

Recommendations for Your Gardening Library

The Rose Rustlers

Greg Grant and William C. Welch. Texas A&M University Press, College Station, TX, 2017. 248 pages. Publisher's price, softcover: \$30.

GREG GRANT and William C. Welch, two of the most celebrated horticulturists involved with the revival of old roses, have written about collecting—or “rustling” in their argot—forgotten plant varieties from Southern cemeteries and ancient homesteads for almost 30 years. But neither of them, and perhaps no one else, has made antique roses more accessible than they have in *The Rose Rustlers*. It is a master class in the methods and philosophy of collecting and preserving roses, written almost as if it were a series of letters to a friend.

Their message is perhaps more timely today than when the authors started out. Since Welch's *Antique Roses for the South* appeared in 1990, new cultivars like those in the KnockOut™ series have given more gardeners a taste for low-maintenance options with a greater diversity of flower forms. Welch and Grant make the case that those who love such newer roses have everything to gain by trying roses that have survived a hundred years with no care—many of which are repeat-blooming, richly perfumed, and luxurious in flower.

The authors' proof is compelling. A few samples: 'Peggy Martin', the only rose in an extensive collection to survive Hurricane Katrina; 'Souvenir de la Malmaison', a shrub that Welch describes as “perhaps the most beautiful rose” he has ever seen; and 'Highway 290 Pink Buttons', whose evocative name says it all. The authors seal their argument by including photos of their own effective use of these plants in their personal gardens going back to the 1980s. And in keeping with contemporary usage, they show how these roses can be used as part of a landscape of diverse plants.

On a more basic level, this is a book about getting it done. Along with details on everything from disease, propagation, and ethics, it offers business anecdotes, such as partnering with brand-name products and local TV stations, and founding the iconic Antique Rose Emporium, a retail and mail-order nursery.

The only flaw in the book is that there's space for only abbreviated vignettes of deserving people like Pam Puryear, an epic eccentric who initiated the authors into a fellowship of roses. That aside, this is a book that will do for readers what Puryear did for the authors.

—Benjamin Whitacre

Benjamin Whitacre is a rose aficionado who has served as a research assistant focused on rose history at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Midcentury Modern Landscape

Ethne Clarke. Gibbs Smith US, Layton, UT, 2017. 224 pages. Publisher's price, hardcover: \$30.

ETHNE CLARKE'S career has encompassed both writing popular books on a wide range of gardening styles and practices, and editing stints with national magazines such as *Traditional Home* and *House & Garden*. If this well-traveled, cosmopolitan garden communicator decides to turn her attention to the midcentury modern design style so popular today, you know it will be a thorough and insightful treatment. Clarke also brings a personal perspective, because she grew up in the post-war, planned community of Park Forest, Illinois, and currently resides in a small ranch style home built in 1958.

The first section of the book is dedicated to a survey of the architects and landscape architects who attempted to develop a residential style of and for the 20th-century. Clarke provides a nice overview of the accomplishments and the limitations of Frank Lloyd Wright, the Bauhaus School, the New Canaan Modernists, and the landscape architects who struggled to achieve equal recognition for their work in developing a modern landscape aesthetic. Ultimately, she implies, landscape architects understood as well or better than their architect counterparts that “gardens are for people,” as landscape architect Thomas Church proclaimed in the title of his 1955 book on the topic.

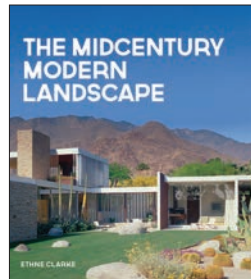
Readers looking for inspiration for their own gardens will find plenty here. “Make it midcentury, but make it your own,” is Clarke's wise advice. She urges readers to express the same individuality and embrace the emphasis on outdoor living that characterized the era. Evoke midcentury modernism, she suggests, rather than attempt an exacting reproduction.

That concept extends to plant palettes. For example, ornamental grasses were not known in the United States until relatively recently. Yet, Clarke notes, they serve well in midcentury modern settings because their movement and seasonal changes bring nature closer to the home—a key element of the era's design style.

