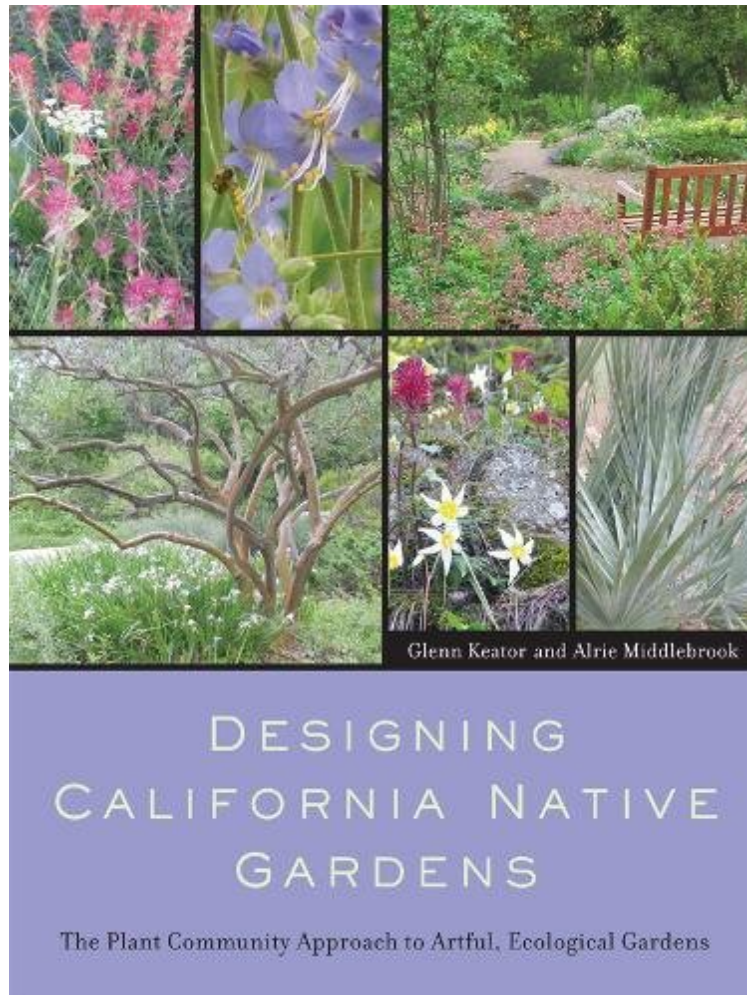


Designing California Native Gardens: The Plant Community Approach to Artful, Ecological Gardens

Glenn Keator, Alrie Middlebrook, Phyllis M. Faber
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Glenn Keator, Alrie Middlebrook, Phyllis M. Faber : Designing California Native Gardens: The Plant Community Approach to Artful, Ecological Gardens before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Designing California Native Gardens: The Plant Community Approach to Artful, Ecological Gardens:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Another dust collector on the bookshelf By BobbieNice book but...not useful for my area. Had offered a "look inside the book" option I would not have ordered it. The book is divided into 12 chapters of approximately 20 pages each, focusing on the different climate/terrain areas of California such as coastal, desert, redwood forest etc. That means if it covers your particular environment you have purchased a

300 + page book with roughly 20 pages of relevant information. That said, it does have many nice photos, landscape drawings and resource information. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Invaluable for understanding how to create a native plant garden that works. By Gen of North Coast Gardening. While many books about natives are like a plant encyclopedia, *Designing California Native Gardens* is more about the concepts involved in designing to the different styles, climates, and plant communities in California's varied regions. This is a book I take into the bathtub or lounge in the sunshine with. It's beautifully illustrated and photographed, and the point of it is to give you that broader understanding of the types of plants that thrive in the region you call home. This is important for two reasons. One, California's a big place, and the plants that thrive in my redwood forest region do NOT like the desert, and vice versa. But an even bigger reason why understanding plant communities is important is that you want your garden to reflect your region's beauty, and be helpful to the bugs and animals that actually live in your area. For me, planting a cactus next to my redwoods and hoping an owl will know to nest there would be silly. But if I plant the trees and shrubs that my local birds are familiar with, THEN I'll see some wildlife. If you've learned some things about native plants, but are struggling to put all the pieces together, this book is the next step for creating a California garden that has regional flair and supports your local wildlife. It's not the only book you'll need, but it fills a valuable niche in books about natives for the insights it provides. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very helpful book from a terrific native garden designer. By Paulette. This book is a terrific resource on how to think about plant groupings so one can get a natural look. Gardens have many micro-climates depending on how much shade surrounding houses cast, so a single garden is often best done using multiple plant communities. The 12 chapters really cover pretty much all the micro-environments one might find in one's own yard. For instance, my front yard is South facing and gets full sun, so a 'chapparral' plant community approach works well. My very small back yard faces north, gets little full sun, and the back fence is lined with my neighbor's row of redwood trees on its far side. For this part of the yard, I used the Redwood forest ideas. Thinking about your garden in terms of sun exposure, coupled with your local rainfall patterns will help you map different parts of your garden to the 12 plant communities in the book. It's a great book, and if you are beginning to think about how to bring the beauty of California's native plants to your garden, this is one of the must-have books. Several reviewers have also recommended another related book, *California Native Plants for the Garden*, by Bornstein and Fross. The two books complement each other, and I would recommend both - this one for how to think about garden design using CA natives, and the other for help identifying plants that meet a specific need.

Inspirational, practical, and easy to use, this book was created with the aim of conveying the awesome diversity and beauty of California's native plants and demonstrating how they can be brought into ecologically sound, attractive, workable, and artful gardens. Structured around major California plant communities: bluffs, redwoods, the Channel Islands, coastal scrub, grasslands, deserts, oak woodlands, mixed evergreen woodlands, riparian, chaparral, mountain meadows, and wetlands. The book's twelve chapters each include sample plans for a native garden design accompanied by original drawings, color photographs, a plant list, tips on successful gardening with individual species, and more. Both residential and professional gardeners will learn the benefits of going native with gardens that require less water and fewer fertilizers, attract wildlife, engage the senses, create a sense of place, and, at the same time, preserve our rich natural heritage. *Designing Native California Gardens* includes:

- * More than 600 selected native species recommended for the garden
- * More than 300 photographs of native plants, natural plant communities, and residential native gardens
- * Recommended places to visit for viewing each plant community

This book not only tells you all about hundreds of these beautiful plants but -- most important -- how and where to deploy them to great effect.