

**Books to Inspire Your Gardening Dreams – and Answer Some Questions  
Jane Bush and Claire Hanson**

**Published in *Estes Park News*, December 1, 2017, page 30.  
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Have you seen the newest Little Free Library (LFL) in town? It's at the Community Garden and at present has some books to keep your gardening spirit alive over the winter. Stop by to take one or leave one!

Speaking of books, we share a plot at the Community Garden, and started talking about our favorite gardening books. We thought you might be interested in where we have found gardening inspiration and information over the years. Here are our favorite favorites.

Jane's choices are:

Springer, Lauren. *The Undaunted Garden: Planting for Weather-Resilient Beauty*. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1994.) I've enjoyed reading this book (and looking at the pictures) for inspiration for many years. There is a 2010 edition [available in paperback; Laura's last name is now Ogden] that contains a lot of new information based on her subsequent experience. Lauren writes, "The undaunted garden is lovingly composed and cared for by the gardener, yet thrives not so much because of him or her, but because it is in tune with the natural forces around it." My garden will probably never achieve that goal, but it gives me something to dream about over a long winter.

Pesman, M. Walter. *Meet the Natives: A Field Guide to Rocky Mountain Wildflowers, Trees and Shrubs: Bridging the Gap Between Trail and Garden*. 11<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boulder, CO: Johnson Books, 2012.) Because I try to incorporate natives into my gardening whenever possible, this is another book I enjoy. The long title really says it all: the book makes many suggestions on what natives to use in the garden. The most challenging thing I find about this book is that I get excited to try a native in my garden and then I can't find it at a nursery!

Denver Water. *Xeriscape Plant Guide: 100 Water-Wise Plants for Gardens and Landscapes*. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1996.) One of my go-to reference books for garden planning, this book covers over 100 low water-use plants, from trees to ground covers, for Colorado. Each plant entry has photos from each season and a full-color illustration. Not all plants in the book are suitable for Estes Park, but each plant is elevation rated – something many books do not include. I love how this book is set up and how easy it is for me to find the information I desire on each plant.

Claire's favorites are:

Hyde, Barbara. *Gardening in the Mountain West*. (Longmont, CO: Barbara J. Hyde, Inc., 1994.) A clear and practical “user manual” for planning and starting a garden in our high elevation, arid area. The author, who was a Master Gardener for the CSU Extension in Boulder County, compiled her decades of experience in design and layout, soil building, composting, and protection from “flood, frost, hail, heat, ice, lightning, vandalism, wind, and winter”! Volume II, to include a chapter on veggies, was never published as far as I can determine. Too bad, as she probably had tons of first-hand experience to share.

Bartholomew, Mel. *Square Foot Gardening Answer Book: New Information from the Creator of Square Foot Gardening – the Revolutionary Method Used by 2 Million Thrilled Followers*. (Minneapolis, MN: Cool Springs Press, 2012.) If you are curious about square foot gardening, which you may have seen in some of the Community Garden plots, this is a great place to start. It includes the basic (and simple) principles of square foot gardening, and answers just about any question you might have about adapting your gardening knowledge (or lack thereof) to this new and efficient way of planting. I’ve tried a lot of the techniques and they do work!

Hart, Rhonda Massingham. *Deerproofing Your Yard & Garden*. (North Adams, MA: Storey Publishing, 2nd ed. 2005.) Subtitle: “The Buck Stops Here” – cute, eh? But also a lot of simple advice to make your landscape and garden a lot less attractive to the larger critters. The focus is specifically on deer, but our elk seem to respond similarly to some of the suggestions I’ve tried. Our Library has this and at least one other on the same topic – now why would they have more than one?

Riotte, Lousie. *Carrots Love Tomatoes: Secrets of Companion Planting for Successful Gardening*. (Pownal, VT: Storey Communications Inc., 1975.) I almost forgot about this book, but found it again at the Library and remembered how useful it was when I first started gardening on my own in Boulder in the late 1970’s. Which plants promote or hinder the growth of others, which deter insect pests in others, plus some hints about increasing yield in a small space with vertical gardening or two-level planting. Has some recipes for pest-detering sprays using plant leaves, and even lists the benefits of weeds. Kind of fun to dip in and out of this book, which is arranged alphabetically by plant name, with separate chapters on nuts and fruits, pollination, and poisonous plants.

All these books can be found at the Estes Valley Library or from Amazon, or there’s always a letter to Santa! We hope you’ll be inspired by our favorites.

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Jane is a long-time gardener in Missouri, Longmont and Estes Park, a founding Board member of the EVCG, now gardening with native plants at home and growing strawberries in her EVCG plot. Claire gardened in Boulder and Santa Fe in the late 1970’s – early 2000’s, is on the EVCG Board, and shares a plot with Jane at EVCG, where she specializes in baby salad greens.