

## **Books Recommendations for Future Reading:**

Mary Blair: ***The Moral of Flowers***, Rebecca Hey

The 1833 gem by the poet, painter, and self-taught naturalist Rebecca Hey. This illustrated encyclopedia presents a singular fusion of Hey's original verse, poetic prose, and perfectly selected quotations from celebrated poets about each flower, coupled with beautiful engravings drawn from life by William Clark, former draughtsman and engraver of the London Horticultural Society.

Mary Blair: ***The Potting Shed Papers***, Charles Elliott

In these essays, Charles Elliott casts a whimsical eye over gardens and gardening around the globe. From the Japanese craze for the Ingurishu Gaaden (English Garden) to the relentless plundering of tropical forests for glamorous orchids, Elliott seeks to bring to life some of the more remarkable episodes in horticultural history.

Mary Blair: ***Tree Story: The History of the World Written in Rings***, Valerie Trouet

Named an April 2020 New and Noteworthy Book by *The New York Times*. Research into tree rings has made amazing contributions to our understanding of Earth's climate history and its influences on human civilization over the past 2,000 years. Trouet reveals how the seemingly simple and relatively familiar concept of counting tree rings has inspired far-reaching scientific breakthroughs that illuminate the complex interactions between nature and people. Blending popular science, travelogue, and cultural history, *Tree Story* highlights exciting findings of tree-ring research, including the fate of lost pirate treasure, successful strategies for surviving California wildfire, the secret to Genghis Khan's victories, the connection between Egyptian pharaohs and volcanoes, and even the role of olives in the fall of Rome.

Mary Blair: ***Virginia Woolf's Garden***, Caroline Zoob

"Few things are more romantic than a lush garden full of vibrant color and sprinkled with cobblestone pathways. *Virginia Woolf's Garden* by Caroline Zoob explores the intricate flowers blooming behind Monk's House, where the legendary author and her husband, Leonard, lived. The Woolfs teach us that even a garden can be designed and is just as much a part of a home as the indoor space." *Romantic Homes Magazine*

Jill DeGraw: ***A Countryman's Woods***, Hal Borland (1983)

"Delightful, informal essays on the trees—and some commonly found shrubs and vines—of the North American woodlands." Book jacket

Jill DeGraw: ***Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds***, Jim Sterba.

"A former reporter for the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* who grew up in the kind of rural environment he writes about, Sterba is careful not to take sides. What he does seem to advocate is for all parties to reexamine their firmly held beliefs about nature, because living among wild, unpredictable animals is not as straightforward as a game of "Duck Hunt" or a Disney cartoon." *Washington Post* (From Peggy Doty's list from MG training)

Jill DeGraw: ***Sowing the Seeds of Victory: American Gardening Programs of World War I***, Rose Hayden-Smith

"Gardening activity during American involvement in World War I (1917-1919) is vital to understanding current work in agriculture and food systems... These World War I programs resulted in a national gardening ethos that transformed the American food system." (Amazon.com)

Ruth Eilers: ***At The Edge of The Orchard***, Tracy Chevalier

I was not crazy about the writing but the story begins with Johnny Appleseed in Ohio where a family has just come from the East to settle in the West, got as far as Ohio. From here one member moves on West, ending up in California working in the Sequoias where he was collecting seedlings to send to Europe. I've seen those trees, they are amazing!

Ruth Eilers: ***Children and Gardens***, Gertrude Jekyll

"Reminiscences of Gertrude Jekyll's childhood and early interest in plants. First published 1908, and written in a simple style for the young, it describes seeds, germination, flowers, fruits and gardens." Amazon.com

Ruth Eilers: ***Ground Rules: 100 Easy Lessons for Growing a More Glorious Garden***, Kate Frey

“Gardening doesn’t have to be difficult, and Kate Frey-expert gardener and designer-makes it easier than ever with her new book, *Ground Rules*.” Amazon.com

Ruth Eilers: ***Life in the Garden***, Penelope Lively

Lively takes up her key themes of time and memory, and her lifelong passions for art, literature, and gardening in this philosophical and poetic memoir. From the courtyards of her childhood home in Cairo to a family cottage in Somerset, to her own gardens in Oxford and London, Lively conducts an expert tour, taking us from Eden to Sissinghurst and into her own backyard, traversing the lives of writers like Virginia Woolf and Philip Larkin while imparting her own sly and spare wisdom.

Ruth Eilers: ***The Hidden Half of Nature, the Microbial Roots of Life and Health***, David R. Montgomery and Anne Bilke

I loved this book but you need to be a science/biology geek to love it. There was a chapter or two where I skipped through because it got too technical.

Ruth Eilers: ***The Paper Garden: An Artist Begins Her Life's Work at 72***, Mary Peacock

In 1772, upon the death of her second husband, Mary Delany arose from her grief, picked up a pair of scissors, and, at the age of seventy-two, created a new art form: mixed-media collage. Mrs. Delany produced an astonishing 985 botanically correct, breathtaking cut-paper flowers, now housed in the British Museum.

