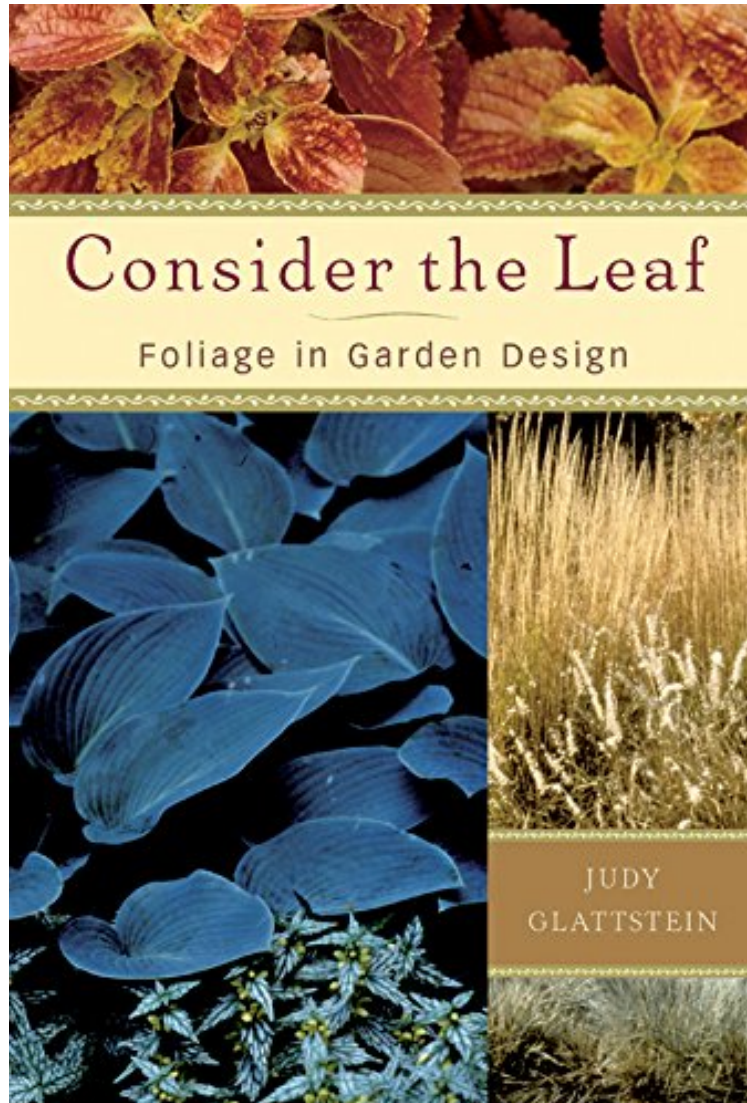


(Download) Consider the Leaf: Foliage in Garden Design

Consider the Leaf: Foliage in Garden Design

Judy Glattstein

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Judy Glattstein : Consider the Leaf: Foliage in Garden Design before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Consider the Leaf: Foliage in Garden Design:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy CustomerPrompt shipper, item as advertised.6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Good Idea, Executional ProblemsBy mtspacThe idea of using foliage texture and color as a primary element in garden design is one of great importance. Failure to do this will typically make garden spaces seem flat, uninspired, confused, or uninteresting. Getting it right can really set a garden aglow. So the thesis of the book is an important one. The book starts with a chapter called Designing with Foliage, and in it

