



Hannah Gardner

Hannah is a horticulturist who also runs her own design business. Her passion for plants has inspired her to study plant communities around the world

PORTRAIT JASON INGRAM

First plant love As a young child it was nasturtiums – so exotic looking – and you could eat the flowers.

Was gardening a change of career for you? I have a Masters degree in art history and still love art, but the call of the wild easily conquered the appeal of a musty archive room.

Who are your horticultural heroes? I greatly admire the late Valerie Finnis, for her talent, knowledge, redoubtable nature and generosity of spirit in encouraging and supporting young horticulturists.

Three worthwhile gardening tips Be generous in passing plants on – redistribution among friends makes space for new arrivals, keeps things interesting and spreads the love. Make time to read about your passion, and extend your knowledge; every potting shed should have full and vibrant bookshelves. Be a horticultural student in some form, and when you've done that mentor a few students yourself.

Favourite planting style I'm inspired by natural plant communities, so let's say naturalistic, but with close attention paid to structure and form.

Unsung hero of the plant world Not a plant – but a species. Guerrilla gardeners the world over are under-appreciated. Every community

should be free to 'garden' their local roundabouts. What's to lose?

Biggest challenge facing gardeners today The threat posed to small nurseries by over legislation and inappropriate changes of law will drastically limit our future planting palette.

What heartens you about our attitude to horticulture today?

I love the fact that younger people are growing herbs and veg, that reliance on inorganic fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides is decreasing, and that there are so many platforms for sharing inspiration – Instagram, Pinterest, and the rest.

Favourite gardening books or blogs I savour *Elizabeth and Her German Garden* by Elizabeth von Arnim and without doubt the most thumbed copy on my shelf is Graham Stuart Thomas's *Perennial Garden Plants or the Modern Florilegium*.

Memorable moment regarding your obsession with plants I've taken many ill-advised trips in the name of botany; one of the most memorable featured a tiny tent, a herd of wild cattle and a stranger with a machine gun. This was searching for tulips in NE Turkey!

Contact info@newbritishlandscapes.co.uk