



## An Island Garden

*Celia Laighton Thaxter , Childe Hassam (Illustrator) , Tasha Tudor (Introduction) , Tahsa Tudor (Introduction)*

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**An Island Garden** Celia Loughton Thaxter , Childe Hassam (Illustrator) , Tasha Tudor (Introduction) , Tahsa Tudor (Introduction)

In her introduction to this new edition, the gardener, writer, illustrator, and craftsperson Tasha Tudor explores the space Celia Thaxter made for herself on one of the Isles of Shoals and the place her gentle, commonsense journal has held in the hearts of gardeners and artists for over a hundred years.

A popular poet in her day, Thaxter is best remembered for AN ISLAND GARDEN, originally published by Houghton Mifflin in 1894. The book chronicles a year in the life of Thaxter's garden on the island her father had purchased in 1848 and renamed Appledore Island. The hotel he built there was among New England's first offshore summer resorts and attracted writers, musicians, and artists, including the American Impressionist Childe Hassam, whose beautiful paintings of Thaxter's house and garden are reproduced in this book. Considered one of the most delightful examples of horticultural writing, AN ISLAND GARDEN has served as an inspiration for essayists and gardeners alike since its first publication.

### An Island Garden Details

Date : Published March 1st 2002 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (first published 1894)

ISBN : 9780618199082

Author : Celia Loughton Thaxter , Childe Hassam (Illustrator) , Tasha Tudor (Introduction) , Tahsa Tudor (Introduction)

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## From Reader Review An Island Garden for online ebook

### Sara says

This is a book that I would love to own! It reminds me of *The Passionate Observer* by Jean Henri Fabre, except that here Ms. Thaxter is rambling on about her love affair with her garden instead of bugs. The version I read didn't have the intro by Tasha Tudor and I think the fellow who did introduce it biased me a little against the author. She liked to hear the sound of her own words and it gets annoying occasionally. Nevertheless, by the end of the book, it's as if you've been dashed into your very own New England vacation to a cottage garden by the sea.

(The hurricane and the hummingbird nearly made me cry! :tear: A pretty chapter on arranging flowers that is right on. I want to grow water lilies in tubs!)

"For mine is just a little old-fashioned garden where the flowers come together to praise the Lord and teach all who look upon them to do likewise."

"All the cares, perplexities, and griefs of existence, all the burdens of life slip from my shoulders and leave me with the heart of a little child that asks nothing beyond its present moment of innocent bliss."

Available online (with all the charming illustrations!) here:

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### Susan Liston says

Got this lovely little book for Christmas. It is sort of a combo of rhapsodic descriptions of her flowers, (Thaxter was a poet), a gardening journal, and practical advice. Beautiful illustrations by Chile Hassam. Very nice. If it doesn't make you want to go outside and dig, well, there is no hope for you.

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### Kim says

Mrs Thaxter spent an amazing amount of time and effort in her garden and with her flower arrangements. I wish I could have seen them in person, but the beautiful illustrations by Childe Hassam helped me imagine their bounty. Beautiful detailed descriptions of flowers. Ironic that I stopped now and then to Google the species and varieties I wasn't familiar with; an option not available to readers of this 1894 memoir until recently. I was inspired to grow more varieties of flowers, but might need to move my garden to an offshore island to keep them from being eaten by deer.

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### Elyse says

Can't say I've ever read or heard anyone who loved her garden more than Ms. Thaxter! Written in 1894 the prose is a bit outdated but it is still very readable and charming. She really hated slugs too. Her garden was

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located on an island off the coast of New England. Sounds like a challenging place to garden but apparently she did very well.

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### **Karen says**

One of my favorite books for several reasons. I first discovered it while researching Childe Hassam, one of my favorite American Impressionists. Reading this book opened up the world of the art colony of the late 19th century which included painters, writers, poets, musicians who would spend summer vacations at a hotel on the island of Appledore, part of the islands between Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Kittery, Maine. Being an amateur artist and writer/poet and avid gardener, I related to Celia Thaxter on so many levels. It seemed as if her words on the page were my thoughts transcribed. The text can be rambling at times; she describes flowers in such minute detail, and she definitely loves her California Poppies! I first read this book back in the mid-1990's, and because it is summer, it was time to dust it off for another read.

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### **Nancy says**

loved it

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### **June Geiger says**

Magic. Mine's a reproduction of Houghon-Mifflin's 1894 1st edition, complete with Childe Hassam's priceless Impressionist watercolors. Even Thaxter's technical talk is tatted into the finest literary lace. Love.

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### **Denise says**

First I must say that I am an avid gardener and my relationship with the natural world is probably more intimate than much of the human population, but Celia Thaxter's romantic interaction with her garden became too much for me quite quickly. I both adored and became tired of her musings about her own dear garden. I wondered about her human interaction and envisioned people rolling their eyes if she conversed anything like she wrote of her beloved garden. She was truly in love with her words.

So why did I give this book 4-stars? Because there are plenty of wonderful thoughts to touch the heart of any true lover of cultivated flora and fauna. I actually gained quite a few ideas from her writings to use in my own future gardens.

Perhaps I too would have the same romantic relationship if all I had to do daily was to get up at 4AM, walk out to the garden to gather armloadsfull of flowers to delicately arrange each day, lay on a blanket searching out minute weeds to pluck, while occasionally rolling over to patiently observe the birds and insects as they frolicked in my dear garden. Oh and when not in the garden, I could spend hours musing on the piazza.

Times were unique and different for Celia Thaxter, and I'm glad she wrote of her intimate love of her garden, although six pages on poppies were a bit too much for me. I have to admit the thought even popped into my head that she loved her poppies for more than the beauty of petal, stem, and pod...maybe more so the pod.....

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**Robin\_R says**

A lovely book with beautiful descriptions of her garden. Celia Thaxter was a joyful gardener!

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**Sherry says**

Delightful. Inspiring. Beautiful language, befitting a poet. I will want to read it again, and would like to own it.

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**Jan says**

Illustrations by Childe Hassam. Thaxter lived from 1835 to 1894. Her Maine garden was restored in 1977.

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**dthaase says**

Celia Thaxter takes you through a descriptive and stunning tour of her flower garden (c. 1893) located on Appledore, one of the Isles of Shoals off the Shores of Portsmouth, NH. Simply put this book is charming. This is a must read for any gardner who has experienced the toil and delight of the garden or for anyone who has ever appreciated a flower. Thaxter's descriptions and stories are wonderful. One of the most delightful reads I have had in a while. It deserves to be read outside on a summer day or at least in a favorite chair with a bouquet of flowers in the room.

An added bonus are the watercolor illustrations provided by Childe Hassam (an American Impressionist and good friend of Thaxter's). I first came to know of Thaxter through Hassam's paintings and the combination of the two artistic expressions make for a very satisfying read.

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**Helen says**

The last and best book Celia Thaxter wrote. The paintings commissioned for An Island Garden are considered by many to be the most beautiful of Childe Hassam's career. Deals with her garden on Appledore.

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**Diane says**

My absolute all time favorite book!

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**Julia says**

Charming but also sort of twee.

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