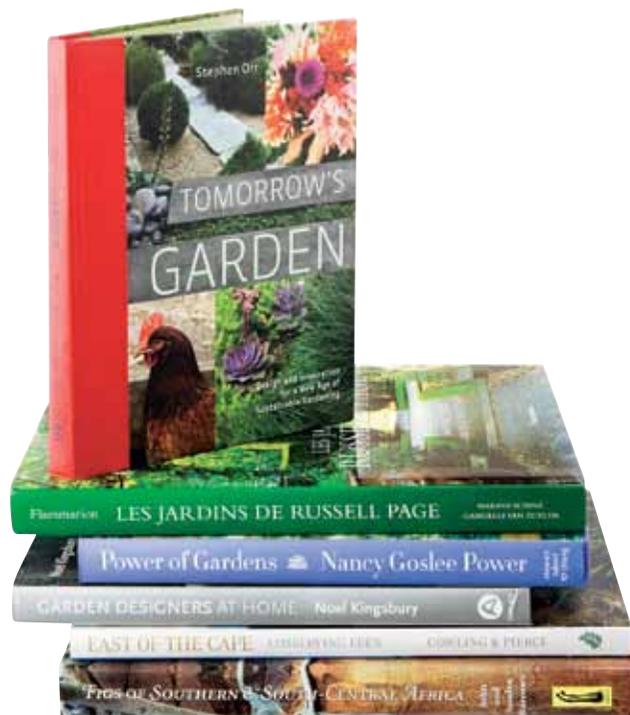




EAST OF THE CAPE - CONSERVING EDEN (Fernwood Press) by R M Cowling and Shirley M Pierce
Borderland in every sense, this section of our country is a biological melting pot of nature and people, where seven of South Africa's eight biomes come together. At the heart of this is the thickest biome, ancient and diverse, misunderstood and neglected, with a mysterious and captivating beauty. In this remarkably beautiful book, the authors introduce the region's natural and human history, take us through its plants, animals and people, and end with a sensible blueprint for the future management of this extraordinary area.



GARDEN DESIGNERS AT HOME (Pavilion) by Noel Kingsbury
Knowing Noel Kingsbury, I was sure he would not serve up the usual A-list of international garden designers. And, sure enough, there are lots of surprises here. Kingsbury views garden designers from a plants person's point of view and sometimes the gulf between these two professions can be immense and fraught. I guess all the designers featured in this book pass muster as being plant knowledgeable too. There are 25 designers' private gardens and each chapter features the designer's biography, a garden-making timeline, conversations with a designer, descriptions of the garden and some favourite plants. His writing is always fresh and personal. It's just a pity that they are all northern-hemisphere gardens, with the exception of Roberto Burle Marx's in Brazil.



Visual Feast



Landscape designer Franchesca Watson shares her top reads - from Californian hamlets and indigenous treasures to design secrets and Russell Page's gardens



TOMORROW'S GARDEN (Rodale Books) by Stephen Orr
This is a fabulous little book managing to present sensible information about sustainable gardening in a new age, while maxing up on style and beauty - a rare accomplishment. The pictures are mostly of American gardens with a modern and accessible style, and the text is zippy, informative and fun. There are three main sections - simply put - covering response to locality and function, materials, and edible and community gardens. This is the first book on sustainable gardening that has excited me visually.



FIGS OF SOUTHERN & SOUTH CENTRAL AFRICA (Umdaus Press) by J E Burrows
Wild figs are one of the wonders of the world and they are really hot at the moment in terms of design, with their incredible roots and wonderful bold foliage. One of the most impressively produced botanical books to come out of South Africa, this authoritative work provides detailed information on the 48 native figs of the region plus commonly cultivated introduced species. It offers beautiful presentation of knowledge with an abundance of good photographs and botanical drawings. There is also information from other specialists on cultivation and the relationships

between figs and birds, animals and insects - especially the curious symbiosis of wasps and figs.



POWER OF GARDENS (Stewart, Tabori & Chang) by Nancy Goslee Power and Bunny Williams
This book showcases the work of Nancy Goslee Power, a veteran garden designer based in Santa Monica. Goslee Power's work encompasses both traditional and modernist styles, and she carries off both with comfortable ease, somehow making her gardens relaxed, easy, casual and inviting - what has come to be called the California style. The book features 17 of her best gardens built over the last 25 years, including her own. She clearly states her mission and purpose in the text, and the photographs are well conceived within the informal layout. The information is very relevant to the way we live here, and most of the plants are familiar too.



THE GARDENS OF RUSSELL PAGE (Frances Lincoln) by Gabrielle van Zuylen and Marina Schinz
Russell Page (1906-1985) was one of the most influential garden designers of the last century. This is a new edition of Marina Schinz's classic account of Page's garden designs and I, for one, am very happy to have it - my first edition has been drooled over so often it is practically falling apart! Page was trained as an artist before a love of plants took him into garden design, and he brought an architectural sensibility and a deeply fabulous style to his many, many commissions around the world. Lovingly collected information and stunning photographs feature in this classic book. • Franchesca Watson • www.franchescawatson.com