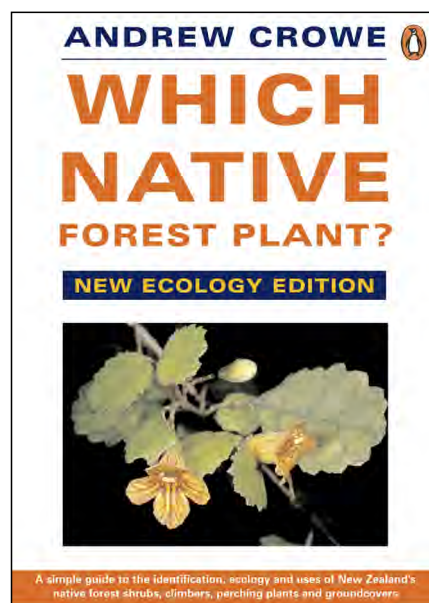
The book summarizes steps New Zealanders can take to reduce their personal ecological footprint. All the usual things: eat more veges, less meat; use public transport, drive less; build or renovate your home to be more energy efficient and recycle more water; grow your own produce, make compost; try to influence policy by writing to the government.

Two appendices are included. The first, a climate change briefing for local government supplied by Ministry for the Environment and the second, a summary of climate change science and impacts supplied by NIWA. There is an extensive bibliography listing books, websites, games and films with both international and New Zealand specific topics.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 263, 2009, Page 36

Which Native Forest Plant?

Andrew Crowe
New Ecology Edition
Published by Penguin
\$NZ25.00



Following his earlier books in the series, *Which Native Tree?* and *Which Native Fern?*, this book is a simple guide to the identification, ecology and uses of New Zealand's native forest shrubs, climbers, perching plants and ground covers.

Discover the known uses of each plant from snow sandals, hair ties, combs, whistles, baskets and dyes to food, medicine and timber.

This little book – a nature identification guide for all the family – shows you how to grow each plant in your garden.

It comes in protective laminate cover sleeve complete with measurer.

The book even has graphics of plant shape and height, plant distribution maps; ID checklists and colour photographs.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 264, 2009, Page 40

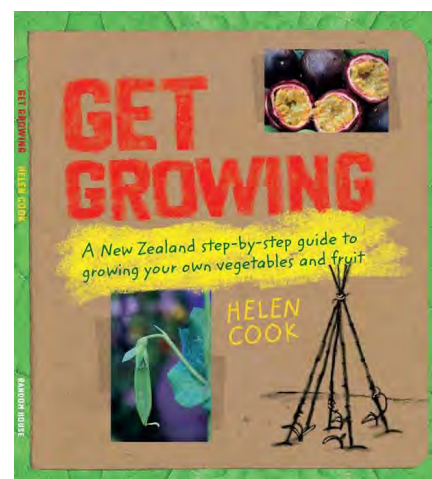
Get Growing

A New Zealand step-by-step guide to growing your own vegetables and fruit

Helen Cook
Published by Random House
\$NZ34.99

Get Growing is a step-by-step guide to growing your vegetables and fruit.

Journalist and author Helen Cook cannot remember her parents ever buying vegetables; their veggie garden near Rotorua was vast and productive. So she has been gardening and growing for as long as she has worn gumboots ... and has established and harvested six vegetable gardens in different parts of the country over the past 30 years.



She learned from an early age that growing and gardening are about more than just providing food for the table: rather working with the nature and the seasons to weave some magic.

Get Growing has fun projects and activities.

Projects include: Growing a sunflower from seed; Grow a pizza garden; Make a quilt garden; Grow strawberries in a bag; Plant a pea wigwam; Grow a bean cave.

Recommended for children.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 264, 2009, Page 40

Mucking In

The gardens and the gardeners

Jim Mora and Tony Murrell
Published by Harper Collins
\$NZ39.99

This book celebrates a decade of the programme on TV One.

It's a selection of highlights, garden designs and tips from the past three series.

Pure heartland, *Mucking In* certainly provides a great collection of ideas that are going to appeal to many New Zealand home owners.



This is a nice book that will be of interest to many.

Jim and his team have been working with communities throughout New Zealand to surprise, amaze and delight viewers and garden recipients alike, as friends, colleagues and neighbours come together to show how much these unsung heroes are cherished and appreciated.

Tony's design and planting tips make the book much more than an interesting perspective of the TV show.

