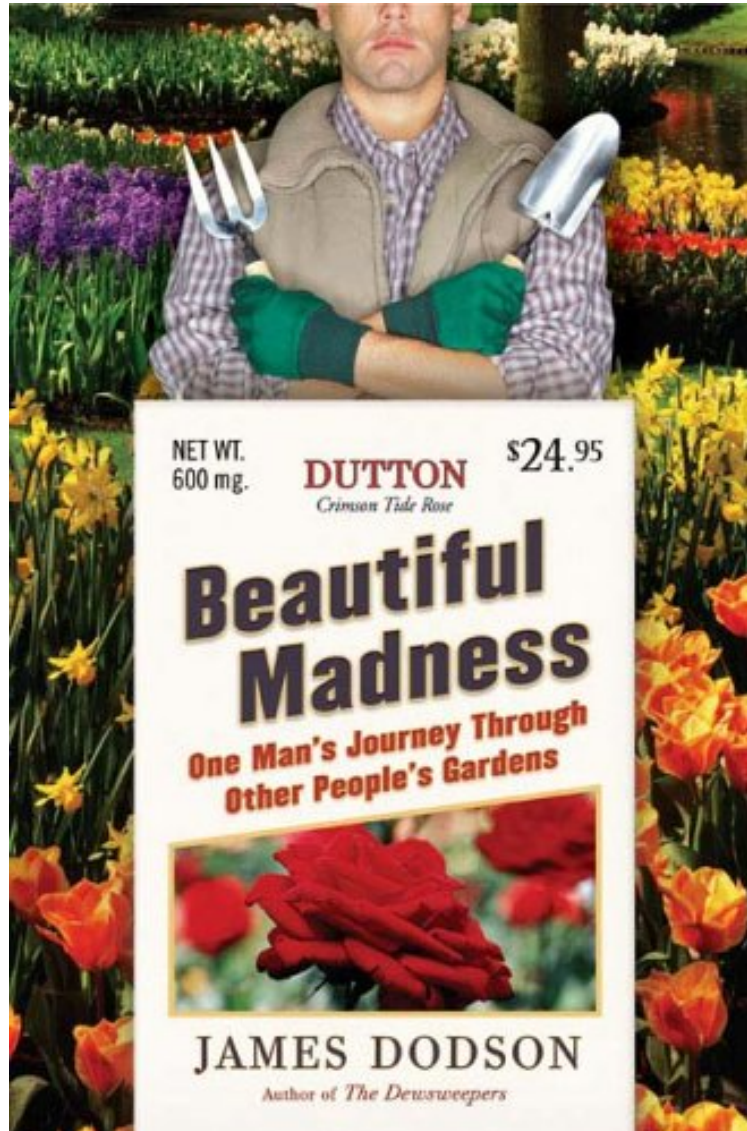


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# Beautiful Madness: One Man's Journey Through Other People's Gardens

James Dodson

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**James Dodson : Beautiful Madness: One Man's Journey Through Other People's Gardens** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beautiful Madness: One Man's Journey Through Other People's Gardens:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Entertaining and informative By Leslie Frates A must read for all avid gardeners. Easy to read in short sittings, or to savor in the winter. I could picture myself participating in the triumphs,

trials, and adventures written about in the book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful Madness By Samuel L. Perry, Jr. Great book written by a terrific author. This is a must read, particularly if you have any interest in flowers, as are James Dodson's other books. 18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. To Know the Soul of Those Who Garden - Read On!! By John R. Linnell James Dodson has an amazing ability to make any aspect of his life that he cares to share with us interesting, readable and enjoyable. I have read all of his books. He has collaborated with Arnold Palmer on his autobiography. He has written eloquently about his relationship with his father in a moving book entitled Final Rounds. He has written several books that talk about his relationship with his children and family. He has written about The Dew Sweepers, a group of men who share a love of golf and true friendship. His personal books are about relationships, spirituality and life and they are all very moving and very entertaining. He has written what I consider the definitive biography of Ben Hogan which was a total departure from his previous efforts. A real tour de force. In this book, golfers and golfing are hardly mentioned. This book is about gardeners and gardening. Is it ever. A transplanted son of the "mid-south", Dobson and his family live now in Maine. A place where gardening does not come easy. Much of one's time, if they live in Maine and garden is planning for those few months where the climate is hospitable to plant life. The rest of the time, Mother Nature does her best to make life miserable for growing things and the people who care for them. I did not buy this book. My wife did. However, before she was ready to read it, I spotted it, noted the name of the author, wondered if there were two James Dodson's, determined that the one I was familiar with was one and the same with this author and started to read. It is perfectly logical that my wife would buy the book. She is a gardener, both flower and vegetable. She has lovely gardens and I enjoy admiring them, photographing them and keeping the lawns that surround them looking neat and trimmed. However, as I told her many years ago, "I don't weed." So, for me to start reading a book about the subject was unlikely. And I can assure you that if Dodson was not the author I would not have. I was not long into the book before he had me hooked as he laid out his passion for gardening and related it to so many aspects of the gardening world and it's people. He even reintroduced me to an old friend I have not seen in a very long time - a lady by the name of Polly Logan. What a special treat THAT was. As I closed the covers on the book, I was not invigorated to start turing over the earth and setting out a garden of my own. I did have a new appreciation of those who do and I enjoyed the travels that Dodson took the reader on to many of the pantheons of gardening around the world. It truly is a beautiful madness and we are all enriched because of it.

