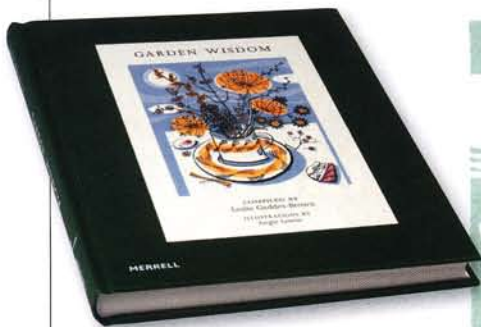


Book reviews



GARDEN WISDOM

compiled by Leslie Geddes-Brown,
illustrations by Angie Lewin Merrell,
£17.95, ISBN 978-1858944623

No gardener can ever know too much, as Geddes-Brown notes in her introduction, and there are very few who don't remain in the thrall of nature, whatever their level of skill. As a compilation of writings from gardeners through the centuries, *Garden Wisdom* confirms our enduring hunger for horticultural understanding. Gathering together the gardening greats from John Gerard in the 17th century, right the way through to today's writers, such as Tim Richardson, who regularly writes for *GARDENS ILLUSTRATED*, we savour their personal experiences, observations, and practical advice. Much of it seems timeless – how extraordinary that 17th-century gardeners should be reading about how best to grow salad, so much in fashion today with our cut-and-come-again crops: 'Lettuce delighteth to grow in a mannured, fat, moist and dunged ground; it must be sown in faire weather in places where there is plenty of water, and prospereth best if it be sown very thin.' (Gerard's *The Complete Herball*, 1633 edition.) Among the 57 entries there's a paean to compost from cottage gardener Margery Fish and a profile of the 'venerable' magnolia from contemporary garden columnist Robin Lane Fox. You'd be right to be



satisfied with just the words, but the irresistibly wonderful prints from Angie Lewin dotted throughout the book offer a closely observed yet characterful observation of the natural world. The entire volume is a joy to immerse yourself in. Sorrel Everton is deputy editor of *GARDENS ILLUSTRATED*

book offer

RRP £17.95. Reader offer price
£15.95 inc p&p. For details of
how to buy, see panel on page 99.

'The Italian garden does not exist for its flowers; its flowers exist for it; they are a late and infrequent adjunct to its beauties'

ENTRY FROM EDITH WHARTON