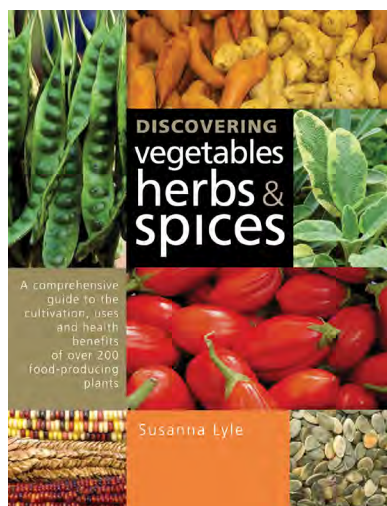
Weekend Gardener, Issue 264, 2009, Page 40

Discovering Vegetables Herbs & Spices

Susanna Lyle

Published by David Bateman

\$NZ89.99



Weekend Gardener's veggie columnist Susanna Lyle has again produced a major book with *Discovering Vegetables Herbs & Spices*, a 480 page hardback that is a companion to her earlier volume *Discovering Fruit & Nuts*.

Now they form a comprehensive and detailed reference to more than 500 edible plants.

Susanna, besides contributing to *Weekend Gardener*, has been involved with plants for 25 years. She has taught horticulture, plant science and garden design and designed and planted many community woodlands and gardens.

After observing food plants in many climates and locations, she settled in Northland where she continues to study, grow, photograph and paint as many of them as she can.

This new book is a comprehensive guide to the cultivation, use and health benefits of more than 200 food-producing plants – vegetable, herb and spice plants including some little known plants.

A general introduction gives a basic background to various aspects of horticulture and plant nutrition and a table of plants for different garden situations is also provided.

A great reference, the book is equally inspiring for people to grow and try new foods and to prospective commercial growers considering choices of varieties and marketing of the harvest.

It includes much on history, description, propagation, harvesting times and methods, cultivation and location needs, pruning, popular varieties, uses of the crop and importantly, nutritional benefits for each species.

The space and information for each veggie's uses is substantial with the food, nutritional/medicinal, ornamental and other uses being pertinent today.

The book contains more than 200 colour illustrations and diagrams.

If you are looking for a real A to Z, ready-reference for vegetables, herbs and spices, this book will not disappoint you.

It is the sort of great book that you go to for information and end up hours later having been totally distracted by the fascinating volumes of information on other plants.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 265, 2009, Page 36

The Royal Horticultural Society The Amazing World of Orchids A practical guide to selection and cultivation

Published by Southern Publishers Group

\$NZ59.99

Another substantial hardback from Britain, *The Amazing World of Orchids* has been successively updated over a decade.



The book's authors Brian and Wilma Rittershausen are among the most respected names in the world of orchids and are the second generation of orchid growers to run the award-winning Burnham Nurseries in Devonshire.

Brian is a member of the Royal Horticultural Society Committee and Wilma is well known for her writings in various orchid journals and she is a former editor of *Orchid Review* in Britain and a former member of the society's Orchid Committee.

Chapters include: A world of orchids; Orchid families; Cool-growing orchids; Intermediate orchids; Warm-growing orchids; and Cultivation.

In the first chapter, the authors reveal the mystery of how such apparently diverse flowers conform to a recognisable structure, and explain how their natural habitats inform the particular growing conditions they require in cultivation.

In the chapter on Orchid families, the most popular families are introduced and their general cultivation requirements described.

One hundred and sixty of the most intriguing and colourful gems of the orchid world are featured and arranged according to their ease of cultivation.

The final chapter on cultivation provides all the practical, step-by-step advice needed to ensure rewarding results for both beginners and experienced enthusiasts.

The book is stacked with intriguing anecdotes with practical advice, tips and information briefs on the flower, flower spike, plant and pot size.

Books for orchid folk are numerous, but this update of *The Amazing World of Orchids* will continue to whet appetites.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 265, 2009, Page 36

Greenfingers Guides
Climbers and Wall Shrubs
Fruit and Vegetables
Drought-Tolerant Plants
 Lucy Summers
 Published by Hachette NZ
 \$NZ34.99 each



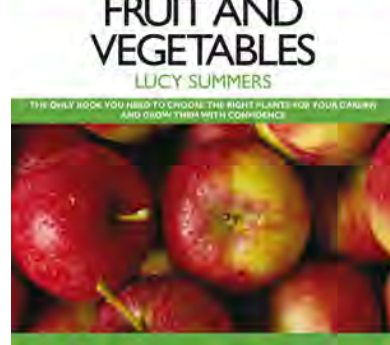
GREENFINGERS GUIDES
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THE ONLY BOOK YOU NEED TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN AND GROW THEM WITH CONFIDENCE



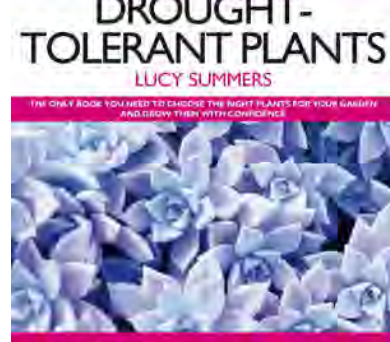
GREENFINGERS GUIDES
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES
 LUCY SUMMERS