Glattstein accurately describes one of the most important principles: Contrast draws attention. Combine plants that have big leaves with plants that have small leaves. Combine plants with light foliage together with plants that have dark foliage. Combine plants with fine, lacy texture with plants that have bold coarse texture. And so on. The trouble I had with this chapter is that this central design principle is more nearly hinted at than it is carefully spelled out. Instead, we are given a careful lesson on the botanical latin naming conventions for describing leaves. It's useful in a technical sense, but not inspiring; and I'm not sure all that terminology is put to use later on in the book. Next, Glattstein takes us into the shade where foliage is most important because most plants do not flower there. She mentions brunnera multiple times in the first chapters, as if it were some magical plant. A variegated brunnera is, indeed, a plant with pretty foliage - if one can get it to grow. I tried growing it in the shade in my own NJ garden and it died the moment it hit the earth. Now I garden in Arizona and unlike hostas, which I have actually tried growing here with limited success, I don't even dream of trying brunnera. I know that there are a lot of states between NJ and AZ where the conditions for growing brunnera are much worse than they were in central NJ. So brunnera is a good plant for bits of the northeast, perhaps, but it is not such a great example of a plant widely adapted to gardens throughout the US. As such, it's not the best place to start in a discussion of plant foliage. Even hostas, in my experience are far superior. But despite their extraordinary dimensions and variation in color hostas do not get much coverage here. The author also spends a great deal of time talking about ferns early on. Ferns are excellent examples of finely divided foliage, but even the ones sold as "good for dry gardens" I could not get to grow at all in my NJ garden in either light or heavy shade. In short, most of the plant choices Glattstein uses early on are ones that seem to me to be ones that do best in spaces for which special accommodation is made for special plants - not in real outdoor gardens. In her chapter on shade gardening she mentions ricinis communis, the castor bean. That certainly is a plant with impressive leaves, but it is a plant that grows happily in full sun here in Arizona. To talk about it in a chapter on shade plants seems really strange. Again, the chapter "Into the Shade" has a section on "trees." The first plant she mentions here is the Aspidistra, or cast iron plant a common indoor plant. She mentions it here because it likes to be out of doors in the shade just as well as being inside. Aspidistra? No other plant that we might grow indoors such as, say Philodendron, Scheffelera, Ficus, or Sanseveria? Then almost in passing she mentions three maples and a dogwood as examples of small trees. And that's it, end of section. A person who knows nothing about trees and their relationships to shade would learn precious little more after reading these two pages. A person who has two encyclopedic volumes on trees is likely to have the impulse to throw the book out the window. Later in the same chapter we learn that vinca minor is good. That sweet woodruff is bad. Or maybe good. And that pachysandra just has a bad reputation because people don't take care of it properly: they - and this is in the section about groundcovers, mind you - use it as a groundcover. The organizational schema of the chapters on color is stronger. There's a chapter on golden leafed plants, one on dark leafed plants, one on silver leafed plants, and one on variegated plants. And in each there are sections on trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and other plants. This is where the book is at its best, giving coverage to plants with interesting foliage in each group. As I consider the perennials notable for silver foliage I see a number of good artemisia cultivars, and I am happy to notice cerastium tomentosum which was not vigorous enough to outgrow weeds in NJ, but does well in AZ. We find, too, stachys byzantium. I don't see nepeta - Walkers Low or Six Hills Giant. I don't see any of the wonderful horehounds such as the wonderful but tricky marubium rotundifolium offered at High Country Gardens. I don't see culinary sage. And I don't see a treatment of russian sage, Perovskia atriplicifolia, or of the many lavenders that were mentioned promisingly in the section on shrubs. I notice that iris was mentioned elsewhere in the book, but it seems to me that it bears mentioning here. Given that at the end of a few minutes of consideration I can think of just about as many plants missing from the section as are mentioned, I am left wondering how thorough the author's exploration of the topic is. One glaring omission throughout the book is talk of grasses. Grasses provide some of the best foils to those hefty leaved plants: brunnera, hosta, castor beans, cannas, bananas, of which the author is fond. Grasses and sedges thrive where many of those large leafed plants fail. Grasses used for texture tend to be perennial, giving them a permanence that too many of the plants of which the author is enamored lack. And while the flowers/seeds of grasses do not count as leaves, they add strong textural variety to gardens - which is what the book really is about. Coleus, canna, caladiums... these plants recur in the book. It's fine for people who wish to painstakingly recreate their gardens every year, but people who wish to build their gardens from year to year are going to want plants with more permanence. Curiously, a chapter on green plants seems to be missing. The point is that if one is talking about how to use foliage well, it is silly to fail to even try to mention the many shades of green to be found in leaves and how to get them to work with each other. The chapters on colors define the leaves that fit into those categories pretty narrowly, so there is room to talk about green. Chartreuse, olive, dark green, burgundy, avocado, bluish or aqua, all of these shades of green have special qualities that - when considered with leaf size and shape can contribute powerfully to garden design. Parallel to this is the fact that evergreens are not treated as foils to plants with larger leaves. Where they are mentioned, they have golden foliage. I am also a little saddened that there is not much discussion about how flowers work with foliage. The fact that the book is about foliage cannot mean that we must exclude from consideration other things that happen in gardens. Matching flowers to foliage can have remarkable effects, which is one reason I grow canna Wyoming almost every year. I should mention that it is generally true that

