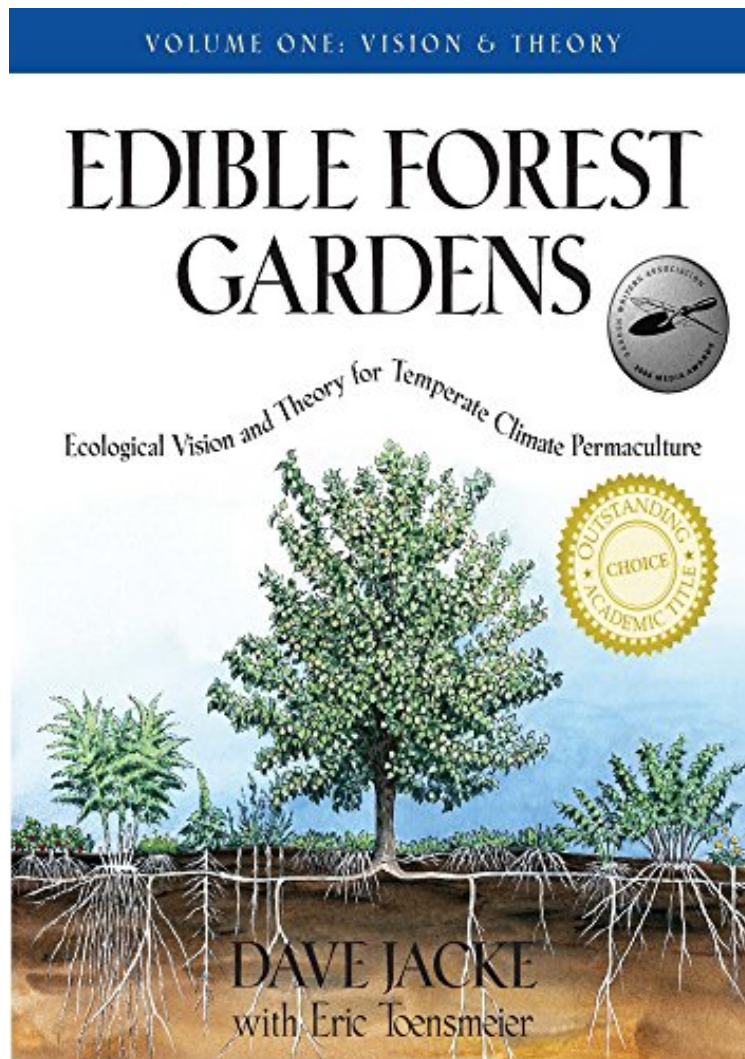


# Edible Forest Gardens, Volume I: Ecological Vision, Theory for Temperate Climate Permaculture

*Dave Jacke, Eric Toensmeier*  
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**Dave Jacke, Eric Toensmeier : Edible Forest Gardens, Volume I: Ecological Vision, Theory for Temperate Climate Permaculture** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Edible Forest Gardens, Volume I: Ecological Vision, Theory for Temperate Climate Permaculture:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. you will enjoy all of the little and big drops of wisdom ...By carlosI am starting a business called Epic Edible Backyards, and researching permaculture and ways to maximize food production. This set of books has been on my reading list for a while and they were well worth the wait. For someone

interested in ecology, nature, permaculture, and design, you will enjoy all of the little and big drops of wisdom in these books. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. "Our step will always leave a footprint" So watch where we walk." By JimBoStuff Impressed to find so much information in what I thought was "just another garden book". Edible Forest Gardens 2 volume set are invaluable to guide us back to our "roots" so to speak. The forest with its plants and trees all interconnected (poly-culture) in an ecosystem designed to bring life, production and rejuvenation back to the forest. Man (IN GENERAL TERMS) thinking he/she would improve things by putting them in "order" (monoculture) actually disordered the system. This set of books brings hopes that each individual will rethink our "steps" watch where we walk. In the Boy Scouts as a scout Master I taught the boys to leave the camp site better than what it was when you got there. This holds true for everything in life, but in this bigger picture the camp site (our forest) are in a mess that will take decades to restore. I highly recommend Edible Forest Gardens 2 volume for anyone who wants to guard his or her's footsteps to leave a lasting impression for the next generation and those there after. Speaking of a lasting legacy I also recommend A Journey Into the Fourth Dimension: The Lasting Legacy of Derek Saul 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Amazing, in-Depth Reference By George Roark It's no surprise to learn that Dave and Eric worked for seven years to write the Edible Forest Gardens books; the depth and breadth of permaculture knowledge that they present is incredible. Although I've heard some say that these books are not an easy read, I've found them to be fascinating, enjoyable and indispensable. I started my journey into permaculture with Gaia's Garden by Toby Hemenway, then decided to plant an edible forest in the back yard, so I purchased Volume 2 of Edible Forest Gardens, since it covers the practical consideration of forest gardening. I was so impressed with the book that I then purchased volume 1, which focuses on the ecological vision and theory for temperate climate permaculture. Highly recommended!

