

---International Rock Gardener---

---Book Review---

'A Gardener's Guide to Snowdrops' - review by Anne Wright.

The enlarged second edition, as a stand-alone book, is a unique and indispensable reference guide for snowdrop fans, with the directory of snowdrop species and cultivars now comprising three quarters of the book.

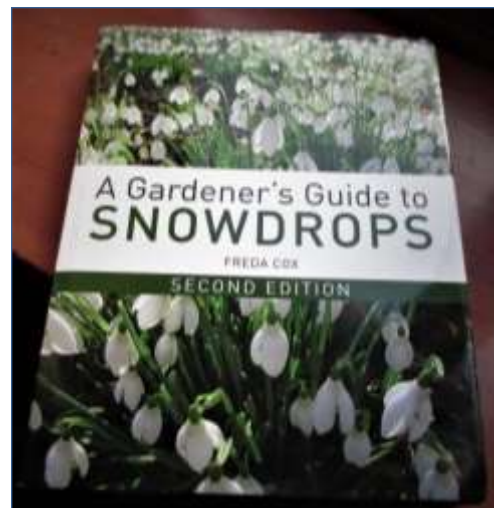
Each entry in the directory shows a simple illustration of the cultivar/species, and information including a description of the flower and foliage, the origin, and the height. Some cultivars also have the flowering time; though this will obviously vary according to season and location, it is a useful comparison of early or late flowering times.

The cultivars are listed in alphabetical order of their cultivar names, so it is easy to find a particular variety, even if you don't know which species it is derived from. The rest of the book covers history, uses, taxonomy, morphology and a useful section on pest and disease problems. There is a list of gardens in alphabetical order where snowdrops can be seen, both in the UK and abroad, and a fairly comprehensive list of nurseries which sell snowdrops.

I suspect the publishers had a problem with enlarging the directory, while keeping all the other information in the first edition and keeping the book to a reasonable size. While it is unfortunate that this has led to a reduction in the excellent cultivation and propagation guides, the increase in listed cultivars reflects the recent rapid growth of interest in collecting snowdrops, and the large number of new cultivars introduced in recent years. An updated list of varieties was badly needed and this edition will fill that need for collectors and beginners alike.

My personal feeling is that I would rather have retained some of the cultivation information, while losing the eight-page section which is a list of people/personalities in the Galanthophile world, but that is just a plantsperson's preference.

Apart from these issues, this volume is bound to become THE reference guide for serious snowdrop enthusiasts wanting to find out about different cultivars – maybe it should more properly have been titled 'An Enthusiast's Guide to Snowdrops'!



'A Gardener's Guide to Snowdrops' (second edition) - author Freda Cox, published by Crowood Press. ISBN 978 1 78500 449 0

Anne Wright runs [Dryad Nursery](#) near York, specialising in galanthus and narcissus.

Another review of this book, by the plantsman, Ian Christie, was published in The Rock Garden, journal of SRGC, January 2019. You can read that review by [clicking this link](#).

