

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION - Shifting Paradigms	9
CHAPTER 1 - Relationships Within Ecosystems	13
Diversity of living organisms	14
Classification of organisms based on physiological differences / genetic evolution	14
Bacteria	15
Archaea	16
Fungi	17
Protista or protoctista	18
Animalia	18
Plantae	19
“Non-living” organisms	19
Viruses	19
Viroids	20
Virusoids and satellites	20
Prions	20
Classification of organisms based on ecological function	21
The carbon – nitrogen cycle	22
Autotrophs and heterotrophs	23
Trade alliances	24
Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)	27
Environmental factors	28
Light	28
Air	29
The carrying capacity of air	30
Water	31
Temperature	32
Interdependence between organisms and their environment	32
CHAPTER 2 - Soil Relationships	35
What is soil?	35
Partner #1: a-biotic components	35
Structural qualities	37
Water holding capacity	37
Electrical nutrient holding capacity	38
Partner #2: living organisms	39
Modification of inherent soil fertility through biological transmutation	40
Conversion of mineral nutrients into organic forms	41
Creation of multi-level food production and storage systems	42
Creation of habitat through structural improvement of the soil	43
Partner #3: environmental components	44
Soil is an ecosystem	45
CHAPTER 3 - Water Relationships	47
Soil / water relationships	47
Water movement through soil	49
The carrying capacity of water	53
Movement of substances across the soil surfaces	54
Degree and length of slope	55
Soil depth and quality of the subsoil	56
Erosion by wind	57
Movement of substances through the soil	58
Water contamination	58
Plant / water relationships	60

CHAPTER 4 - Working With Water 67

Collecting, storing and draining water69

 The soil69

 The vegetation70

 The terrain71

 Terraces72

 Ponds and dams72

 Cisterns73

 Swales and berms74

 Surface drains, subsurface drains, ditches and culverts74

 Surface drainage systems74

 Subsurface drainage systems75

 Ditches and culverts77

 Wetlands, bog gardens and rain gardens77

 Sunken gardens79

 Green roofs and roof gardens79

Supplementing water effectively80

CHAPTER 5 - Working With Soil 85

Supplementing missing essential nutrients85

 Fertilizer terminology86

 Organic fertilizers86

 Organic based, natural and similarly described fertilizers87

 Synthetic fertilizers88

 Mineral fertilizers88

 Soil applied fertilizers88

 Foliar applied fertilizers88

 Injectable fertilizers89

 Granular vs. liquid fertilizers89

 Fertilizers vs. soil amendments90

 Fertilizer legislation quirks90

 Effects of some synthetic fertilizers on the soil91

 Fertilizers allowed under organic standards95

 Organic fertilizers and soil amendments96

 Mineral fertilizers97

 Other fertilizers102

 Providing appropriate organic matter for soil organisms103

 Nature’s own mulch103

 Leaf mould104

 Ramial chipped wood (RCW)104

 Compost105

 Peat and coir108

 Bark mulch110

 Wood chips111

 Sawdust111

 Straw and hay111

 Increasing soil biodiversity113

 Compost114

 Manures114

 Microbial extracts115

 Compost, soil and plant extracts116

 Aerated compost tea116

 Compost extracts117

 Soil tea118

 Effective microorganisms (EM)119

 Indigenous fermenting microorganisms (IM)120

 Specific microbial cultures121

 Mycorrhizal inoculants (propagative spores of mycorrhizal fungi)121

 Nitrogen fixing bacteria123

The right microbes for the job	124
Stimulating biological processes	124
Water	125
Air	126
Tilling & aerating	126
Aerating with organic matter management	126
Optimizing the soil nutrient balance	127
Changing the soil texture	128
Zeolites	128
Humic and fulvic acids and other chelators	129
Seaweed (kelp) products	130
Plant hormones	130
Vitamins and other compound organic substances	131
Yucca and other plant extracts	132
Rock dusts	132

CHAPTER 6 - Diagnosing Ecosystem Needs **137**

Soil texture and structure	137
Soil texture	137
Sedimentation test	138
Ribbon test	139
Soil structure	139
Compaction	139
Ultra low-tech	139
Penetrometer	140
Proctor density	140
Bulk density	141
Water infiltration	141
Ultra low-tech	141
Soil biological properties	142
Soil profile: litter layer and topsoil	142
Microbial diversity	143
Percentage of organic matter	143
Soil respiration	143
Soil nutritional properties	143
Soil pH	143
Cation exchange capacity (CEC)	148
Base saturation and exchangeable cations	148
Tests for anions and micronutrients	149
Nitrogen values	149
Accuracy of nutrient test results	150
Interpretation of nutrient test results	151
Energy flow within ecosystems	153
Electrical conductivity (EC)	153
Plant / ecosystem health	154
Brix	154
Plant sap pH	155
Infra-red radiation	155
Kirlian effect photography	156
Dowsing, radionics, applied kinesiology and related practices	156
Dowsing	156
Radionics	157
Applied kinesiology	158

CHAPTER 7 - Working With Energy **161**

Everything is composed of energy	161
Everything receives and emits energy	163
Sound energy	164
Insects and energy	165

Plants and energy	168
Soil and energy	169
Water and energy	174
CHAPTER 8 - Working With Health	177
Pesticide use: the environmental warfare approach	178
Pesticide composition and toxicity	178
Pesticide mode of operation	182
Insecticides	182
Fungicides	183
Herbicides	183
Environmental effects of pesticides	184
Health management: the environmental welfare approach	187
Plant defenses	187
Life strategies	188
Structural defenses	189
Chemical defenses	189
Abscission and replacement of diseased / injured tissues	190
Compartmentalization of decay in trees (CODIT)	191
Cooperative associations	192
When plants get sick	193
Providing plant support	194
Nutrition	194
Biodiversity	198
Weeds	202
Invasive plants	206
The nature of health	208
A closing thought	209
Glossary	211
References	215
Index	237