

Gardening Books of the Southwest

Allow me to pitch my two favorite source books for this area. The Western Garden Book, published by Sunset, has long been the gold standard for gardeners in the Western states. Good practical advice, some wonderful color plates, and a section devoted to plants to use in special situations make this a must-have for any plant lovers' reference collection. One drawback of this book is its sheer size (it covers 13 states and 2 Canadian provinces). Since plants are rated by which climate zone they are best suited, you will need to refer to the map provided to determine the zone for which you are gardening.

Another excellent book is Landscape Plants for Dry Regions, by Warren Jones and Charles Sacamano. Covering over 600 desert adapted species, this fine publication has color photos of each plant, as well as uses in the landscape and a section outlining problems each species may present. New and used editions of both books can found online or, occasionally, at your local book store.