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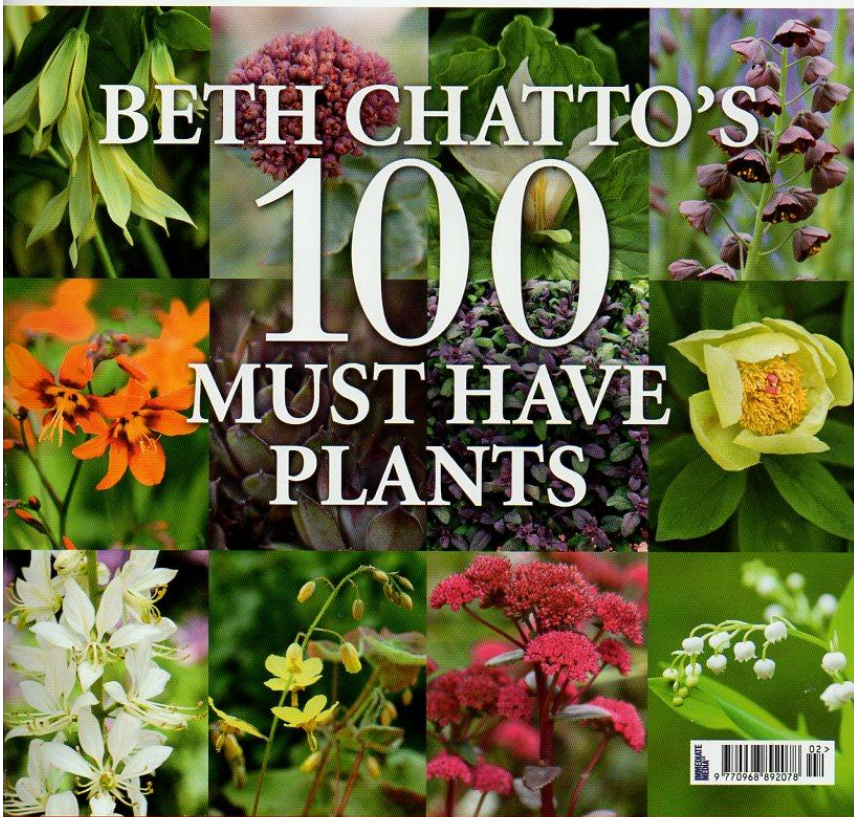
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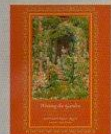


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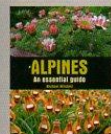
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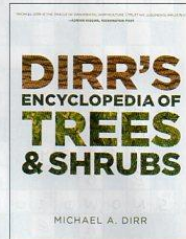
by Michael A Dirr
Timber Press, £50
ISBN 978-0881929010

Nearly all tree enthusiasts across the globe will own a tree or shrub book by Michael Dirr. One of the most respected tree experts in the USA, he is the author of two classic reference books, *Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs* and *Dirr's Trees and Shrubs for Warm Climates*. I have both at home and use them all the time.

Dirr's Encyclopedia of Trees & Shrubs is a compendium of both these books, brought right up to date by the author. It covers some 380 genera and 3,700 species and cultivars of both deciduous and evergreen woody plants.

This book has been written primarily for the American market, with imperial measurements and many references to trees he has observed in US states, towns and gardens, with typical North American hardiness zones added; but this does not detract from the quality and usefulness of the text to the European reader. In fact many of the cultivars he describes are unavailable in English nurseries, but hopefully they will be made available in the near future.

Dirr has his own writing style, which is fun, entertaining, a joy to read, easy to understand and easy to relate to and still extremely factual. This huge volume, weighing in at just under 3kg, is not just an



identification guide, but also provides clear cultivation and growing tips for each plant, from Dirr's personal experiences. More than 3,500 useful colour photographs of a good size are spread throughout the book, showing various attributes such as leaf colour, flower, fruit, habit and many more. In the back of the book there is one of the best plant selection guides I have come across in any book to help any amateur or professional gardener, and two substantial indexes.

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Tony Kirkham is head of arboretum at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

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