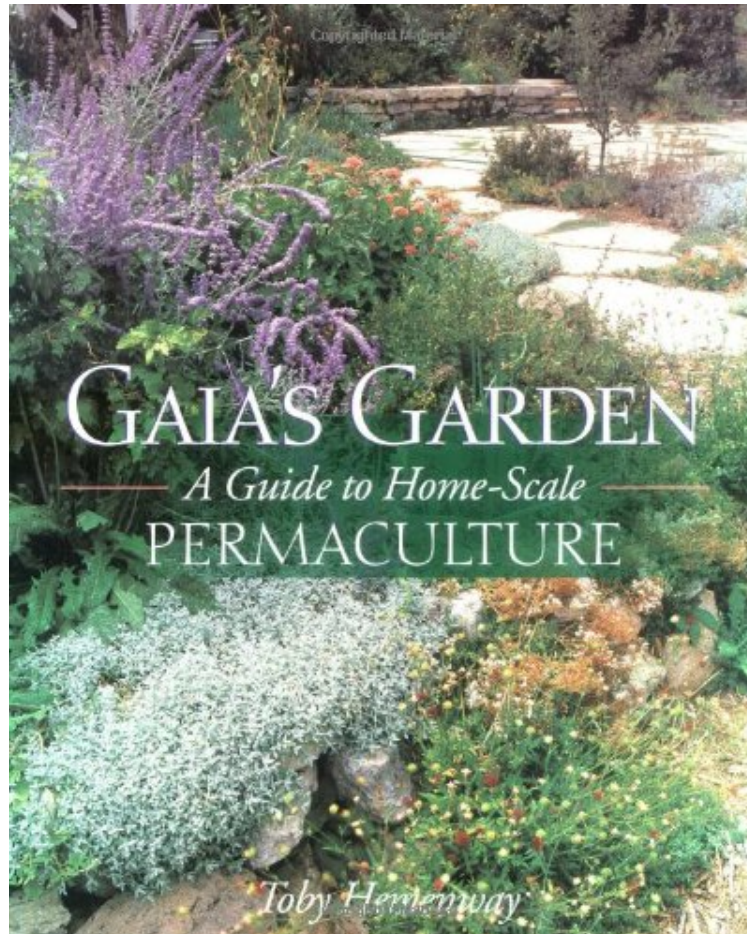


Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture

Toby Hemenway, John Todd

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Toby Hemenway, John Todd : Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. permaculture at its bestBy Customer candaceThis book came highly recommended and justifiably so. This is an excellent reference book about permaculture. The Why. The how.This is applicable to many different situations, although, it would seem to be most applicable to those who have more than just a house on a typical small urban building lot. Not that you can't implement some of these changes even there to help create a great personal environment.And before you begin any of these projects, make sure you have your family's support. I got shot down as soon as I opened by mouth.The first thing to be aware of though, is that this will need a certain investment of time, \$\$, and WATER. Once started and going, pretty self-sustaining, which is the point. Wish I could get there. Wish we could ALL get there.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Permaculture as both luscious and accessibleBy Ann CrosbyBest book to introduce permaculture! Toby describes a luscious

environment that we can create right where we live, whether urban, suburban or rural. He encourages imaginative planning built on the basic permaculture principles. I have given away numerous copies to friends because this book is so accessible and so good! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very nice
By KI Time
Hobby farms are likely a very good hobby for everyone given the Cali drought.

Permaculture is a verbal marriage of "permanent" and "agriculture." Australian Bill Mollison pioneered its development. Key features include: use of compatible perennials; non-invasive planting techniques; emphasis on biodiversity; specifically adaptable to local climate, landscape, and soil conditions; highly productive output of edibles. Now, picture your backyard as one incredibly lush garden, filled with edible flowers, bursting with fruit and berries, and carpeted with scented herbs and tangy salad greens. The visual impact is of Monet's palette, a wash of color, texture, and hue. But this is no still life. The flowers nurture endangered pollinators. Bright-colored songbirds feed on abundant berries and gather twigs for their nests. The plants themselves are grouped in natural communities, where each species plays a role in building soil, deterring pests, storing nutrients, and luring beneficial insects. And finally, you--good ol' homo sapiens--are an integral part of the scene. Your garden tools are resting against a nearby tree, and have a slight patina of rust, because this garden requires so little maintenance. You recline into a hammock to admire your work. You have created a garden paradise. This is no dream, but rather an ecological garden, which takes the principles of permaculture and applies them on a home-scale. There is nothing technical, intrusive, secretive, or expensive about this form of gardening. All that is required is some botanical knowledge (which is in this book) and a mindset that defines a backyard paradise as something other than a carpet of grass fed by MiracleGro.

From Library Journal
Hemenway, a permaculture expert and associate editor of *The Permaculture Activist*, explains how gardens can function as ecosystems, describes the basic parts of an ecological garden (soil, water, plants, and animals), and shows how to create backyard ecosystems through guilds. Guilds, the author tells us, are groups of plants that function as an ecosystem to provide products for humans, create cover and food for wildlife, nourish the soil, conserve water, and repel pests. A simple example of a guild is the "three sisters" (corn, beans, and squash); corn stalks provide a trellis for beans, the beans supply nitrogen to the soil, and the squash leaves inhibit weeds and conserve water. While Hemenway's ideas are intriguing, creating guilds specific to an area involves extensive research, which involves either observing plant communities in the wild or using books or university contacts. In addition, the author doesn't sufficiently explain how to incorporate the many sun-loving vegetables and flowers into guilds, which are often shade-oriented. Recommended only for botanical and academic libraries.
Sue O'Brien, Downers Grove P.L., IL Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.
About the Author
Toby Hemenway is the author of the first major North American book on permaculture, *Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture*. After obtaining a degree in biology from Tufts University, Toby worked for many years as a researcher in genetics and immunology, first in academic laboratories at Harvard and the University of Washington in Seattle, and then at Immunex, a major medical biotech company. At about the time he was growing dissatisfied with the direction biotechnology was taking, he discovered permaculture, a design approach based on ecological principles that creates sustainable landscapes, homes, and workplaces. A career change followed, and Toby and his wife spent ten years creating a rural permaculture site in southern Oregon. He was associate editor of *Permaculture Activist*, a journal of ecological design and sustainable culture, from 1999 to 2004. He teaches permaculture and consults and lectures on ecological design throughout the country. His writing has appeared in magazines such as *Whole Earth*, *Natural Home*, and *Kitchen Gardener*. He is available for workshops, lectures, and consulting in ecological design. He lives in Sebastopol, California. Visit his web site at www.patternliteracy.com