

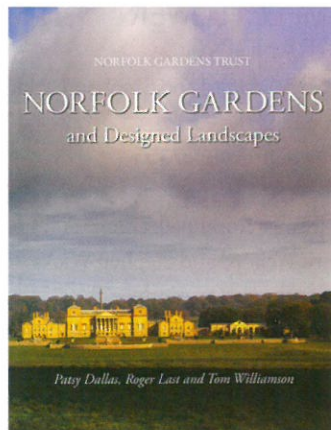
Books

NORFOLK GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

by Patsy Dallas, Roger Last and Tom Williamson

Windgather Press, £25

ISBN 978-1905119929



Even living as I do in neighbouring Suffolk, I was surprised to learn that in Norfolk there are more than 300 gardens and parks considered worthy of inclusion in this absorbing volume published by the Norfolk Gardens Trust.

The book is carefully researched and generously illustrated, providing a historical record of the county's rich heritage of gardening and landscape architecture. The familiar gardens of Holkham and Houghton are there, but you will also find hidden gems such as 16th-century Little Hautbois Hall with its avenue of ancient quince trees; Happisburgh Manor gardens designed by Arts and Crafts architect Detmar Blow; and the quirky Jungle Garden, created since 1999 by its owner Jon Kelf.

Due recognition is given to the giants of garden design who left their mark on the county, including 'Capability' Brown, William Kent and Humphry Repton, who was involved in 15 Norfolk gardens. Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll are included though their creations have all but disappeared, while contemporary

designers including Tom Stuart-Smith and George Carter bring the story into the 21st century.

The gardens are put into historical context, from early fortified and moated manor houses to the elegant parks paid for by the county's 18th-century wealth, and from 19th-century civic spaces to contemporary private gardens created by plantsmen and amateurs.

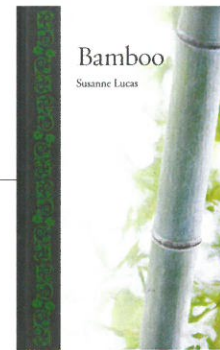
The book is a mine of fascinating information about significant Norfolk gardens and their creators, and a useful introduction to the wider history and development of English gardens. But why is there no map for those unfamiliar with the area, nor any indication of which gardens are regularly or even occasionally open to the public? Enthusiasts will be keen to see some of the gardens themselves.

The authors describe this as a 'Pevsner' for lovers of designed landscapes. It serves as a challenge to other counties to follow Norfolk's lead and ensure our garden heritage is documented for future generations.

Widget Finn is a freelance garden writer and editor.

book offer

RRP £25. **Reader offer price £24** including p&p.



BAMBOO

By Susanne Lucas

Reaktion Books, £16

ISBN 978-1780232010

Bamboo comes with so much cultural baggage that it can be difficult to look at it with a fresh mind. For western gardeners, plantings of bamboo invariably conjure up images of Japanese lanterns or cloud-pruned shrubs. Which is where this little book comes in handy, for its perspective on bamboo is very wide-ranging, from its botany to its uses, history and cultural associations.

What comes across is how widespread bamboo is and I am glad to see much discussion about the New World bamboos, which are even more varied than the Asian and African. Particularly exciting is the discussion of the vast range of contemporary technical uses; we may know about bamboo socks, but there is much more, with many new applications linked to sustainability.

The book is the latest in a series exploring plant groups in a rounded way, concentrating on human interaction with each plant. The production values are high and the books are set to become a collector's series. The design is conventional, or perhaps deliberately retro? The book is not, sadly, made of bamboo, although technically, I feel sure it could have been.

Noël Kingsbury is a writer and plantsman.

book offer

RRP £16. **Reader offer price £15** including p&p.