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The review of the book WILD GARDENS – CREATING NATURALISTIC GARDENS

Sven Nürnberger, WILD GARDEN. Garten naturalistisch gestalten. (WILD GARDEN. Shaping Gardens in a Naturalistic Way), ss. 216, Stuttgart (Hohenheim) 2019, Eugen Ulmer KG, ISBN 978-3-8186-0716-6, www.ulmer.de

Sven Nürnberger is a prominent horticultural specialist at the Frankfurt Palm Garden (Frankfurt am Main). He works as a master horticulturist in the field of ornamental plants, dealing mainly with the cultivation and application of perennials. He creates botanical theme gardens at the Palm Garden, as well as horticultural demonstration sites. S. Nürnberger speaks at international conferences on perennials and garden design and is a recognized author published in various scientific journals, especially in the Horticultural Practice ("Gartenpraxis") journal, where he regularly presents the results of his research. In his work, he combines observation and research into natural sites with the creation of horticultural entities based on such knowledge. This idea serves as the basis for his research assumptions adopted in the latest book: "WILD GARDEN. Shaping Gardens in a Naturalistic Way." The author seeks gardening inspiration not only in areas located in the Northern Hemisphere, but also at many Southern Hemisphere sites. Much of his gardening inspiration can be found in the areas of: New Zealand, Australia and Tasmania, South America (especially Chile and Argentina) and the Falkland Islands. Sven Nürnberger considers Ursula Mc Hardy (1930-2011), a Scottish traveler and gardener, to be one his mentors.

The book by S. Nürnberger perfectly combines descriptions of natural habitats as the main inspiration for the creation of gardens in a naturalistic style. Chapters dedicated to such concepts are referred to as "Special Gardens." The book consists of the following sections: "Why the 'Wild Garden" (pp. 8-21); "Observing Natural Habitats as Inspiration" (pp. 8-21); "Vegetation Areas in the Northern Hemisphere" (pp. 22-43); "Alpine Plants on Magic Mountain. Schatzalp Alpine Garden" (pp. 44-89); "Grassland Landscapes and Mediterranean Rocky Heathlands. Botanical Garden in Würzburg" (pp. 90-97); "Vegetation Areas in the Southern Hemisphere" (pp. 98-105); "Dragon Mountains in the Garden's Image. Frankfurt Palm Garden" (pp. 106-143); "South Hemisphere Garden in Northern Europe. Mc Hardy Garden" (pp. 144-161); "Connecting Garden Images Resembling Natural Ones" (pp. 162-181); "Diverse Plant Life Ranges in the Frankfurt Palm Garden" (pp. 161-193); "Service" ("Plants for Your Garden"; "Further Reading"; "Order Sources and Internet Information"; "Index"; "Gardens Described in this Book") (pp. 194-216).

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In the introduction titled "Why the 'Wild Garden?," the author states that this book emerged from his fascination with natural processes and the dynamic interpretation of living spaces within gardens (p. 7). Furthermore, the observation and study of nature provided an inexhaustible foundation for the introduction of innovation and creativity into gardens. In the section titled "Observing Natural Habitats as Inspiration," the interpretation of nature as a concept for gardens is undertaken, the ranges of cultivated plant life with the concept of a "Mixed Garden," insights into plant sociology, drawing conclusions based on natural habitats, the process of creating frameworks (frames) in gardens, and the creation of their individual components. Particularly suitable for these purposes are types and species from South America and the Southern Pacific region. It is important to authentically reflect landscape experiences in the gardens being created.

In the next section titled "Vegetation Images in the Northern Hemisphere," S. Nürnberger presents his inspirations for rock gardens and alpine areas. The Alps are young, high mountains, stretching 1,200 km in length and 150-250 km in width. They are home to many endemic species, including rock plants, pioneering trees, grassy areas, and tall perennial communities (such as *Adenostyles alliariae*, monkshoods, etc.). As many alpine plants struggle to grow in lowland areas, the cultivation needs of these plants must be taken into account. Particularly interesting are the considerations in the chapter titled "Alpine Plants on Magic Mountain. Schatzalp Alpine Garden." Alpine plants were first introduced to the Schatzalp hotel garden in 1907. It was originally part of a luxury sanatorium for tuberculosis patients in Davos, as described in Thomas Mann's novel "The Magic Mountain." Since 1954, the location has been functioning as a hotel, and since 2004, Klaus Oetjen has been following the maxim of cultivating plants according to their species requirements (p. 46). Next to the hotel, plants from other regions – especially Asia – grow in the garden. Therefore, this section discusses monsoon vegetation on Mount Emei in Sichuan (China), the possibilities of using plants from monsoon areas in gardens, the concept of grassland landscapes, and Mediterranean vegetation from Southern Europe. Mount Emei is characterized by immense biological diversity (with three climatic zones and 10% of China's total flora). It has long been a Buddhist place of worship and contains various elements such as understory perennials, subtropical valleys, and exotic perennials. Botanical collections in Germany also include well-known Mediterranean spices, gentians, wolf's milk plants and cushion plants originating from the Mediterranean region.

