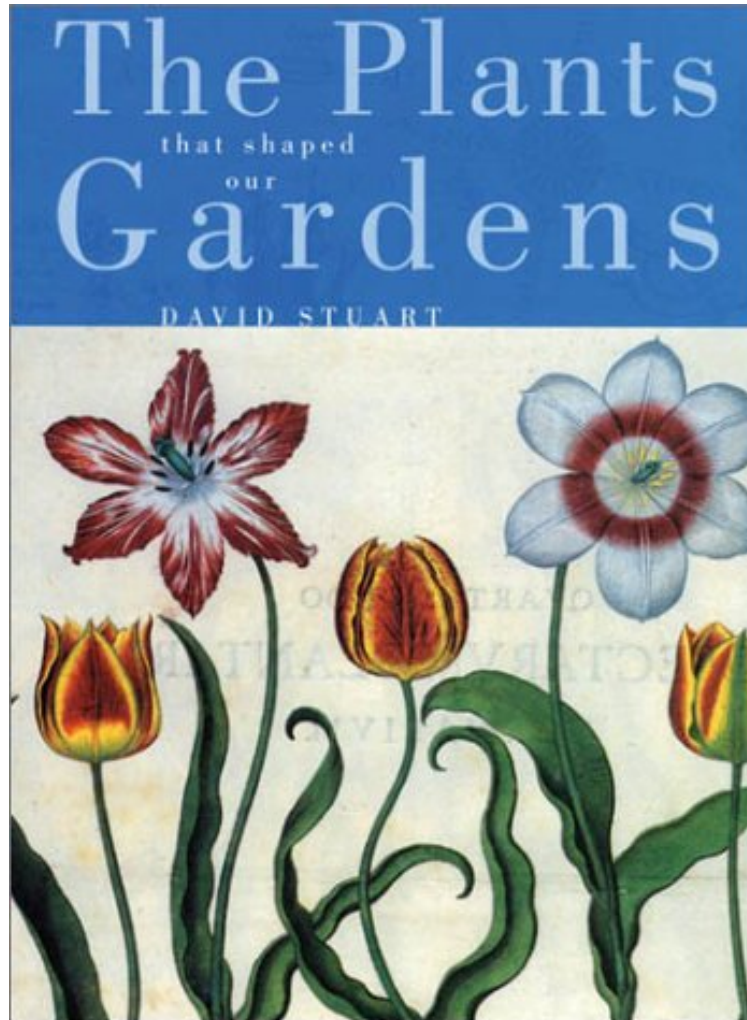


[Download free pdf] The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens

## The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens

*David Stuart*

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#3479394 in BooksColor: Multicolor Harvard University Press 2002-05-12 2002-04-09Ingredients:  
Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.76 x .84 x 7.921, 2.21 #File Name:  
0674007905208 pages | File size: 47.Mb

**David Stuart : The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens:

Inspiration, happy accidents, and outright obsessions have all had their way with gardens--but nothing has done more to shape the modern garden than plants themselves. In a story that ranges from continent to continent and spans four centuries, botanist and gardener David Stuart reveals how the garden as we know it was created not by garden designers but by ordinary gardeners responding to exotic and novel plants that suggested new spaces, places, and

means of display. The history begins with two earth-changing events--the establishment of colonies in the Americas and the spread of the Turkish empire. Both brought the first astonishing wave of flowering exotics to gardens across Europe. Stuart relates how, over the following centuries, the influx of new plants inspired a frenzy of hybridization (at first by a new breed of gardener, the "florist," later by nurserymen), which in turn led to such features as the familiar herbaceous border, flower bed, and rose garden, as well as the now little-known rockery, shrubbery, and "wilderness." From the Dutch tulip mania, the eighteenth-century European passion for "American gardens," and on to the rhododendron craze of the nineteenth century, Stuart's book traces the shape of the modern garden as it changed with the fashion, returning at last to classic, cottage garden varieties long neglected in favor of the foreign and new. In conclusion, Stuart looks at plant prospecting today--now that the collecting of plants may prove essential to protecting botanical diversity and preserving plant species rapidly disappearing from the wild.

