

# Nevada gardeners tame desert

**By Ashley Andrews, Reno Gazette-Journal**

More than 170 years ago, a woman named Gertrude Jeckyll was born in Mayfair, London. Eighty-nine years later, she died. Gertrude filled the years in between to the brim. She created a line of flower vases, and she documented fading facets of 19th-century life. Gertrude published more than 300 photos. She wrote more than 15 books and 1,000 articles. Gertrude was a painter. She also created more than 400 gardens.

“There is no spot of ground, however arid, bare or ugly, that cannot be tamed into such a state as may give impression of beauty and delight,” she said.

I am glad to know Gertrude understood the plight of Nevada gardeners. Our spot of ground comes with challenges. Its organic matter content is often less than 1 percent. Because of this, Nevada soil has a decreased ability to absorb and store water, hold plant nutrients and support soil biota. Some consider this the biggest obstacle to gardening in our area.

**Read the whole story**