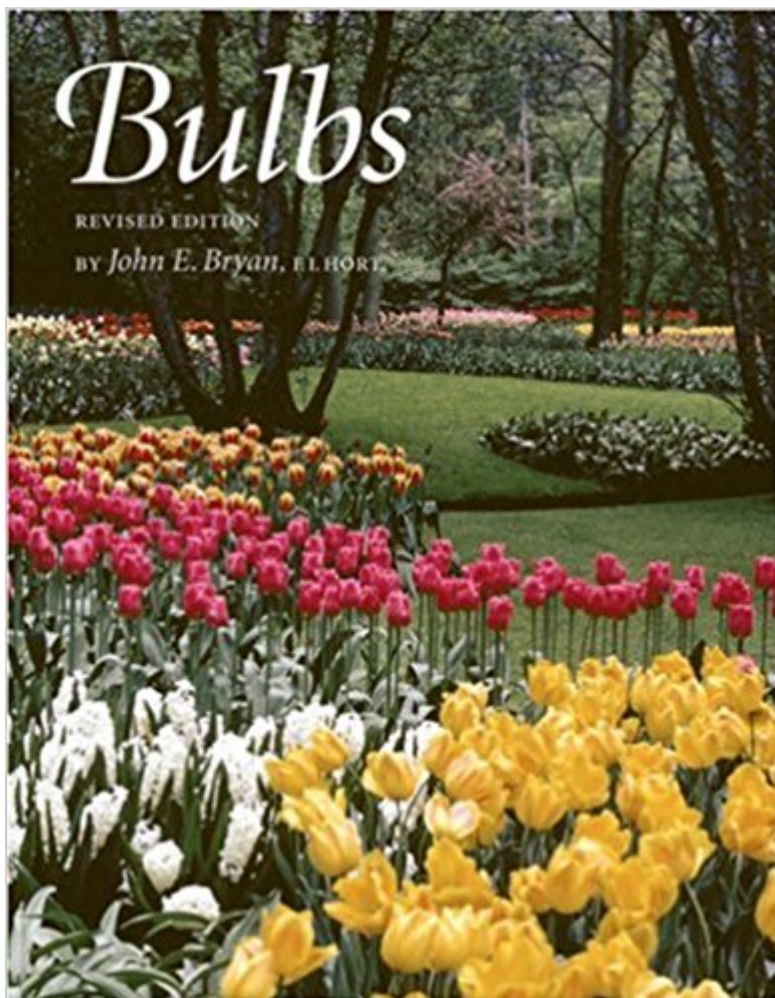


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# Bulbs



## Synopsis

John Bryan's substantive revision to his original magnum opus published in 1989-selected by the American Horticultural Society as one of the 75 great American gardening books- provides expanded coverage of some 230 genera and a staggering number of species, varieties, and cultivars. Genera are treated with detail appropriate to their importance, with information on history, classification, culture, propagation, pests and diseases, uses, and species and cultivars. Detailed encyclopedic plant listings are complemented by an equally comprehensive pictorial presentation. Not only are there more than 1100 color photographs-many showing the plants in their natural habitats-but there are also 43 color reproductions of botanical illustrations from 19th-century issues of Curtis's Botanical Magazine and other publications, taken from the author's extensive collection.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"One of the classics of technical gardening literature. . . . An absurdly informative volume, with nearly 1200 color illustrations." -- Verlyn Klinkenborg, *The New York Times Book Review*, June 2, 2002

This substantive revision to Bryan's original magnum opus published in 1989 provides expanded coverage of some 230 genera and a staggering number of species, varieties, and cultivars.

By sheer volume of photos and practical information this tome wins a prize. Bryan's magnum opus is technical enough for use by experts but relatively easy for a lay person to understand.

Impressive. It was delivered ahead of time, well packaged and in mint condition upon arrival.