From Library Journal Botanist and biologist Stuart (*The Garden Triumphant: A Victorian Legacy*) here chronicles the efforts of a small number of botanists and plant collectors to retrieve exotic plants for their own gardens and the consequences for generations of professional and amateur gardeners in Europe and then America. Beginning in the Renaissance, these collectors traveled around the globe, from the Americas to the Turkish Empire to China, enduring hostile climates, pirates, famine, strange new diseases, and poverty to capture and cultivate original plant matter for European gardens. Stuart highlights the most colorful aspects of plant collection the triumphs and tragedies, the rivalries and jealousies, and even the role that politics played. The author never spends too much time on any one character but moves effortlessly from one story to the next, including those of John Fremont, "a handsome buffoon and a rascal," and the Empress Josephine, "an ardent and jealous collector" of plants. The text is gorgeously and generously illustrated throughout. While a pleasant read for the casual gardener or plant enthusiast, this volume will be a meeting of the souls for true plant lovers. Highly recommended for public libraries developing collections for impassioned gardeners and recommended for academic libraries with large botanical history collections. Marianne Stowell Bracke, Univ. of Arizona Lib., Tucson Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Avid gardeners eager to obtain the newest perennial cultivar or add yet another conifer species to the garden often self-deprecatingly acknowledge their plant-collecting hobby as an addiction, yet even the most fanatic garden enthusiasts are pikers compared to the early plant collectors, who risked their lives traveling to remote and exotic lands to bring new plant species to their gardens. The world of horticulture is not usually known for its charismatic characters, but Stuart's genius lies in breathing life into historical figures whose astounding passion for plants makes for compelling reading. For those who have wondered who the "Douglas" in Douglas fir is or where petunias originated, Stuart acknowledges the contributions of intrepid botanists and horticulturists, sharing the bizarre as well as the biographical, such as Hooker's flower-picking elephants or Dampier's murderous past. Stuart digs deep to provide arcane historical background, making this meticulously researched and engagingly written treatise a must-read for ardent gardeners who want to know more about the plants that obsess them so. Carol Haggas Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Botanist and biologist Stuart...here chronicles the efforts of a small number of botanists and plant collectors to retrieve exotic plants for their own gardens and the consequences for generations of professional and amateur gardeners in Europe and then America...Stuart highlights the most colorful aspects of plant collection--the triumphs and tragedies, the rivalries and jealousies, and even the role that politics played...The text is gorgeously and generously illustrated throughout. While a pleasant read for the casual gardener or plant enthusiast, this volume will be a meeting of the souls for true plant lovers. Highly recommended. (Marianne Stowell Library Journal 2002-05-01) The world of horticulture is not usually known for its charismatic characters, but Stuart's genius lies in breathing life into historical figures whose astounding passion for plants makes for compelling reading...Stuart acknowledges the contributions of intrepid botanists and horticulturists, sharing the bizarre as well as the biographical...Stuart digs deep to provide arcane historical background, making this meticulously researched and engagingly written treatise a must-read for ardent gardeners who want to know more about the plants that obsess them so. (Carol Haggas Booklist 2002-05-15) If you ever wondered why the Dutch have tulip mania or why people have a passion for flowers at all, then Stuart's history of gardening will help you understand. Beginning in the Renaissance, Stuart examines how Europeans began to gather exotic flowers on their travels--even pirates went on quests to gather plants. By the middle of the 18th century, flowers invaded the all-green gardens that prevailed at the time. Stuart traces the making of the modern garden through a rich blend of stories of plant collectors who were ultimately responsible for colonizing species around the world. (Science News 2002-05-11) David Stuart, a botanist, offers a rich historical account of European plant collecting dating back to the 16th century. He suggests that modern garden design evolved from the desire to showcase collected specimens and their resulting hybrids. (Julia Lewis House and Garden Magazine 2002-07-01) How did the gardens of Europe and America evolve to look the way they do? A botanist, biologist, nurseryman, and former London Sunday Times gardening columnist, Stuart traces the history of the modern garden--from the Ottoman Empire to the Dutch tulip craze to tomorrow's hybrids--in a profusely illustrated volume that could be enhanced only by the perfume of its subjects. (The Atlantic 2002-07-01) *The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens* by David Stuart, is a mingling of history, plant hunters, the plants they collected and how the appearance of gardens evolved according to the exotic

material that was in demand...Stuart follows the development of new features such as flower beds and herbaceous borders, which resulted when plant breeders tinkered with genes, developing new colors and shapes for flowers. Stuart believes plant prospecting is necessary today to preserve species that are disappearing in the wild. (Suzanne Hively Cleveland Plain Dealer 2002-08-01)Books make great gifts for gardeners. Even when it's freezing outside, they hold out the promise of lush landscapes, as I was reminded when I read the introduction of *The Plants That Shaped Our Gardens*...[This book] tells the story of how our gardens came to look the way they do, and how the plants we grow migrated around the world--with the help of plant hunters and collectors. It's an exciting tale, ranging from pre-colonial America to the Turkish Empire, and filled with wild adventures, strange characters and extraordinary plants. (Denise Cowie Philadelphia Inquirer 2002-12-30)A banana tree grows in England. A palm in Paris. A tulip in New England. In 2002, not many of us give a second thought to how--or why--those plants got so far from home. But David Stuart does, and the result reads like a fast-paced mystery. From the court of Constantinople to the trail of Lewis and Clark, Stuart dives into the history of how gardens came to look as they do. Sound dry and boring? Hardly. Unknotting the stems of history, Stuart tells how early travelers changed the course of horticulture, even evolution. As travel became easier, smitten plant collectors continued the trend of carrying plants thousands of miles from their native environment. Stuart manages to find provocative tidbits and the people who shaped modern horticulture. It's a great read. (Kym Pokorny Portland Oregonian 2002-12-12)Filled with exciting plates reproducing images from centuries of botanical and horticultural literature*The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens* offers the reader an adventure story of a different type. Here David Stuart gives us the history of how plants we now consider essential parts of our gardens were brought from distant and exotic locales*The Plants that Shaped Our Gardens* should be of interest to any gardener who might well wonder where the beautiful hydrangea shrub originated. Now you can read the adventures of Philipp Franz Balthasar von Siebold and be grateful for his pioneering spirit. (Joan Richards Chicago Botanic Garden)