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The Bold Dry Garden: Lessons From The Ruth Bancroft Garden



Synopsis

“For those of you and your numbers are growing gardening in drought-stricken parts of the country, The Bold Dry Garden will quench your thirst for inspiration.”

• New York Times Book Review Ruth Bancroft is a dry gardening pioneer. Her lifelong love of plants led to the creation of one of the most acclaimed public gardens, The Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, California. The Bold Dry Garden offers unparalleled access to the garden and the extraordinary woman responsible for it. In its stunningly photographed pages, you’ll discover the history of the garden and the design principles and plant palette that make it unique. Packed with growing and maintenance tips, profiles of signature plants for a dry garden, and innovative design techniques, The Bold Dry Garden has everything you need to create a garden that is lush, waterwise, and welcoming.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“This sumptuous book will inspire you to create your own water-saving paradise.”

• Flora Grubb, owner of Flora Grubb Gardens “This book wonderfully reveals Ruth’s enduring lessons in the power of creativity and imagination and big, bold compositions to transform even the most unpromising landscape into a work of art.”

• Jenny Young du Pont, president and CEO of The Garden Conservancy “Ruth Bancroft’s garden is a rare combination of an artist’s vision and a meticulous collector’s passion—an invaluable resource that showcases the rich textures,

structures, and colors of dry plants.

•Andrea Cochran FASLA, principal of Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture

“The Bold Dry Garden beautifully showcases the glorious garden Ruth Bancroft so courageously created.

•Bernard Trainor, bernard trainor + associates

“For those of you

and your numbers are growing

gardening in drought-stricken parts of the country, Johanna Silver’s The Bold Dry Garden: Lessons from the Ruth Bancroft Garden will quench your thirst for inspiration. This dazzling three-and-a-half-acre succulent garden in Walnut Creek, Calif., was the Garden Conservancy’s first preservation project. Marion Brenner’s elegant photographs ably capture the architectural drama of its bold forms and eccentric groupings, as well as the strange and intriguing textures of individual agaves, cycads, euphorbias and sedums. Plump or spiny, tiny or looming, succulents have enormous variety and endless appeal. It seems almost criminal to avoid them in favor of lawns.

•The New York Times Book Review

“The American garden, located in Walnut Creek, CA, that inspired the Garden Conservancy is handsomely portrayed precisely when people should follow Bancroft’s lead of using xerophytic plants, challenging convention, and paying attention to climate cues.

•Library Journal

starred review

“Combining biography of the dry-garden pioneer with a landscaper’s guide, Silver and photographer Brenner tour the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, Calif., and discuss the life and work of its creator and namesake. Replete with brilliant color photography, this hopeful book will win over anyone who doubts that a desolate landscape can support thriving life.

•Publishers Weekly

“An inspiring history of the Ruth Bancroft Garden, in Walnut Creek, California, that’s packed with rich photography. You’ll learn about design and plant palettes, as well as practical information on how to maximize a water-wise landscape from the pioneer of dry gardening.

•Martha Stewart Living

“This book serves readers in several ways. If you live in a nearly frost-free, dry climate like that east of San Francisco, you can take it right out to the garden or a local nursery. If you are an avid indoor gardener with grow-lights or south-facing windows, you will be thrilled by the extensive picture-filled encyclopedia of cacti and other succulents. If you love gorgeous books with voluptuous pictures (by Marion Brenner, California’s premier landscape photographer), this is a book for your collection. I’m happy to say that another reason to get this book is for the richly illustrated biography of this remarkable plantswoman.

•Better Homes and Country Gardens

“Part coffee table book and part homage, The Bold Dry Garden is a beautiful book.

•NYBG’s Plant Talk

“Today, as the West wakes up with what feels like a collective hangover from the era of overly irrigated

landscapes, the Ruth Bancroft Garden is the perfect antidote – dry yet lush, bold yet welcoming, and full of natural curiosities. – Sunset – “Everything about The Bold Dry Garden, from the beautiful cover to the wealth of authoritative information it contains, will appeal to fans of succulents and other arid-region plants. But even if you have never planted a single cactus, you will be inspired by the story of Ruth Bancroft and her exemplary dry garden. – The American Gardener – “This book is a loving tribute in text and magnificent photographs to the plant collecting passion of one woman – Ruth Bancroft. . . . Bancroft’s adventurous plant choices, attention to climate cues, and lack of fear of failure all provide an exquisite lesson to contemporary gardeners. – Choice – “Lavishly illustrated with full colour photographs – including charming shots from the early years and eye-catching vistas or close-up details of plants taken more recently – all demonstrating Ruth’s ability to blend art, horticulture and botany. . . . anyone interested in putting together a garden of succulent plants cannot fail to be inspired to try and replicate some of those vistas using hardier subjects. Otherwise, simply turn the pages and immerse yourself in the story of one of the world’s great gardens. – The Garden – “An eloquently written fan-letter to Ruth, and the garden, . . . the book is filled with bits of Ruth’s history, her love of collecting and cataloging. . . and stories of the beginning of the garden. . . . That’s why you should buy this book. Because it’s inspiring. Because it contains a subtle challenge to embrace your site, garden like you will live forever, and share your knowledge with those that care to ask. – Danger Garden – “Johanna and master garden photographer Marion Brenner would visit the garden every Saturday for a year. That commitment and dedication is evident in every sentence and every picture. – Succulents and More – “A gorgeous homage to a life’s work and an intimate view of the woman behind its creation. – Pacific Horticulture

The Ruth Bancroft Garden is one of the country’s most renowned public gardens; a rich example of inspired low-water landscaping. Planted by Bancroft herself on 3.5 acres of her Walnut Creek, California, home, the garden celebrates its creator’s extraordinary passion for succulents and other xeric plants, as well as her visionary sense of design. More than forty years after it was first planted, the garden continues to develop its collection of water-conserving plants for the education and enjoyment of the public. –

This book is amazing! The woman who made this garden is amazing herself! She is 106 years old! I

poured over this book for hours. We moved from cold Northern Utah to the Southwest desert in Utah and I wanted to find a book on Desert plants. This is absolutely "The" book. It tells about the plants. Has wonderful pictures. And water conservation, etc., etc., etc.. And it is a hardback with a cover. If you love Desert plants you have to have this book!

Beautifully done book. Wonderful information and great images. Makes me want to start all over on our landscape.

Ruth's garden is just lovely. I love to visit gardens and this will be a visit when I am in the San Francisco area. The book has such wonderful illustrations and stories about how the garden and its people who have tended it for so many years. I have given this book several times and it is always a welcomed gift.

Great book, lots of pictures and worth the read! If you ever have a chance to visit these gardens in Walnut creek I highly suggest you do!

GORGEOUS book, worthy of leaving out permanently on a coffee table. A visual feast inside and a work of art, very inspiring!

This was a gift for my mom, and she loves it and keeps it on her coffee table.

I expected it to have plan drawings for yards

Beautiful and timely book. Pictures are terrific, really showing the many beauties of this mature garden

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