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A Southern Garden



Synopsis

Lawrence's exceptional gift for writing about plants puts this volume in the category of fine literature ...If you aren't a gardener before reading *A Southern Garden*, chances are you will be when you finish. *Southern Living*

Book Information

Hardcover: 251 pages

Publisher: Univ of North Carolina Pr; 4th edition (August 1991)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 080781962X

ISBN-13: 978-0807819623

Product Dimensions: 1 x 6 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,508,211 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #217 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > By Region > South](#)

Customer Reviews

This is a charming book that is extremely valuable for gardeners in Zone 7. The copy in my local library has delicate color illustrations that added a lot to my enjoyment of the book, but the paperback I ordered new from .com had muddy black-and white versions of the original illustrations. (I don't know if the hardcover pictures are in color.) I've managed to find used copies with color illustrations.

In the fifties, when I was growing up in North Carolina, Miss Lawrence was known in garden circles all over the state as she had been an active gardener and writer for a number of years. I am pleased to see "A Southern Garden" which she wrote in 1942 back in print. RE-reading her words is like listening to an old friend. She lived and gardened first in Raleigh, then in Charlotte (both Zone 8). The winters in Zone 7 were a bit colder, but many of the plants she recommended for Zone 8, survived in Zone 7 where my family lived and gardened. Given global warming, I think much of Zone 7, which extends right up the East Coast--almost to New England (?)--is now verging on becoming Zone 8 -- at least the part that lies east of the "fall line" on the coastal plain. I have lived in Arlington, Virginia for a number of years, and have seen a decided shift in the climate in my area. Crepe Myrtles that used to live no further north than Fredericksburg and die back to the ground in Arlington

don't. And Catbirds, a real southerner are nesting in my yard. Both of these are Zone 8 transplants. Even though I am technically in the lower edge of Zone 7, I can grow almost anything Miss Lawrence discusses in her book "A Southern Garden" in my garden. My house is on the "fall line" however, and just west of me the winters are a tad too cold for some things. But if you live in Zone 7, and like a plant try it. If it lives great, if not you've gained some wonderful experience. Most importantly, pay attention to Miss Lawrence when she describes the 'old timey gardens' -- some say there is nothing new under the sun, and though that might not be entirely correct, many of the old plant forms she discusses are still extant.

This book is a window into the way our Grandmother's gardened. Miss Lawrence describes in her own wonderful and modest style where she purchased plants and how plants she admired performed either in her garden or in the garden's of her friend's. Her descriptions are informative and often humorous. Anyone serious about gardening in the South should own this book as a reference guide. Even a non-gardener would enjoy this lovely book.

This is a delightful book, different from most garden books you have read. It went out of print for a while, but recently was edited and republished, definitely worth it. Ms. Lawrence tells about various types of gardens, how she procured material from friends and others as well as purchased and the source. Elizabeth takes you on a tour of each garden section and all it's parts interspersed with stories about people and places. It reads like a novel about a southern garden. I found it delightful and easy to read just picking it up or for longer periods of time relaxing. It can be read just like any other "story" book, either fiction or non-fiction. I guarantee you will enjoy it.

A must-read for the Southern gardener. My #1 recommendation. Instrumental in helping me change my thought process from a northern gardener with a few short months to garden to a southern gardener with 12 months to garden. I especially like the order of the book, starting with winter: a season that I never could garden in before.

I was disappointed that the illustrations weren't colored. Lawrence's writing is tediously descriptive, but occasionally she'll pop in a great topic sentence, like the one about her irises not responding well to theory.

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