THE ONLY BOOK YOU NEED TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN AND GROW THEM WITH CONFIDENCE



GREENFINGERS GUIDES
DROUGHT-TOLERANT PLANTS
 LUCY SUMMERS

THE ONLY BOOK YOU NEED TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN AND GROW THEM WITH CONFIDENCE



This series of three books, the *Greenfingers Guides*, details plant profiles arranged by season and size or with fruit and vegetables, arranged alphabetically.

The trio of books provides easy-to-follow information telling you at a

glance which fruit and vegetables, climber or drought-tolerant plant is best suited to your garden and how to grow it.

The books provide a selection of user-friendly lists to help you choose the right plant for the right place.

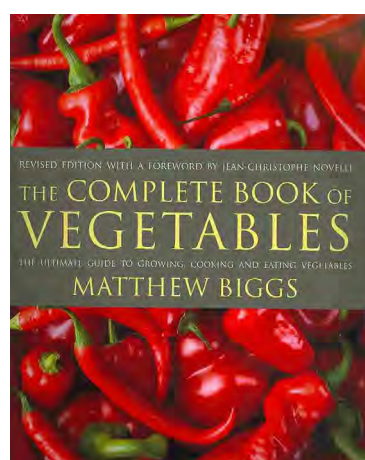
This series, each title of about 128 pages, is concise and to the point, easy to follow and well presented but *Fruit and Vegetables* is coordinated for the English growing season.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 268, 2009, Page 24

The Complete Book of Vegetables Matthew Biggs

Revised edition with a foreword by Jean-Christophe Novelli

Published by New Holland
 \$NZ49.99



In this substantial hardback of 280 pages, leading British gardening commentator Matthew Biggs shares his knowledge on a wide variety of vegetables and provides inspiration to gardeners.

The book is an A-Z of vegetables with sections on the history of veggie growing, harvesting and storing.

There are more than 200 recipes so the volume will be of real interest in the kitchen.

A special section contains practical advice on how to grow top-quality plants from propagation to harvest and there's plenty of information on controlling pests, crop rotation and companion planting.

There are volumes on 'green' gardening, soil improvement and weed control.

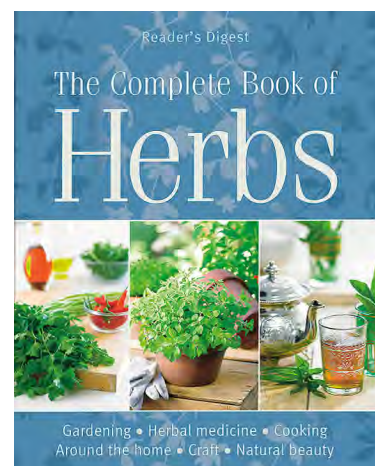
The book is beautifully illustrated with colour photographs. It is particularly relevant for the New Zealand gardener and has a substantial glossary and index.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 268, 2009, Page 24

Reader's Digest

The Complete Book of Herbs

Published by Bookwise International
 \$NZ89.99



A hardback of some 400 pages, *The Complete Book of Herbs* really is very substantial.

It includes a directory of more than 100 herbs with ways to cultivate, use and store them.

There are expert tips for growing herbs with success in any situation, from the backyard to the windowsill.

Safe and effective herbal remedies are included to boost your health and wellbeing and treat common ailments.

The volume has easy inexpensive recipes for body-care and beauty treatments using aromatic herbs and essential oils.

Also included are creative ideas for a healthier home; craft projects using fresh and dry herbs and plenty of recipes from around the world.

The Complete Book of Herbs has exceptional photography and pages of essential advice.

It is beautifully presented: an outstanding gift or investment for confirmed herb people and learners alike.

Recommended as a 'must have' book on the subject.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 268, 2009, Page 24

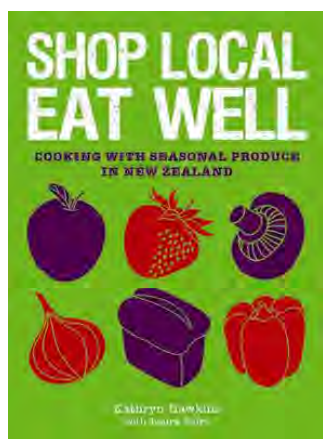
Shop Local Eat Well

Cooking with seasonal produce in New Zealand

Kathryn Hawkins with Laura Faire
 Published by New Holland
 \$NZ29.99

This book emphasises shopping for fresh, locally grown produce.

