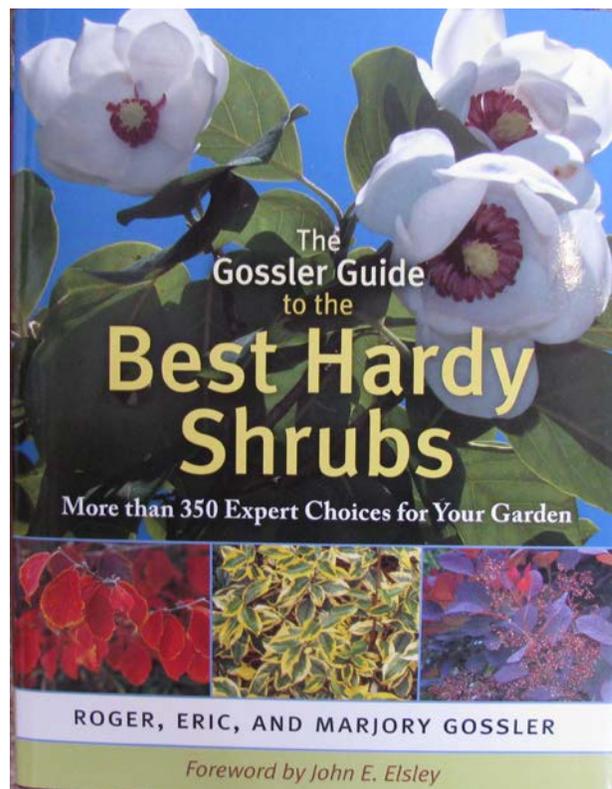


## Book Reviews (Margaret Hodgson)

***The Gossler Guide to the Best Hardy Shrubs*** by Roger, Eric, and Marjory Gossler. 204 pages, 146 colour photos, Hardiness Zones in detail, Shrubs for Specific Sites and Purposes, Index. Hardbound, Copyright 2009, Published by Timber Press, Inc., Portland, Oregon, USA.  
ISBN 978-0-88192-908-9 (hardcover) \$30.06 + tax Cdn. (Chapters)

**Roger Gossler** is one of those rare individuals who knew his career from birth. He became interested in plants at an early age and quickly became a leader in promoting the use of woody trees and shrubs. Roger is the buyer and main grower for Gossler Farms Nursery. He avidly researches what is new in the trade and worthy of inclusion in the nursery's catalogue. Gossler Farms Nursery is currently operated by two brothers and their mother and covers roughly 10 acres between the production facilities and the display gardens. They have tried over the years to find the proper size balance between being big enough to support themselves and small enough to still be a small family business. The family has been in the Springfield, Oregon, area for 120 years and have farmed this area for most of that. In recent history, they were corn and peppermint farmers. Over time there was an interest in ornamental plants in the family and as time passed there was an effort to increase the size of the garden and collection. To do this they began selling bare root street trees around the Eugene and Springfield area. Then in the mid 1960's they produced their first catalog and began shipping plants around the country. The nursery remained a side business to the farming until 1985 when they quit farming and established the nursery as the primary operation. Since then they have expanded their offering each year and continue to offer a large number of new materials each year while remaining loyal to some of their traditional materials. Gossler Farms Nursery was started like many small businesses as a hobby gone crazy. In the 1950's the interest in ornamental plants started to develop in the family, and to help purchase more varieties of trees and shrubs they started to buy extras to sell to local landscapers.



This quickly developed into a large collection of magnolias that is still one of the larger private collections in the world. Because of the magnolias, they became active in the Magnolia Society International and started to develop a customer base around the country and world.

**Eric Gossler** grew up in the Gossler family farm and nursery. After graduating from Oregon State University with a focus on environmental health and safety, he moved to La Grande, Oregon, to work as a consultant for an insurance company before returning home to the nursery. Eric is primarily responsible for physical operations, construction, and maintenance in the family enterprise. He is also the main packer for shipping, boxing most of the orders personally.

**Marjory Gossler** is responsible for the office operations at Gossler Farms Nursery and reviews each order prior to shipping. She graduated from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, in Physical Education and Science.

After several years as a teacher, she came to the farm and nursery where she has worked for the past 55 years.

**The Gossler Guide to the Best Hardy Shrubs, More than 350 Expert Choices for your Garden** is an ideal book for our west coast climate as many of the shrubs suggested in the various chapters thrive in our climate. For most homeowners, shrubs are an essential ingredient in the yard or garden. They provide shade, flowers, and attractive foliage throughout the entire year. Shrubs provide privacy and screen out eyesores, while giving a sense of solidity and permanence to the garden. Unfortunately at many garden centres, the choice of shrubs is often too predictable and many times not suitable for our climate. Too many gardens look so similar, but with a little research of the best shrubs, a garden can take on its own character and be transformed into a scene of beauty and serenity. This book includes a guide to more than 350 of the beautiful, versatile, and easily grown shrubs. Included are time-tested favorites such as Japanese maples, witch hazels, and Magnolias, as well as less common shrubs such as Japanese aralia and corylopsis. Plant profiles describe the plant's main characteristics, give its height and spread, and list the growing conditions the plant needs to thrive. The remaining chapters of the book produced a very well-organized body of information over six chapters ranging from *How to Think About Climate and Growing Conditions* to a very long and excellent chapter, *A to Z Plant Directory* which goes into great detail of many shrubs. The last chapter is followed by the information on the Hardiness Zones, the Shrubs for Specific Sites and Purposes and a good Index. The detailed photographs are very helpful in adding to information about the shrubs. Plant descriptions are also very detailed.