

# The Wild Garden: Expanded Edition

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First published in 1870, *The Wild Garden* challenged the prevailing garden style of the day and advocated a naturalistic style, in which hardy plants, both native and exotic, are arranged in groupings that mimic wild landscapes. Thanks to Robinson's passionate advocacy, the naturalistic style triumphed, and Robinson's urgent message continues to resonate today. For this newly designed edition, Rick Darke has written an introductory essay that not only underscores Robinson's importance in the evolution of garden design and ecology, but also explains his relevance for today's gardeners, designers, and landscape professionals. The book contains over 100 stunning photographs taken by Darke, including images of Gravetye and of modern "wild" gardens.

"Rick Darke captures in text and brilliant photography the essence of Robinson's philosophy, now practiced virtually worldwide." --Peter Herbert, consultant and former proprietor of Gravetye Manor

"Rick Darke has done a great service to all gardeners in showing how Robinson's nineteenth-century classic is alive and relevant to us and our time." --Noel Kingsbury, garden designer, author, lecturer

William Robinson's revolutionary book, *The Wild Garden*, envisioned an authentically naturalistic approach to gardening that is more vital today than ever before. First published in 1870, *The Wild Garden* evolved through many editions and remained in print through the remainder of the author's lifetime (1838-1935). In the book, Robinson issued a forceful challenge to the prevailing style of the day, which relied upon tender plants arranged in rigidly geometrical designs. In sharp contrast, Robinson advocated for the use of hardy, locally adapted native and exotic plants arranged according to local growing conditions. Robinson's vision was inspired by his first-hand observations of natural habitats in Europe and North America, and he put his ideas into practice in his own garden at Gravetye Manor in West Sussex. *The Wild Garden* was ground-breaking and hugely influential in its day, and is stunningly relevant to twenty-first century gardeners and landscape stewards seeking to adopt sustainable design and management practices.

In addition to the complete original text and illustrations from the fifth edition of 1895, this expanded edition includes new chapters and 125 color photographs by award-winning photographer and landscape consultant Rick Darke. His new material places wild gardening in modern context, underscoring Robinson's importance in the evolution of ecological design and illustrating an inspiring diversity of contemporary wild gardens.

William Robinson (1838-1935) emigrated from Ireland at a young age and was rapidly welcomed into the top echelons of British horticulture and botany. By 1866 he was a Fellow in the Linnean Society, sponsored by his friend Charles Darwin. Already an expert on the flora of the British Isles, he traveled the breadth of North America by train in 1870, observing regional habitats and forging lasting connections with Charles Sargent, Asa Gray, Frederick Law Olmsted, and others of their stature. Robinson was just thirty-two when he first published *The Wild Garden*, which has proved to be the most insightful, influential, and enduring of his many books and journals. Robinson's brilliance and enormous personal energy enabled him to become one of the most accomplished gardeners, editors, and publishers of his era, and he is often referred to as the Father of the English Flower Garden. Gravetye Manor, a sixteenth-century house which survives on

over one-thousand acres in West Sussex, became his home and laboratory for developing and refining the wild garden concept.

Rick Darke is a landscape design consultant, author, lecturer, and photographer based in Pennsylvania who blends art, ecology, and cultural geography in the creation and conservation of livable landscapes. His projects include scenic byways, public gardens, corporate and collegiate campuses, mixed-use conservation developments, and residential gardens. Darke served on the staff of Longwood Gardens for twenty years and received the Scientific Award of the American Horticultural Society. His work has been featured in the New York Times and on National Public Radio. Darke is recognized as one of the world's experts on grasses and their use in public and private landscapes. For further information visit [www.rickdarke.com](http://www.rickdarke.com).

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With stunning photography, lists of the best plants to support wildlife, and 17 projects the whole family can enjoy, this is a must-have resource for nature enthusiasts, gardeners, and animal lovers."