



The Gardener's Life: Inspired Plantsmen, Passionate Collectors, and Singular Visions in the World of Gardening

Larry Sheehan, Carol Sheehan, Kathryn Ge Precourt, William Stites

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For those who love the garden, it is not just about planting and growing, but about collecting garden-themed china, painting orchids and violets, visiting botanical gardens, reading and repairing rare horticultural books, competing in shows, and dreaming about the garden all winter long. In a book that celebrates the particular passion—perhaps “obsession” is a more accurate term—of the gardener’s life, Laurence Sheehan (with Carol Sama Sheehan, Kathryn George Precourt, and photographer William Stites) presents a diverse array of treasures that will delight every garden lover. In this select society, everyone understands why a collection of colorful seed packets could grow to fill many rooms, why one species of plant could preoccupy a lifetime, and why those with concrete patios as well as acres of ranch land could share a vision.

In the first section, “Inspired Plantsmen,” *The Gardener’s Life* introduces a group of people whose passion focuses on the plants themselves—growers of herbs and roses from Connecticut to California who have spent lifetimes devoted to their favorite plants. “Passionate Collectors” presents aficionados of garden books, garden watercolors, garden ornaments, and even well-worn, much-used, and lovingly restored antique lawn mowers. Finally, whether they possess a desire to throw the perfect flowerpot or to create a miniature yard on a city terrace, the free spirits in “Singular Visions” offer new ways of looking at, and loving, the garden—demonstrating that each garden and each gardener who tends it is unique. Mixed among the stories of these individuals are photographic “excursions”—visits to flower shows and wildflower gardens that illustrate how vast and varied the gardener’s world truly is.

More than a how-to gardening book, *The Gardener’s Life* works its way to the heart of why gardeners have unlimited fascination with their pastime, and why the garden is a place where art and nature, technique and toil—not to mention joie de vivre—meet to create paradise.

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