Dianne Freeze: ***Epitaph for a Peach: Four Seasons on My Family Farm***, David M. Masumoto

A third generation farmer, David Mas Masumoto grows peaches, nectarines, grapes and raisins on an organic 80 acre farm south of Fresno, California. Masumoto is currently a columnist for and The Fresno Bee and a regular contributor to the Sacramento Bee. “A lyrical, sensuous and thoroughly engrossing memoir of one critical year in the life of an organic peach farmer, *Epitaph for a Peach* is “a delightful narrative . . . with poetic flair and a sense of humor” (Amazon)

Dianne Freeze: ***Passalong Plants***, Steve Bender and Felder Rushing

“In this lively and sometimes irreverent book (don't miss the chapter on yard art), Steve Bender and Felder Rushing describe 117 passalong plants, giving particulars on hardiness, size, uses in the garden, and horticultural requirements. They present this information in the informal, chatty, and sometimes humorous manner that your next-door neighbor might use when giving you a cutting of her treasured Confederate rose.” (Amazon)

Shirlee Iverson: ***A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf***, John Muir

“This is the adventure that started it all. Walk with Muir from Indiana through Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. A story that is sure to inspire your own adventures and love for nature and the off beaten path.”

Shirlee Iverson: ***An Island Garden***, Celia Thaxter

An autobiographical account of gardening on an island off the coast of Maine. The illustrations are by Childe Hassam who spent time on the island. Beautiful little book.

Shirlee Iverson: ***Down to Earth with Helen Dillon***, Helen Dillon

“In this book Helen Dillon encapsulates, in her inimitable witty and accessible style, her lifetime of gardening know-how, deep love of plants and assured sense of design.” Amazon.com

Shirlee Iverson: ***Walden***, Henry David Thoreau

Here is a classic which everyone may – or may not – have read. Thoreau removes himself from men living “lives of quiet desperation” into the woods where he lives a simple and natural life. (Though I was surprised by how many times he trotted into Concord to chat with friends!)

Jean Korte: ***Faith in a Seed : The Dispersion Of Seeds And Other Late Natural History Writings***, Henry C. Thoreau

“Faith in a Seed contains the hitherto unpublished work The Dispersion of Seeds, one of Henry D. Thoreau's last important research and writing projects, and now his first new book to appear in 125 years. With the remarkable clarity and grace that characterize all of his writings, Thoreau describes the ecological succession of plant species through seed dispersal.” Amazon

Shey Lowman: ***A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Law Olmsted and American in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century***, Witold Rybczynski

“A brilliant collaboration between writer and subject illuminates Frederick Law Olmsted's role as a major cultural figure at the epicenter of nineteenth-century American history. We know Olmsted through the physical legacy of his stunning landscapes. But Olmsted's contemporaries knew a man of even more extraordinarily diverse talents.” A rare biography of Olmsted, filled with his beautifully written descriptions and letters.

Shey Lowman: ***American Canopy: Trees, Forests, and the Making of a Nation***, Eric Rutkow

An extremely well written and interesting history of the U.S. through our trees and forest. Why the U.S. continues to be a wood-based society lagging behind the rest of the world. Another gem of a book on trees.

Shey Lowman: ***Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter*** by Ben Goldfarb, 2018.

Who knew how important beavers were to the natural history of America and how bringing them back restores important habitat? Written in the first person, very engaging.

Shey Lowman: ***The Growing Season: How I Built a New Life-and Saved an American Farm***, Sarah Frey

Another memorable memoir, this time in Illinois. Frey known as the Pumpkin Queen of America saved her family farm in Wayne County at the age of 16 and built an empire out of Frey Farms delivering fruits and vegetables across the country through grocery stores and all the big box stores including Walmart and Lowe's.

Shey Lowman: ***The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World***, Andrea Wulf

The acclaimed author of *Founding Gardeners* reveals the forgotten life of Alexander von Humboldt, the visionary German naturalist whose ideas changed the way we see the natural world—and in the process created modern environmentalism. One of the *New York Times* 10 Best Books of the Year. Amazon.com

Shey Lowman: ***Reading the Landscape of America***, May Theilgaard Watts

A naturalist's classic. Essays about the Indiana Dunes and many areas in Illinois. Watts also wrote many of the plant and animal keys that are still in publication.

Shey Lowman: ***The Snoring Bird: My Family's Journey Through a Century of Biology***, Bernd Heinrich

Heinrich has written many naturalists books, many I have read and enjoyed. This book about his background is especially interesting. He writes about the *Snoring Bird*: “It contains history of WWII, a story of coming to America, one of a difficult but understandable father-son relationship. It is a biography of my father and the changing science of life as well as the life in our century.” Complete list of his books:

<http://www.thenaturalistsnotebook.com/books-by-bernd/>

Joan Oliver: ***Gardening for a Lifetime: How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older***, Sydney Eddison

“Sydney Eddison draws on her own forty years of gardening to provide a practical and encouraging roadmap for scaling back while keeping up with the gardening activities that each gardener loves most.” Amazon.com

Joan Oliver: ***Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses***, Robin Wall Kimmerer

Living at the limits of our ordinary perception, mosses are a common but largely unnoticed element of the natural world. *Gathering Moss* is a beautifully written mix of science and personal reflection that invites readers to explore and learn from the elegantly simple lives of mosses.