Beautiful Madness will do for competitive gardening what Word Freak did for competitive Scrabble, and what Best in Show did for competitive dog breeding. Its Susan Orleans The Orchid Thief with a sense of humor. You'll never look at a potted plant the same way again. During an amazing year of living botanically, James Dodson went behind the scenes of the worlds two most important garden shows (the Philadelphia Flower Show and the Chelsea Garden Show in New York City); spent time with the Botticelli of Bulbs; attended a rare plant auction of high rollers; sneaked into a Hosta convention; communed with the kindred spirits of Thomas Jefferson and John Bartram; met a man smuggling exotic day lilies; learned the inside poop on ten or twelve of the Western worlds most influential gardens; swiped cuttings from a Founding Fathers shrubbery; hung out with ten or twelve of the most accomplished gardening fanatics on earth; built three new gardens of his own; and wound up hanging perilously from a limb on the side of a cliff in Southern Africa, the birthplace of an estimated one-third of the worlds flowers, where he capped off his year of incalculable learning and discovery by tagging along with four of Americas leading plant hunters on an expedition into the rugged jungles to find the exotic new species of tomorrow. This yeomans tale of shared horticultural obsession burrows deeply into the story of how Americans became such fanatical gardeners and are today, in fact, at the forefront of what everyone agrees is a new Golden Age of Gardening, an unprecedented growth in gardenings popularity that has according to a recent Gallop poll astonishing eighty percent of adult Americans claiming to be primary hobby gardeners.

From Publishers Weekly Flower fanatics and perfectionist planters will find much to enjoy in Dodson's recounting of his year spent traveling to various gardens around the world. The author, an amateur gardener whose other books are mostly about golf, travels through the eastern U.S., England and Africa, looking at and learning about flowers and plants. Dodson begins and ends his journey at the Philadelphia Flower Show, where he introduces readers to, among others, Linda and Walt Fisher, a retired couple who force bulbs to grow according to a set schedule so they bloom at precisely the right time for the show. Dodson also takes readers to Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's estate, and to his home state of North Carolina, where, in a touching scene, he reconnects with an elderly friend of his late mother. But while Dodson's travels are interesting enough, there isn't a through-line uniting his adventures other than him collecting plants he hopes will grow in his garden in Maine. There are lots of people in the book-so many that it's hard to keep track of them all-but no main characters emerge in Dodson's narrative. While horticulture enthusiasts may delight in Dodson's descriptions of his travails, casual readers may find themselves bored by the descriptions of the plants, places and people he encounters. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Takes us on a four-season dash through other peoples gardens--with weeks off for frenetic work in his

own. -- The New York Times Book Takes us on a four-season dash through other peoples gardens--with weeks off for frenetic work in his own. (The New York Times Book )About the AuthorJAMES DODSON is the author of Final Rounds, the 1996 bestseller that was named the Golf Book of the Year by the International Network of Golf. He is also the author of The Road to Somewhere, The Dew sweepers, Faithful Travelers, and A Golfer's Life, a collaboration with Arnold Palmer that was a New York Times bestseller. He is a four-time winner of the prestigious Golf Writers of America Award for his column in Golf Magazine, and a recipient of the 1998 Golf Reporter of the Year Award by the International Network of Golf.