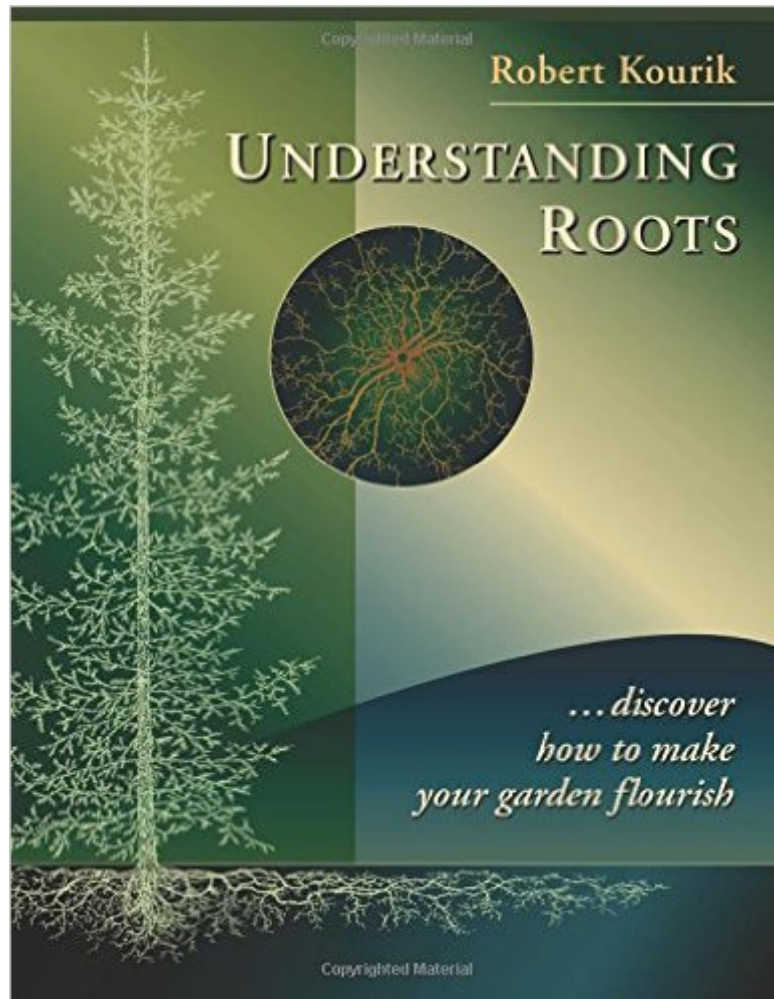


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# Understanding Roots: Discover How To Make Your Garden Flourish



## Synopsis

Award-Winner in the "Home & Garden" category of the 2015 USA Best Book Awards

Understanding Roots uncovers one of the greatest mysteries underground—the secret lives and magical workings of the roots that move and grow invisibly beneath our feet. Roots, it seems, do more than just keep a plant from falling over: they gather water and nutrients, exude wondrous elixirs to create good soil, make friends with microbes and fungi, communicate with other roots, and adapt themselves to all manner of soils, winds, and climates, nourishing and sustaining our gardens, lawns, and woodlands. Understanding Roots contains over 115 enchanting and revealing root drawings that most people have never seen, from prairies, grasslands, and deserts, as well as drawings based on excavations of vegetable, fruit, nut, and ornamental tree roots. Every root system presented in this book was drawn by people literally working in the trenches, sketching the roots where they grew. The text provides a very detailed review of all aspects of transplanting; describes how roots work their magic to improve soil nutrients; investigates the hidden life of soil microbes and their mysterious relationship to roots; explores the question of whether deep roots really gather more unique nutrients than shallow roots; shares the latest research about the mysteries of mycorrhizal (good fungal) association; shows you exactly where to put your fertilizer, compost, water, and mulch to help plants flourish; tells you why gray water increases crop yields more than fresh water; and, most importantly, reveals the science behind all the above (with citations for each scientific paper). This book contains at least eighty percent more new information, more results of the latest in-depth and up-to-date explorations, and even more helpful guidelines on roots than the author's previous book (Roots Demystified: Change Your Garden Habits to Help Roots Thrive). This is not a revised edition—it's a whole new stand-alone book.

## Book Information

Paperback: 225 pages

Publisher: Metamorphic Press (August 24, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0961584866

ISBN-13: 978-0961584863

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.5 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #86,800 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #83 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies &](#)

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## Customer Reviews

(I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.) Understanding Roots is a great book for the thinking gardener. What do I mean by that? Well, if you want your information spoonfed, I'm afraid you'll be disappointed. But if you're willing to read critically, you'll find some gems in Kourik's newest book. Understanding Roots summarizes information from a wide variety of scientific sources, and the copious illustrations make the scientists' findings easy to read. But despite being written for a lay audience, the book itself reads a bit like a scientific paper in which the author is leery of making any assertions that can't be entirely backed up by the facts. Instead, the reader is left to draw his own conclusions on topics like --- do dynamic accumulators really suck nutrients up from deep in the subsoil? how do different types of soil determine rooting habits of plants? etc. Many of the illustrations in Understanding Roots are from the same Dr. Weaver who drew the root maps in Kourik's earlier books. But this new text includes companion root drawings from other sources, notably some German maps. The addition is very handy since I think Dr. Weaver's prairie soils resulted in much deeper rooting than many of us are likely to see in our own garden, so this most recent book gives a more well-rounded look at roots. In the end, I highly recommend Understanding Roots for the intermediate gardener. The topic is integral to understanding how to keep your soil and plants happy. But it's a good book for a winter night when you can curl up in front of the wood stove and ponder rather than expecting to find information you can instantly utilize in your own garden.

If you want a very informative book then this is not for you. There are a few good tips, but this book is pretty much a compendium of drawn root structures. If you like to look at the curves and twists of trunks and branches then you might find the numerous sketches in this book attractive. I am very impressed with the images and the work that went into excavating the roots. See how the roots grow in different plants has given me many ideas on how to alter my ever expanding orchard.

(I received this book in exchange for an honest review) Robert Kourik has re-visited roots with his trademark humor, detail and curiosity. Delving into historical drawings, re-doing the chart on dynamic accumulators and pushing beyond the already extensive information contained within his

previous *Roots Demystified*, Kourik has compiled a resource that will be definitive for many years to come. Unconfined, he roams through soil facts, planting techniques, scientific studies and folk wisdom to enlighten every gardener. Always ready to explore both sides of an argument, Kourik pulls our heads out of the clouds and reveals what is happening beneath our feet. Reviewed by Organic Gardening Techniques teacher, NYBG

Fantastic information and explanations. I am an avid gardener for decades. This book is captivating. I have always held soil in the highest regard. Now, I am super amazed by roots. So good, I gave it to a friend as a gift.

While this may not be a book for every gardener or a beginning gardener, it was EXACTLY what I was looking for. I think it is wonderful.

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