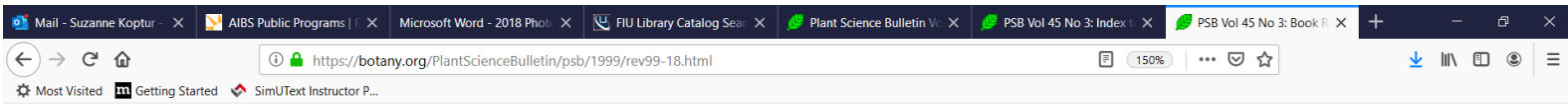


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<https://botany.org/PlantScienceBulletin/psb/1999/book99-3.html>



## Book Review: General

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**Gardening with a Wild Heart** Larner Lowry, Judith 1998. ISBN 0-520-21516-8 (cloth US\$35.00) 280 pp University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. - Judith Larner Lowry has written a beautiful and inspiring book, in which she traces her personal history of interest in native plants, taking her into her life's calling as proprietor of a native plant seed production nursery and landscape designer. *Gardening With a Wild Heart: Restoring California's Native Landscapes at Home*. The romantic title of this book lends it appeal to a wide variety of people interested in plants, yet the book is quite practical, and readily enjoyed by those considering themselves serious botanists. After all, there are those who may feel that native plants are more spiritually sustaining to the soul, and those who have heard that native plants are cheaper to maintain in the home landscape. It is the author's business to be more willing to relate on a variety of levels.

California is certainly one of the most enlightened states regarding landscaping with native plants, and has a well-known and active Native Plant Society and Exotic Pest Plant Council, and it is not surprising that a business like Lowry's has thrived in that environment. I hope that such pursuits will take all over the country in the near future! It is encouraging that people who take up gardening with native plants do not usually develop the attitude that once there is a good supply of the desired species in cultivation, the native communities are unimportant. Judith Larner Lowry appreciates the stunning complexity of natural areas compared with anything that people reproduce or design. When one grows native plants, one gains an appreciation for the adaptations of plants, and an understanding that a plant species never really experiences reality, or achieves its true destiny, outside of the habitats where it grows naturally. As natural areas disappear in the face of development, plants can often persist in cultivation much longer than the species with which they have coevolved for pollination and seed dispersal. But they, and we, their tenders, may not entirely happy or fulfilled. I recommend this book for an enjoyable read, and for encouragement in pursuing gardening with native plants and a wild heart! —Susanne Koptur, Florida International University, Miami

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