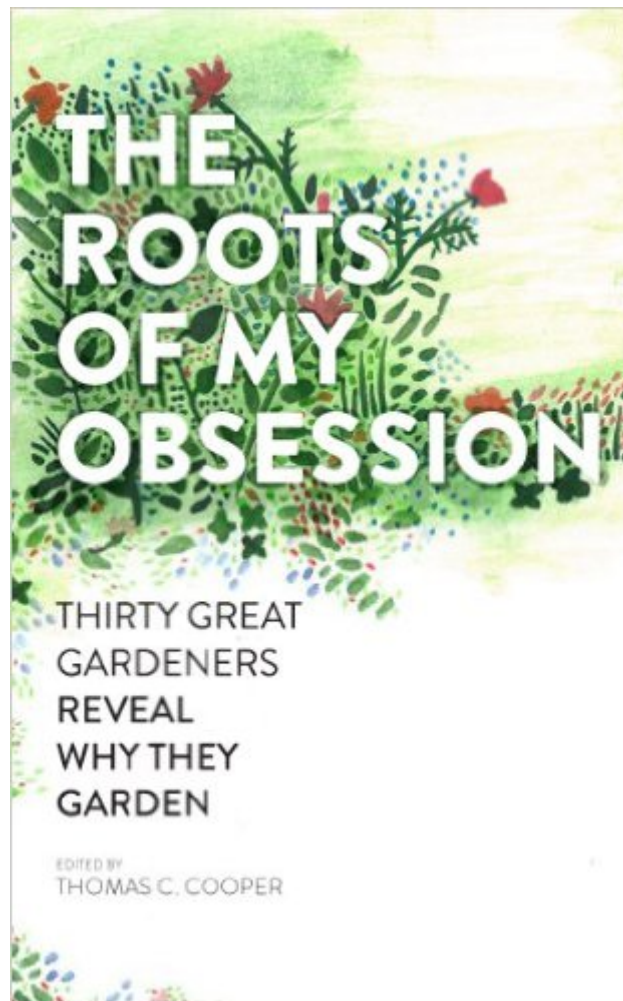


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# The Roots Of My Obsession: Thirty Great Gardeners Reveal Why They Garden



## Synopsis

Why do you garden? For fun? Work? Food? The reasons to garden are as unique as the gardener. *The Roots of My Obsession* features thirty essays from the most vital voices in gardening, exploring the myriad motives and impulses that cause a person to become a gardener. For some, it's the quest to achieve a personal vision of ultimate beauty; for others, it's a mission to heal the earth, or to grow a perfect peach. The essays are as distinct as their authors, and yet each one is direct, engaging, and from the heart. For Doug Tallamy, a love of plants is rooted first in a love of animals: animals with two legs (birds), four legs (box turtles, salamanders, and foxes), six legs (butterflies and beetles), eight legs (spiders), dozens of legs (centipedes), hundreds of legs (millipedes), and even animals with no legs (snakes and pollywogs). • For Rosalind Creasy, it's not the plant itself; it's how you use it in the garden. • And for Sydney Eddison, the reason has changed throughout the years. Now, she gardens for the moment. • As you read, you may find yourself nodding your head in agreement, or gasping in disbelief. What you're sure to encounter is some of the best writing about the gardener's soul ever to appear. For anyone who cherishes the miracle of bringing forth life from the soil, *The Roots of My Obsession* is essential inspiration.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This charming little book offers a new vista in our gardens of earthly delights. Here Hieronymous Bosch might have painted 30 figures--well more, if he included such splendid family members as

Fergus Garrett's Turkish grandmother whose flowers "were her great love and joy" or Panayoti Kelaidis's rock-garden besotted brother-in-law, Allan. "The Roots of My Obsession" began when editor Thomas C. Cooper invited some well-known garden writers to reflect on "Why do you garden?" Whatever the original number so invited may have been, he obtained brief (5 to 6 page, probably as long as requested) replies from 30 gardeners. Some are legendary figures such as the venerable Penelope Hobhouse and the greatly admired Margaret Roach. All are suitably obsessed, some to that point described by the late, great Henry Mitchell, garden writer for the Washington Post, of the understandable madness of a friend who planted hundreds of packages of seeds for a narrow city garden. Mitchell's essays are available elsewhere but the obsessions here are as he described. Every one of these 30 gardeners writes splendidly, in a unique voice, and every one of them has a fascinating story to tell. One expects such prowess with words as well as plants from the likes, say, of Amy Stewart whose "Wicked Bugs" is a gardening best seller and who has written five books and appeared on hundreds of TV and radio shows, or from Stephen Orr, editorial director for gardening of Martha Stewart Living, whose essay "The Flower Thief" may have you LOL. That is, these are professionals and it shows! Most of the writers interpreted "Why do you garden?" as "How did you get so involved to begin with?"--that is, the origins of their vegetable love.

The Roots of my Obsession, Thirty Great Gardeners Reveal Why They Garden, edited by Thomas Cooper, Timber Press. Under the stewardship of Thomas Cooper, innovative Timber Press collected first hand experiences of distinguished gardeners from around the globe and encapsulated them into a little book whose size belies the grandeur of its contents. Do not be misled by the title. This is not a collection of cobbled - together, self-congratulatory paeans to horticulture. Instead, consider it a jewelry box filled with personal sketches that touch the heart of those that open its cover. Mr. Cooper himself has written a sublimely crafted introduction that represents garden writing at its best. Imagine your favorite musicians. Then, think what a concert would sound like if they all assembled to perform at a command performance. Now, envisage this publication; for that's what this is: - a concert of master gardeners, each with their own moving solo. The publishers solicited thirty personal recollections from some of the world's most prominent horticultural voices to find out what motivated them. It is not a coincidence that they are all, in their own right, superb garden writers. Only the splendor of their professional accomplishments surpasses the beautiful skills of communication they display here. Some of the participants in this book submitted short essays, others have written a short narrative. A large number connect the dots of gardening back to pleasurable childhood experiences. Regardless of the kind of horticultural journey they traveled, all

share a love for this passionate hobby. With a variety of thirty different personal experiences to discover, readers who garden will find themselves reflected in the pages of this book.

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