The following sections pertain to grassland landscapes and rocky heathlands from Mediterranean regions. These types of plants can be found, for instance, in the Botanical Garden in Würzburg, where they occupy an area of 3,500 m^2 (for example North American prairies and rocky heathlands). Significant importance in the reviewed book is given to the discussion of vegetation areas in the Southern Hemisphere. Aspects of vegetation characteristic for this hemisphere can serve as inspiration for creating various garden areas. Notably, the natural habitats in the Dragon Mountains should be mentioned, as plant life in this region is among the richest in the world. Many plants from South Africa can thrive in Central Europe. Another important area is the Sani Pass

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between Lesotho and KwaZulu-Natal, where numerous horticulturally significant plants grow in the mountains at elevations between 2,000 and 3,000 meters above sea level. Among these plants are tritomas (Kniphofia), as well as sunroses (Delosperma), summer hyacinths (galtonias), irises, Erica species, and orchids (such as Disa and Satyrium). Dragon Mountain species are cultivated in the Frankfurt Palm Garden, including species from the Phygelius, Dierama, Watsonia, Ornithogalum, and Berkheya genera.

Other vegetation-rich areas in the Southern Hemisphere include South America (from Santiago de Chile to the Strait of Magellan), the Falkland Islands as a subantarctic archipelago in the South Atlantic, New Zealand, Australia, and Tasmania (South Pacific). The vegetation zones of Chile and Argentina evoke great fascination, even in Europe, although they are currently subject to significant anthropogenic destruction. Dry forests with honey palm trees (Jubaea chilensis) are noteworthy, as well as araucaria forests with rich understory of perennials located above the altitude of 900 meters. In central Patagonia, there are the so-called Valdivian rainforests (with rainfall between 2000-4500 mm) characterized by a diverse flora of perennials. As one moves south, forests dominated by southern beech (Nothofagus) gradually appear, along with grassy steppes and harsh conditions in southern Patagonia. The region is home to Magellanic peatlands surrounded by forests, as well as grassy steppes with species of Jarava and Pappostipa grasses.

The subantarctic archipelago of the Falkland Islands comprises two large islands (West Falkland and East Falkland) and 780 smaller islands. There is generally a lack of forests in the area and the vegetation bears similarities to a tundra (including many endemic species). The climate is cool-oceanic with weak, acidic soils. Northern Patagonia, with its Araucaria forests, Valdivian rainforests, and subantarctic regions serve as the place of origin for many attractive plants. Alpine plant communities with valuable perennials can also be found. The Argentine pampas, high Andean regions, and Patagonian steppes are home to numerous valuable grasses. A significant potential for ornamental plants, which are already being obtained in many British horticultural establishments, exists in that area. This includes the Patagonian steppe flora, as well as alpine plants. In New Zealand, Australia, and Tasmania, the following landscapes are known to exists: scrub (evergreen shrub areas), tussock - grassy areas in New Zealand with numerous perennials, New Zealand alpine plants, and various species of eucalyptus from the Tasmanian and southeastern Australian mountains (snow gums – forests of snow eucalyptus). In Scotland, near Edinburgh, Ursula Mc Hardy established the Walled Garden where she cultivated flora from the Southern Hemisphere. There, she created a series of theme gardens with plantings from many areas of that hemisphere.

The integration of garden landscapes poses a significant challenge in garden design. Such modeling is achieved using stones and dead wood. Special sites in gardens, such as wetlands, peat bogs, high peatlands, terraces made of peat, frost-resistant cacti, the edges of plantings, as well as transitions between different plantings (garden images) also require considerable effort. The Frankfurt Palm Garden can serve as an example of such a divided plant life with its impressive grasses, South African mountain meadows, tussock grass areas, tall perennial plantings, and even high peatlands.

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In the "Service" section, the author presents, among other things, a table listing of various plants suitable for different garden positions. The table includes ferns, low woodland perennials, perennial species from the Dragon Mountains, alpine species from New Zealand, South American plants for rock gardens, and more. The table provides a comprehensive overview of plant options for specific garden conditions.

The book "WILD GARDEN: Shaping Gardens in a Naturalistic Way" by Sven Nürnberger deserves the attention of Polish readers. The author takes observation and study of natural areas as the basis for creating gardens in a naturalistic manner. When designing new garden layouts, the author suggests utilizing not only the flora of the Northern Hemisphere, but also that of the Southern Hemisphere. Nürnberger demonstrates extensive knowledge of flora from regions such as Chile, Argentina, the Falkland Islands, South Africa, Tasmania, Australia, and New Zealand. Many plants from these areas are still relatively unknown in Europe. Translating this fascinating book into Polish would be a valuable resource for plant and garden enthusiasts, as well as for a wide range of interested readers.

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