large-leafed plants tend to be thirsty plants, and therefore, it is easiest to get the most dramatic effects were it is possible to grow them near fine-foliaged plants with the same cultural requirement. That said, the idea that you can only make good use of foliage if you garden on damp soil - an idea implicit to this book - strikes me as being severely limiting. There are cactus, yucca, and agaves with very large foliage, for example. And one of my favorite spaces at Longwood Gardens is the gray plants/succulent garden where foliage reigns supreme. Consider the Leaf is a book worth considering as part of a large gardening library, especially for people who live in the Hudson Delaware Valleys, Long Island, and Connecticut. It is, however, impossible to recommend as the only book on the subject. If one is looking for an encyclopedic treatment or one that relies less on trendy plants, less on tender plants, and less on plants that need constantly damp soil, it works only as an introduction to the subject. Despite its well executed photos, it is also a book more oriented to those who love to read about plants than it is to those who covet books packed with photos of plants in the garden. 16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. This Book Might Change Your Thinking on Garden Design By NJCher The leaf itself is not only worthy of consideration, it should be the determining factor, says this author. A plant doesn't earn its keep unless it has an interesting leaf that contributes to the esthetics of the garden. This is a different way of looking at garden planning, as most people choose plants based on their flower. I used the book this spring when I redesigned my front herb and flower gardens, a task which was prompted by tree growth that had turned a formerly sunny garden into a shade garden. I learned that by "considering the leaf," I could have my flowers early in the season while the tree leaves were unfurling. Peonies, daylilies, ferns and hostas, arranged with respect to their leaf shape, gave me foliage and flowers throughout the summer. Furthermore, when arranged by leaf shape and color, I found I had an attractive display even when there were no blooms going on. I found that design using this principle resulted in more color than what I would have otherwise. There are several sections of color plates to illustrate the different approaches and I am excited about using some of these ideas next year.

What gardener hasn't been disappointed with borders after spring blooms have faded? Designing a garden with the focus on flowers is missing half the fun, according to the author, an expert plantswoman and popular horticultural educator. Working on the premise that the form of the leaf is the most important design element, Glattstein explains the basic leaf shapes and how to balance them pleasingly. Color also adds dimension to plantings, and Glattstein includes individual chapters focusing on specific tonal palettes. Each chapter is filled with plant suggestions and hints for successfully incorporating foliage into the garden. More than 110 photographs illustrate foliage effects, from subtle to dramatic. This lively and information-rich book will benefit gardeners and landscape designers alike.

From Booklist Whether ruffled, woolly, with a metallic sheen, or filigreed like lace, leaves are among the most significant elements to be considered when planning and planting visually exciting garden displays. Writing in an engaging style that should inspire gardeners regardless of skill level, Glattstein makes a case for thinking long and hard about using the foliage aspect of plants to best advantage, including an entire palette of perennials, trees, shrubs, vines, and tender annuals. With her eyes trained on the details, Glattstein reveals myriad ways of incorporating plants with interesting or unusual leaves, whether one is developing new areas of the garden or integrating plants into an existing scheme. Always stressing a well-considered overall design over the mere gathering together of odd or bizarre specimens, Glattstein shows her value as an instructor by explaining concepts clearly, suggesting appealing species and cultivars for diverse climates and conditions, and providing options enough to challenge budding designers while also giving the experienced green thumb plenty to think about, too. Alice Joyce Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A substantial read for serious gardeners. -- The Bookseller, January 17, 2003 The text . . . offer[s] helpful suggestions for beginning gardeners as well as providing inspiration for professionals. -- Suzanne Hively, The Cleveland Plain Dealer, February 13, 2003 From the Author Judy Glattstein is an instructor at the New York Botanical Garden and the Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education at Rutgers University.