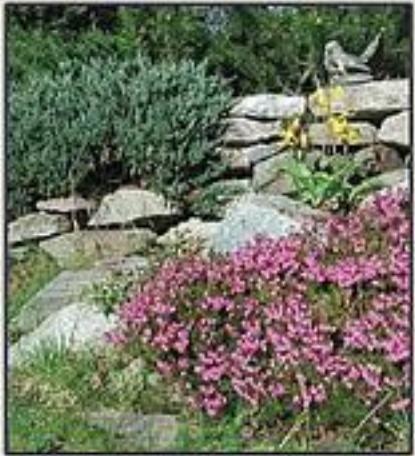


Interwoven Wild

DON GAYTON



ESSAYS



INTERWOVEN WILD

An Ecologist Loose in the Garden

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"Interwoven Wild: An Ecologist Loose In the Garden" begins with an intimate look at Don Gayton in his BC garden with his dog Spud. Striking a series of premises - the first one being that gardening is essentially an irrational act - he logically and humorously begins to unravel the work and rituals of gardening. Engaging the reader with real gardening experiences, Gayton takes us on the microscopic steps of a gardening season and his interest in ecological succession. While commenting on the inter-reliance of species, types of soil, why weeds invade, how foreign planets appear, insects, disease and frost, he also speculates on gardeners -- their needs to landscape, to purchase specialized tools, to use chemicals, to emotionally bond with trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables. The "back story" of "Interwoven Wild" is much more universal. In it Gayton uses his experiences as a working field ecologist to place the garden in the larger context of our present natural world. By interlocking artists such as Monet and Caravaggio; writers such as Walt Whitman, Thoreau, Emily Dickinson, and Ann Dowden; park designer Frederick Law Olmstead, and landscape architect Christopher Alexander, Gayton reminds us that the garden has long held sway in the creative consciousness. His brief excursions into history, whether tracing the apple back to Kazakhstan, explaining how the tulip made its way from Turkey to Holland, or how the industrialist Baylock's introduction of a smuggled Asian cherry tree destroyed the BC cherry orchids fascinate as well as instruct. For Gayton, the garden is a primordial human urge -- a gift, celebration, and revelation buried in human psyche, marked in our collective mythologies -- a kind of magical glue binding world culture, science and economics.

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