Although some of the photos left a little to be desired in terms of quality, *The Midcentury Modern Landscape* is well written and well priced. It would be just the ticket for the new owner of a ranch-style home, or any landscape history buff.

—Susan Hines

Susan Hines is a former staff writer for Landscape Architecture magazine. She lives and gardens in Hyattsville, Maryland.



GARDENER'S BOOKS: JAPANESE GARDENS

ORNAMENTAL GATES, cherry blossoms, steppingstones—these motifs and landscaping details may be what most Americans associate with Japanese gardens. But what really defines these distinctive gardens is their ability to evoke a connection with nature. The following books explore the essence of this aesthetic and profile exemplary Japanese-style gardens across the country and abroad.

In *Japanese-Style Gardens* (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 2015, \$12.95), readers



will learn about the essential components of style and substance—a garden's *ma* and *kisei*. These components can be found in any size space, from small stone arrangements to expansive “stroll” gardens, complete with lakes and waterfalls. The book highlights several notable gardens around the United States and concludes by offering tips for creating Japanese-inspired gardens at home.

Visionary Landscapes (Tuttle Publishing, 2017, \$24.95) by Kendall H. Brown



spotlights the work of various prominent designers of Japanese-inspired landscapes. Each artist highlights a different aspect about these gardens' power to impact the viewer, such as modernist motifs to tell “visual stories,” or restorative and meditative elements. The photography by David Cobb vividly captures the quintessence of these varied spaces created at private residences, public gardens, and other sites.

The Japanese Garden (Phaidon Press, 2017, \$69.95) by Sophie Walker



begins by providing context within the larger genre of gardening. Reflecting on Japanese gardens and their “cultural resonance,” Walker writes that “garden-making belongs to the highest arts...a significant achievement in our human consciousness.” The book profiles hundreds of unique and stunning gardens around Japan that reflect her viewpoint of horticulture as art form.

—Aaron Dorman, Editorial Intern

Listen to the Land is an engaging, informative, and poignant memoir of a life spent tending one particular property, a woodland garden in Alabama. Louise Agee Wrinkle grew up on this land, returned to it in mid-life, and has, for the last 30 years, tended it with care and creativity, according to her philosophy of allowing the land to speak for itself.

Published by *Birmingham Home and Garden* | birminghamhomeandgarden.com

I think that family, friends, garden club members, master gardeners, and other serious gardeners will find this book inspiring and informative.

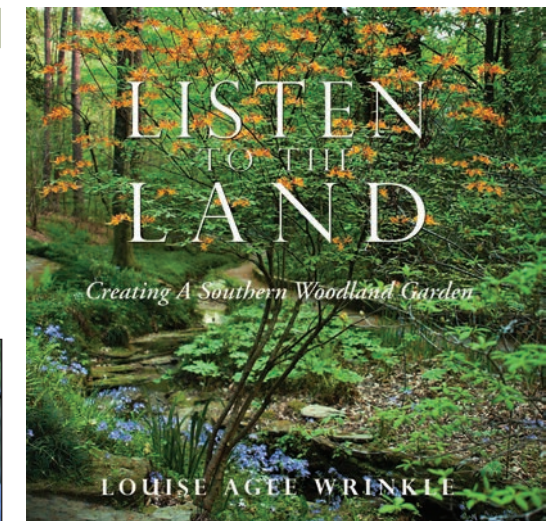
—Neil Odenwald, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, past Director, Robert S. Reich School of Landscape Architecture, Louisiana State University

The Plant Profiles will be valuable to any gardener. This is not just a list of plants with descriptions, but rather examples that Wrinkle has or had in her garden, and her personal experiences with them.

—John Alex Floyd, Jr., Ph.D., Retired Editor in Chief, *Southern Living*

This is a coming-of-age story that spans a lifetime and is a must-read for any avid gardener today.

—Fred Spicer, Executive Vice President and Director, Chicago Botanic Garden



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