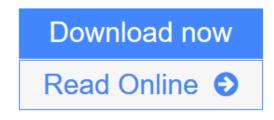


Integrated Forest Gardening: The Complete Guide to Polycultures and Plant Guilds in Permaculture Systems

Wayne Weiseman, Daniel Halsey, Bryce Ruddock



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Permaculture is a movement that is coming into its own, and the concept of creating plant guilds in permaculture is at the forefront of every farmer's and gardener's practice. One of the essential practices of permaculture is to develop perennial agricultural systems that thrive over several decades without expensive and harmful inputs: perennial plant guilds, food forests, agroforestry, and mixed animal and woody species polycultures.

The massive degradation of conventional agriculture and the environmental havoc it creates has never been as all pervasive in terms of scale, so it has become a global necessity to further the understanding of a comprehensive design and planning system such as permaculture that works with nature, not against it. The guild concept often used is one of a "functional relationship" between plants–beneficial groupings of plants that share functions in order to bring health and stability to a plant regime and create an abundant yield for our utilization. In other words, it is the integration of species that creates a balanced, healthy, and thriving ecosystem. But it goes beyond integration. A guild is a metaphor for all walks of life, most importantly a group of people working together to craft works of balance, beauty, and utility.

This book is the first, and most comprehensive, guide about plant guilds ever written, and covers in detail both what guilds are and how to design and construct them, complete with extensive color photography and design illustrations. Included is information on:

- What we can observe about natural plant guilds in the wild and the importance of observation;
- Detailed research on the structure of plant guilds, and a portrait of an oak tree (a guild unto itself);
- Animal interactions with plant guilds;
- Steps to guild design, construction, and dynamics: from assessment to design to implementation;
- Fifteen detailed plant guilds, five each from the three authors based on their unique perspectives;
- Guild project management: budgets, implementation, management, and maintenance.

Readers of any scale will benefit from this book, from permaculture designers and professional growers, to backyard growers new to the concept of permaculture. Books on permaculture cover this topic, but never in enough depth to be replicable in a serious way. Finally, it's here!

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