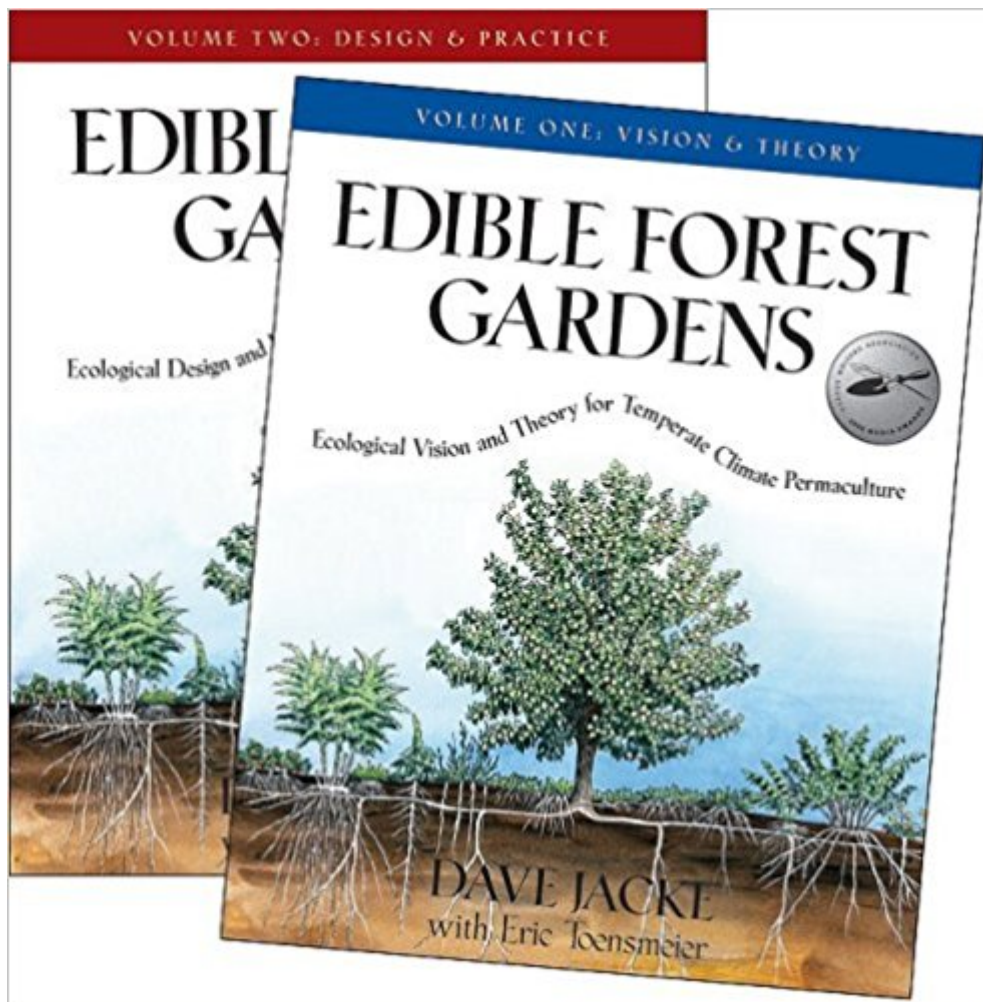


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Edible Forest Gardens (2 Volume Set)



Synopsis

Edible Forest Gardens is a groundbreaking two-volume work that spells out and explores the key concepts of forest ecology and applies them to the needs of natural gardeners in temperate climates. Volume I lays out the vision of the forest garden and explains the basic ecological principles that make it work. In Volume II, Dave Jacke and Eric Toensmeier move on to practical considerations: concrete ways to design, establish, and maintain your own forest garden. Along the way they present case studies and examples, as well as tables, illustrations, and a uniquely valuable "plant matrix" that lists hundreds of the best edible and useful species. Taken together, the two volumes of Edible Forest Gardens offer an advanced course in ecological gardening—one that will forever change the way you look at plants and your environment. What is an edible forest garden? An edible forest garden is a perennial polyculture of multipurpose plants. Most plants regrow every year without replanting: perennials. Many species grow together: a polyculture. Each plant contributes to the success of the whole by fulfilling many functions: multipurpose. In other words, a forest garden is an edible ecosystem, a consciously designed community of mutually beneficial plants and animals intended for human food production. Edible forest gardens provide more than just a variety of foods. The seven F's apply here: food, fuel, fiber, fodder, fertilizer, and "farmaceuticals," as well as fun. A beautiful, lush environment can be a conscious focus of your garden design, or a side benefit you enjoy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'll start by saying that even though this is a great 2-volume set, it scared me away from actually creating a forest garden for years. The first volume gives an extremely detailed and comprehensive overview of the theory behind forest gardening. If you start reading this book and think that you actually need to understand all this stuff in order to go and plant a forest garden, you'll probably throw in the towel and never do it. There are a million details covered, and understanding it all to me seems like a daunting task. I also found it for the most part very boring and even redundant. Based on some of the other reviews, other people seem to disagree with this. But to me in terms of excitement this book is just a shade above a technical manual (except the first section on "Vision," which I found very interesting). And the thing is, you don't need to know everything in this book to start a forest garden. If you actually want to know what you need to know about making a forest garden, I highly recommend Martin Crawford's *Creating a Forest Garden: Working with Nature to Grow Edible Crops*. When I read that book, I realized that I already basically knew what I needed to know in order to actually get started and put plants in the ground. Before I read Crawford's book I felt almost hopelessly lost. I had only been reading *Edible Forest Gardens*, which makes creating a forest garden seem like a superhuman task. Martin Crawford's book puts it on a more human level. In the end, there really aren't that many really key points to consider in making a forest garden. And the rest is mostly practical common sense.

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