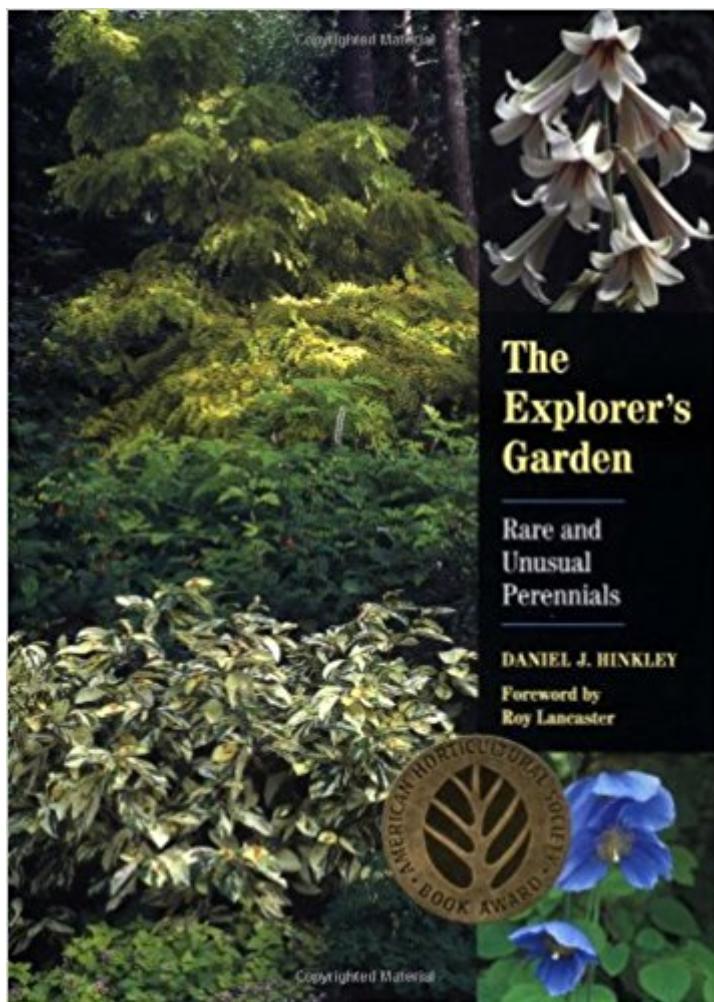


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The Explorer's Garden: Rare And Unusual Perennials



Synopsis

The sophisticated gardener is forever in search of distinctive new plants not commonly found in gardens. For these enthusiasts, Dan Hinkley's Heronswood Nursery near Seattle has become a mail-order mecca in recent years, the arrival of its fat catalog an eagerly awaited event. This book describes and illustrates the most interesting perennials Hinkley has encountered in his many travels around the world hunting plants in the wild. All are grown at his nursery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If, like so many other gardeners the world over, you're enamored of Dan Hinkley's Heronswood Nursery catalog, you'll love the Explorer's Garden. Heronswood is a wildly successful nursery in Kingston, Washington, that offers many of the most beautiful and unusual plants available anywhere. My guess is that once The Explorer's Garden is read through for pleasure, it will be used over and over again as a supplement to the catalog, as it thoroughly describes the plants Hinkley offers at Heronswood, and offers information on how best to grow them. The Explorer's Garden is part sheer adventure, part the story of Hinkley's intense love and appreciation for the flora of Planet Earth. While fascinating for the botanist with its tales of plants growing in their native habitats at the far corners of the world, The Explorer's Garden also satisfies the gardener by emphasizing which plants are most garden-worthy. Out of the many masterworts (Astrantia) now available, Hinkley tells us that the cultivar known as "Margery Fish" or "Shaggy" is one of the best of the lot. He sorts through the virtues of the many hardy geraniums, distinguishing *G. sylvaticum "Amy Doncaster"*

for its deep-blue upturned flowers with white eyes; he calls *G. phaeum* exceptional for its striking, purple-blotched foliage. This is just the kind of information gardeners need to know. We may grow plants better by understanding from whence they hail, but it is experienced guidance in choosing amongst the hosts of available plants that keeps us reading, notepad to hand. And if you think that this book will help you to fill up your garden with the best perennials, just remember that Hinkley has two more books to follow in The Explorer's Garden series. So leave some room, on your bookshelf and in your garden, for trees and shrubs. --Valerie Easton

Hinkley, an exhilarating garden writer, is also a modern-day plant explorer who frequently treks to remote realms in pursuit of plant species to grow, propagate, and introduce to the world of gardening. At his Heronswood Nursery outside Seattle (a mecca attracting keen gardeners from near and far), the private gardens and lushly landscaped display gardens allow visitors firsthand encounters with a surprising array of praiseworthy plants growing in breathtaking splendor. Now in his own inimitable style, Hinkley sets pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard, as the case may be) to discuss the merits of a wide range of garden-worthy perennials. Graced by the author's formidable knowledge of botany, the book promises to satisfy the most demanding tendencies of today's gardeners with remarkably evocative portraits of rare and wonderful species, accompanied by glorious color photographs. Tackling the topic at hand with unequaled capability, Hinkley offers detailed cultivation advice on a vast number of alluring specimens to thrill and delight the fancies of garden lovers. Alice Joyce

An excellent recent plant explorer who currently introduces plants from China, Korea, Nepal, Chile. I've been lucky enough to visit Herronswood, his garden and nursery on Puget Sound and have a few cherished catalogs from now closed nursery. Excellent photos and descriptions. A treasure.

A-OK

Photos and growing information about beautiful plants for your dream garden. Some of them might even be acquired and grown. Mr. Hinkley is as rare and unusual as the plants he shares with us: a super-expert with delightful enthusiasm who can write!

Dan Hinkley is my hero !

Love this book. If you enjoy plants that are a little unusual you too will love it. Dan is amazing and his private gardens are beautiful.

This book does what it aims to very well: it describes (and includes photos of) some very unusual plants. However, please be aware that many of these plants do not have mass appeal; that is why, after all, they are still rare and unusual, rather than having been picked up by your local garden centers. I found myself using this book mostly as a specific adjunct to the Heronswood Nursery catalogue, looking up some photos and cultural information for a few of the plants listed in the catalogue. If this is YOUR intended use, please be aware that you may be able to get this information for a lot less money by just using Heronswood's website, now that it is expanded to include a good variety of plant photos.

This is an excellent book. Dan Hinkley is a funny and engaging writer and speaker. I highly recommend this for the gardener who appreciates subtle yet beautiful flowers and foliage. Many of the plants that he discusses are from Asia where he has travelled extensively. The book is a great companion to the thick Heronswood Nursery catalog and web site since it has a number of photos. Dan discusses care and propagation of the plants as well.

A well researched, well thought out guide to some wonderful plants that, to quote the author's witty prose, should be on a good many gardener's 'lust list'. Good photography, HONEST descriptions of the plant (without 'catalog-ese') and cultural information all add to a fine addition to the hort books out there.

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