Edible Forest Gardens is a groundbreaking two-volume work that spells out and explores the key concepts of forest ecology and applies them to the needs of natural gardeners in temperate climates. Volume I lays out the vision of the forest garden and explains the basic ecological principles that make it work. In Volume II, Dave Jacke and Eric Toensmeier move on to practical considerations: concrete ways to design, establish, and maintain your own forest garden. Along the way they present case studies and examples, as well as tables, illustrations, and a uniquely valuable "plant matrix" that lists hundreds of the best edible and useful species. Taken together, the two volumes of Edible Forest Gardens offer an advanced course in ecological gardening--one that will forever change the way you look at plants and your environment.

Bookwatch-Don't expect the usual light gardening guide reading, Volume 1 of Edible Forest Gardens: Ecological Vision and Theory for Temperate Climate Permaculture packs in serious surveys of the ancient practice of forest gardening, which offers homeowners and gardeners a new way of viewing modern home landscaping and nature. Useful plants can be blended to supply daily needs, the land can be 'untamed' to return support to healthy populations of plant and animal species. Years of experience goes into Edible Forest Gardens; this first volume provides a review of the ecological and cultural foundations for recognizing forest gardening as a viable ecological alternative in modern North America. Dave Jacke runs his own ecological design firm consulting on permaculture and landscapes around the world; his co-author Eric Toensmeier founded the former Perennial Vegetable Seed Company and has worked with the New England Small Farm Institute. A highly recommended pick; especially for college-level and serious collections on permaculture and horticulture. Plants and Gardens News--Patricia Jonas, Brooklyn Botanic Garden--But even if you grow enough organic food to feed yourself, are you doing what's best for the ecosystem? "Many drawbacks of modern agriculture persist in organic farming and gardening," Dave Jacke and Eric Toensmeier write in Edible Forest Gardens, because they do not "mimic the structure of natural systems, only selected functions." Even Quail Hill Farm members are still harvesting mostly annual crops grown in plowed fields. Jacke and Toensmeier offer a radical vision for stepping out of the conceptual continuum of conventional agriculture and organic farming. They point to the productivity of temperate forests--which is twice that of agricultural land in terms of net calories--and take that as their design model. Building on Robert Hart's classic book, Forest Gardening, and incorporating permaculture practice, Jacke and Toensmeier propose a garden where many species of edible perennial plants are grown together in a design that mimics forest structure and function. Edible Forest Gardens is an ambitious two-volume work whose influence should extend well beyond ecologists and permaculturists and, in the best of all outcomes, reach into the mainstream. Volume one lays out the "Ecological Vision and Theory for Temperate Climate Permaculture," and it also includes a very useful analysis of existing forest gardens (one only 50 by 90 feet) and a tantalizing 30-page appendix of "top 100" species. As of this writing, volume two, which focuses on practical design and maintenance considerations, is just being released, but on the evidence of volume one, I have no doubt the set will be an indispensable reference for gardeners and farmers for decades. "When people have food gardens," the authors write, "they usually are tucked out of sight and out of view of the neighbors. They rely on external inputs of energy, nutrients, insect and disease controls, and water and are based primarily on annual plants. For some reason, growing food is considered unsightly, unseemly, possibly antisocial, and in some towns and cities, illegal! The tremendous infrastructure we have built in our cities and