After reviewing many books on bulbs, this one has risen to the top. It is easily the most thorough and up-to-date reference covering the full range of geophytes. One of the features I like best in this book is the short, easy to read and well-diagrammed Botany and Classification of Bulbs chapter. It is a very well written introduction that includes explanations of the jargon and theories used by taxonomists and horticulturists. This is a great intro for early students of horticulture to grasp the bigger picture. The majority of the book is an A-Z, with accompanying line drawings as well as hundreds of color images. Each entry covers the family, culture, pests and disease, propagation, and all relevant species. The use of the new family classification is appreciated, with a handy reference to the previous family in parenthesis. Speaking of families, there is a great explanation of all the families of bulbous plants in Appendix A. Appendix B has all the bulbs around the world listed by country of habitat. The list of flowering time is not particularly useful though because it only breaks down into the 4 seasons. Early, mid, and late season classifications would be nice. There is a short list of plants for specific purposes - fragrance, cutting, etc. There is a very thorough bibliography and a common name index. This is a large and heavy book, but worth every penny. The descriptions are written in an easy to read style and it is the most thorough and complete book on bulbs I have seen.

i love anything on bulbs. my mother was a bulb fanatic and i must have inherited it from her. anytime i see a tulip i think of her and the artistic ways she used them to convey messages in gardening.

A scholarly Tome of a book, but not so easy to find what I was looking for. Also I love Zephyranthes and Habranthus, which were hardly mentioned.

Must have if you are at all interested in Bulbs!

Considering myself to be only an average (although passionate) gardener, I purchased this book because I was looking for a good reference on the topic of bulbs. An amazingly exhaustive volume that was honored by the American Horticulture Society and named one of '75 Great American Garden Books', 'Bulbs' by John E. Bryan is almost overwhelming for the average gardener. The beginning chapters of 'Bulbs' cover the normal gardening topics such as a brief bulb history, nomenclature, propagation, cultivation, forcing, and pests & diseases. The main bulk of the book

(and it's real use) is the alphabetical listing of bulbs by genus. Included in each genus listing are general historical and general remarks followed by advice on their culture, pests and diseases, propagation methods and an amazingly complete listing of the species. The 1,171 photographs in the book are compiled alphabetically in three sections of plates, meaning that to see the plant photo referenced in the text you have to flip to the plant photo plate section of the book. These photos are (IMHO) generally of good quality and include flower close-ups, the entire plant, historical flower drawings/plates as well as pictures of some of the bulbs in the wild of mixed quality. What makes this book seem overwhelming to the average gardener (i.e. me) is the sheer amount of information (in comparison to other gardening books). Following the listing of each species is a description of the plant, (possibly) individual cultural information and a list of known cultivars. In the case of very large or extensively hybridized genres (i.e. tulipa) where there are many different 'families' of plants (i.e. Single early tulips, Darwin hybrid tulips, Lily-flowered tulips, etc), the families of plants are listed and described in detail with a few representative cultivars listed followed by the individual species. Because of this, 'Bulbs' can seem decidedly 'unfriendly' toward the average gardener (i.e. someone who just wants to look up the best red tulip cultivars). Furthermore, because 'Bulbs' lists all of the known species within the genus and not just the common 'garden worthy' varieties, I found it is very easy to get overwhelmed by the sheer number of entries. However, it is also this completeness that also makes this book an invaluable reference for the more advanced gardeners, collectors and scientists alike. (In the case of the extensively hybridized genres (i.e. tulips and daffodils), a more specialized reference book would probably be more appropriate than this through bulb survey.) Overall, I believe that 'Bulbs' is an amazingly thorough book, but perhaps a little too thorough for the average gardener (I'm still keeping an eye open for a good garden bulb book - and I'm not a big fan of those smaller sized Taylor guides - any suggestions?). For the serious gardener, though, this book is a must read.

lovely one thanks

This is an excellent reference book, listing all types of bulbs, from the common garden variety to the more obscure varieties. Listings also include all the hybrids and new cultivars. The book is well set out with many colour photos of the different species. A must for any home library and avid gardeners anywhere.

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