It teaches how to reduce food miles and prepare fresher, better food at a time when it is meant to be eaten – when it is in season.



Shopping locally and seasonally may take New Zealanders a while to learn; Kiwis are big buyers of out-of-season produce, strawberries in June and salad mixes grown overseas.

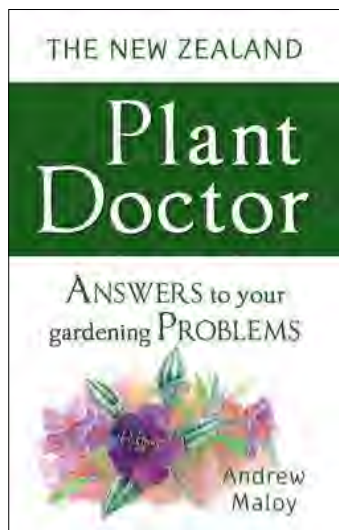
The book has 150 recipes arranged into chapters for spring, summer, autumn and winter.

There is a chapter on preserves, featuring new ways to enjoy your favourite fruits and vegetables all year round.

Kathryn Hawkins is a food writer based in Scotland and author of titles including *The Allotment Cookbook*. Laura Faire is a New Zealand chef and food writer.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 268, 2009, Page 24

The New Zealand Plant Doctor
Answers to your gardening problems
Andrew Maloy
Published by New Holland
\$NZ24.95



After more than a decade of featuring in *Weekend Gardener* pages, *Plant Doctor* now hits the book stands.

Andrew Maloy has been the magazine's Plant Doctor since 2003, giving thousands of answers over hundreds of issues to common problems faced by gardeners.

Now *Plant Doctor*, the book, provides a tidy compilation of answers to the most common problems in a tidy and durable, indexed format.

Whether its lumps on your lemons, daffodils refusing to flower or hebes turning yellow, Andrew has the answers.

He has advice on most subjects: eradicating disease, pest management, weed control spraying, feeding and scores more problems.

Complete with colour illustrations, *Plant Doctor* provides sensible and proven remedies for New Zealand gardeners.

A wonderful addition to the Kiwi gardener's library.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 274, 2009, Page 23

On Guerrilla Gardening
A handbook for gardening without boundaries
Richard Reynolds
Published by Allen & Unwin Book Publishers
\$NZ27.99



This paperback is an activist's call to arms for people to join the revolution of guerrilla gardening to transform public space into oases of colour and life.

The guerrilla gardeners' enemy is neglect, apathy and the disintegration of community spirit.

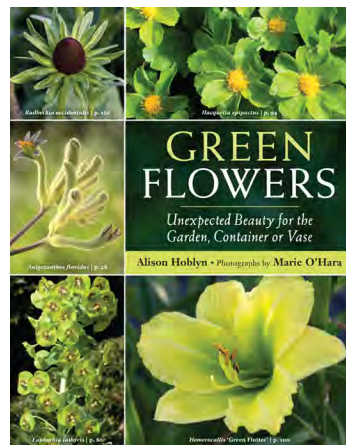
The arsenal is daring, a packet of seeds and a passionate commitment to social change.

Perhaps the world's best known guerrilla gardener, Reynolds, who founded GuerrillaGardening.org, tells the story of the international movement's history and provides a how-to manual.

A fascinating read, as much about city life, combining fun with social change, improving the environment and, of course, gardening.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 274, 2009, Page 23

Green Flowers
Unexpected beauty for the Garden, Container or Vase
Alison Hoblyn
Photos by Marie O'Hara
Published by Timber Press
Distributed by Bookreps
\$NZ70.00



Green flowers are not common in nature despite the abundance of the colour in other parts of plants and therein lies a lot of their quiet charm.

Here Hoblyn presents more than 80 examples.

Some are common garden plants like hellebore and euphorbia and others much less so; some are decidedly green and others one might describe as greenish, like the flower bracts of *Cornus kousa*.

Included with each plant is a beautifully executed, full-page photograph, a general description, cultivation notes (including hardiness and sun or shade preferences) and ways a particular plant and its flowers can be used in the garden, in floral work and, if appropriate, in containers.

The hardiness indication is based on the American zone system but the chart at the back makes it possible for New Zealand gardeners to work out where their garden falls under it.

A book for beginner and experienced flower lovers alike that has a quiet, unembellished sophisticated appeal like its subjects.

Weekend Gardener, Issue 275, 2009, Page 40

Book review archive

Our entire archive of book reviews (from the *Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture* 1981, under its various names), together with book reviews from the *Weekend Gardener* magazine (from Issue 86, November 2001) are available on our website at www.rnzih.org.nz.