towns reflects a culture and horticulture of separation and isolation." The consequences of such attitudes about growing food have been disastrous, and each of us can contribute to the repair effort. Jacke and Toensmeier say that the principles of forest gardening can be applied even in a tiny urban yard or on a rooftop. Containers of edible perennials and annuals on a rooftop are not most farmers' idea of agriculture, but I grow nearly 20 percent of the authors' top 100 species and intend to look for ways to take this small start much further. And what about chocolate and oranges? Clearly there are foods that cannot be grown in a temperate forest. "We do not expect forest gardening to replace regular gardening or the foods we know and love," the authors admit. "Just how far we can take forest gardening in supplying food for ourselves is not yet determined." Finding the answer may be the most optimistic work gardeners and farmers can do. "These will be the benchmark works in the field for many years. The level of scholarship and meticulous footnoting is unsurpassed by anything I've seen in permaculture literature." --Toby Hemenway, author of *Gaia's Garden* From the Publisher "...But the book I will be keeping by me for the seasons ahead... is *Edible Forest Gardens* by Dave Jacke with Eric Toensmeier. In its way this book--the first of two volumes--is a sequel to the wonderful *Tree Crops: A Permanent Agriculture* (1929) by J. Russell Smith.... *Edible Forest Gardens* offers a vision of the garden that reaches well beneath its aesthetic surface and into its ecological depths. It reminds us that whatever gardens are an oasis from, they can never be an oasis from the natural world or our own underlying economic needs." --Verlyn Klinkenborg *The New York Times Book* June 5, 2005 "This is certainly the most thorough and realistic assessment of the potential for temperate perennial-based gardening that I have seen -- and I've read everything I've been able to find on temperate perennial crops, going back to J. Russell Smith and John Hershey... The first volume of *Edible Forest Gardens* is a superb primer on ecology as it relates to horticulture in general, and I highly recommend it even for gardeners who aren't primarily interested in useful perennials..." --Greg Williams Publisher, *Hort Ideas* From the Inside Flap From the Introduction: An Invitation to Adventure Picture yourself in a forest where almost everything around you is food. Mature and maturing fruit and nut trees form an open canopy. If you look carefully, you can see fruits swelling on many branches: pears, apples, persimmons, pecans, and chestnuts. Shrubs fill the gaps in the canopy. They bear raspberries, blueberries, currants, hazelnuts, and other lesser-known fruits, flowers, and nuts at different times of the year. Assorted native wildflowers, wild edibles, herbs, and perennial vegetables thickly cover the ground. You use many of these plants for food or medicine. Some attract beneficial insects, birds, and butterflies. Others act as soil builders, or simply help keep out weeds. Here and there vines climb on trees, shrubs, or arbors with fruit hanging through the foliage: hardy kiwis, grapes, and passionflower fruits. In sunnier glades large stands of Jerusalem artichokes grow together with groundnut vines. These plants support one another as they store energy in their roots for later harvest and winter storage. Their bright yellow and deep violet flowers enjoy the radiant warmth from the sky. What Is an Edible Forest Garden? An edible forest garden is a perennial polyculture of multipurpose plants. Most plants regrow every year without replanting: perennials. Many species grow together: a polyculture. Each plant contributes to the success of the whole by fulfilling many functions: multipurpose. In other words, a forest garden is an edible ecosystem, a consciously designed community of mutually beneficial plants and animals intended for human food production. Edible forest gardens provide more than just a variety of foods. The seven Fs apply here: food, fuel, fiber, fodder, fertilizer, and "farmaceuticals," as well as fun. A beautiful, lush environment can be a conscious focus of your garden design, or a side benefit you enjoy (see Figure 0.1). Forest gardens mimic forest ecosystems, those natural perennial polycultures once found throughout the world's humid climates. In much of North America, your garden would soon start reverting to forest if you were to stop tilling and weeding it. Annual and perennial weeds would first colonize the bare soil. Shrubs would soon shade out the weeds. Then, sun-loving pioneer trees would move in and a forest would be born. Eventually, even these pioneers would succumb to longer-lived, more shade-tolerant species. It can take many decades for this process, called succession, to result in a mature forest. We humans work hard to hold back succession: mowing, weeding, plowing, and spraying. If the successional process were the wind, we would be constantly motoring against it. Why not put up a sail and glide along with the land's natural tendency to become forest? Edible forest gardening is about expanding the horizons of our food gardening across the full range of the successional sequence, from field to forest, and everything in between. Besides the food and other products, you should design your forest garden for self-renewing, self-fertilizing self-maintenance. For a self-renewing garden, plant mainly perennials or self-sowing annuals. Allow a healthy soil community to develop by mulching and leaving the soil undisturbed. Build soil fertility with plants that fix nitrogen, amass soil minerals, act as mulch sources, or a blend of these. Reduce or eliminate your pest control work by providing food and shelter for insectivorous birds, and predatory and parasitic insects. Fragrant plants, such as onions, may confuse insect pests and slow their march toward your crops. In fact, you can reduce pest and disease problems simply by mixing things up, rather than planting in blocks of the same species! All these things, and more, reduce the amount of maintenance your garden needs and increase its yields. When we mimic how nature works and design well, we can reduce the work of sustaining ourselves to mulching, some pruning, occasional weeding, and minimal pest and disease management (depending on the crops you grow). Oh, and then there's the harvesting! Essentially, edible forest gardening is the art and science of putting plants together in woodland-like patterns that forge mutually beneficial relationships, creating a garden ecosystem that is more than the sum of its parts. You can grow fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, other useful plants, and animals in a way that mimics

natural ecosystems. You can create a beautiful, diverse, high-yield garden that is largely self-maintained. Gardening LIKE the Forest vs. Gardening IN the Forest Edible forest gardening is not necessarily gardening in the forest. It is gardening like the forest. You dont need to have an existing woodland if you want to forest garden, though you can certainly work with one. Forest gardeners use the forest as a design metaphor, a model of structure and function, while adapting the design to focus on meeting human needs in a small space. We learn how forests work and then participate in the creation of an ecosystem in our backyards that can teach us things about ecology and ourselves while we eat our way through it. Gardening like a forest is what this book is all about. Gardening in the forest is different. We can transform an existing piece of woodland into an edible forest garden, and this book will explain how, but there are many other ways to garden in the forest. These include the restoration of natural woodlands, ecological forestry, and the creation of primarily aesthetic woodland gardens. The latter forms of gardening in the forest are not what this book is about. If you want to garden in the forest in any of those ways, see the resources listed in the appendix. If you want to grow food in a garden like a forest, read on.