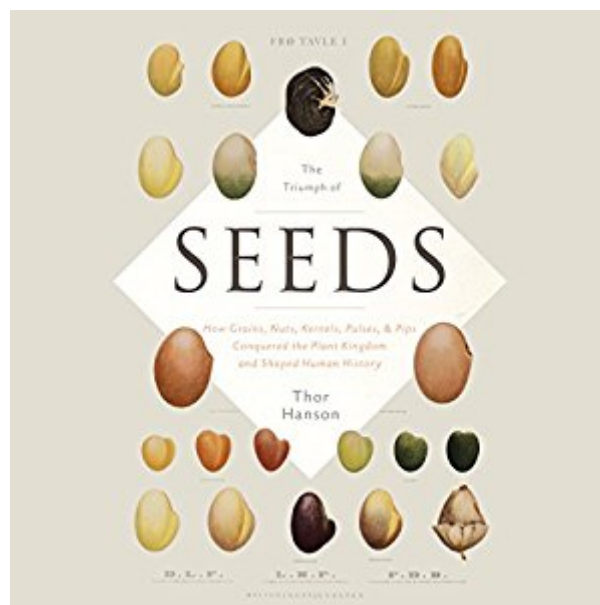


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# The Triumph Of Seeds: How Grains, Nuts, Kernels, Pulses & Pips Conquered The Plant Kingdom And Shaped Human History



## Synopsis

We live in a world of seeds. From our morning toast to the cotton in our clothes, they are quite literally the stuff and staff of life, supporting diets, economies, and civilizations around the globe. Just as the search for nutmeg and the humble peppercorn drove the Age of Discovery, so did coffee beans help fuel the Enlightenment and cottonseed help spark the Industrial Revolution. And from the fall of Rome to the Arab Spring, the fate of nations continues to hinge on the seeds of a Middle Eastern grass known as wheat. In nature and in culture, seeds are fundamental - objects of beauty, evolutionary wonder, and simple fascination. How many times has a child dropped the winged pip of a maple, marveling as it spirals its way down to the ground, or relished the way a gust of wind (or a stout breath) can send a dandelion's feathery flotilla skyward? Yet despite their importance, seeds are often seen as a commonplace, their extraordinary natural and human histories overlooked. Thanks to Thor Hanson and this stunning new book, they can be overlooked no more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a book written by someone whose passion for their corner of the natural world is joyful and infectious. It is a pleasure to read. It is also a fount of information useful to help us thread our way through the risky future of genetically modified food crops even though the author specifically places that whole world outside of consideration for this book. I recommend this book, and if you have youthful family members showing interest in the natural world this book is an excellent doorway into a rewarding world.

I love both reading/learning about plants and working with them. This was a good look at seeds and the profound influences they have on human life. The writing was interesting with bits of humor and for someone like me anyway, kept me avidly reading. The science and history behind seeds and their use is fascinating. The tiniest criticism I have for this book is that the author sometimes wandered into personal tales that had little to do with seed function and history. I would also have enjoyed a few more examples of odd seeds or plant adaptations to distribute seeds. But I found the book enjoyable and well worth reading.

A good read. Evolution always has some surprises that are counter intuitive. Teasing out those facts in some seeds makes for very interesting reading and provides impetus for viewing life around you with a wider vision to understand why, how and where plants live. But the section on coffee making kind of stunned me and made me shake my head. Really? Brewing to a half degree and to seconds? Considering that amount of sun, rain, nutrients and other variables in the process of getting those coffee beans to your cup of java, I had a good laugh. Even a scientist is not above falling for hyperbole and marketing.

I'm about half-way through this book, and it is wonderful. Interesting mix of science and personal anecdotes. I, too, have read "An Orchard Invisible," which is also informative. I am a botanical artist driven to learn about what I attempt to paint. Nuts and seeds are fascinating to look at and hold - so many shapes, sizes, colors, textures. Thor Hanson is good at describing what is going on inside those seeds, and some of the reasons why they vary. I've got some seed packets left over from last year and will try my hand at attempting to get them to sprout. I think I will read Thor's other books as well.

As an Ag major, you could enjoy this book as a leisure way of personifying the life of seeds. It's a good book for basic ecology courses, and it makes someone who is a general seed enthusiast more appreciative of the struggles and triumphs seeds go through to survive.

I'm a changed person after this book. I love seeds now and I can't recommend this book enough if you like food, science, or coffee. If you like books like Emperor of all Maladies, and want something less depressing and more uplifting, read this book.

Very well written. Botanical narrative is smooth and interesting. Thor Hanson reveals interesting

insights into the evolution and development of seeds. He uses clear examples to demonstrate principles which result in the amazing powerhouse which is the modern seed. Excellent read.

Really enjoyed reading the book. It was well written and the content was good. He treated the changes in agriculture over recent years in a fair and balanced way. I would recommend this book to those interested in plant biology, agriculture, and their interplay with culture.

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