

# Sustainable Gardening: A Better Way to Beautiful

Makarios Communications

## What is “Sustainable Gardening” anyway?

### KNOW YOUR GARDEN

- ✓ **“Aspect”** – My yard slopes towards the \_\_\_\_\_ (south, north, east, west)
- ✓ **Temperature** range is from \_\_\_\_\_ (this winter) to \_\_\_\_\_ (last summer) --- *YIKES!!!*
- ✓ **Sun / Partial Sun / Shade**
  - What are the variations within my yard? And what am I trying to grow in each?
  - How does it change between winter and summer?
  - What creates the shade?
- ✓ **Rainwater**
  - Does it soak into my soil or run off?
  - Are there areas of ponding (especially in heavy rain or in winter)?
  - How fast does water soak in?
- ✓ **Soil Moisture** – without adding water, is it naturally. . .
  - Wet in winter, dry in summer?
  - Moist, wet, or saturated?
  - Well-draining throughout the year?

### BUILD HEALTHY SOIL . . .

- ✓ **Protect it:** prevent compaction; add organic material; cover bare soil
- ✓ **Add Compost**
  - BEFORE planting large, unplanted area - mix up to 4” of compost into soil
  - NOT within individual planting holes
- ✓ **Cover it (Mulch)** –areas with existing plants ... *weed-less, water-less gardening*
  - Woody plants...**woodchips** (3-4”) [www.chipdrop.com](http://www.chipdrop.com), **leaves** (2-3”), **compost** (1-2”)
  - annuals and perennials .....**leaves** (2-3”) or **compost** (1-2”)

### RIGHT PLANT / RIGHT PLACE

- ✓ **Conserve** existing native plants
- ✓ **Match** plants’ needs to your site – sun / shade, moisture need, winter hardiness
- ✓ **Select pest- and disease-resistant varieties**
- ✓ **Visually pleasing “Rule of Thirds”** (1/3<sup>rd</sup> evergreen, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> deciduous, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> ephemeral)

✓ **Local Plant Selection Guides:**

- The Plant List, Natural Lawn Care, & more (free download)*.....[www.savingwater.org](http://www.savingwater.org)
- Bellevue Botanical Garden’s Water Wise Demonstration Garden .... [www.bellevuebotanical.org](http://www.bellevuebotanical.org)
- Great Plant Picks.....[www.greatplantpicks.org](http://www.greatplantpicks.org), Plant Lists
- King County Native Plant Guide ..... [www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov), Native Plant Guide

**WATER . . .**

- ✓ **Let rain soak in**
- ✓ **Conserve it (Smart Watering)** – make every drop count.....[www.cascadewater.org](http://www.cascadewater.org)

**START PLANTS RIGHT**

1. **Water plants** before they are planted
2. **Plant Right**
  - Dig wide, rough-sided hole** . . . only as deep as plant’s root ball
  - Loosen & spread roots**
  - Position** to keep the root flare exposed (top of root ball slightly above the soil)
  - Use the native soil** (no peat moss, compost, or anything else)
3. **Mulch**
4. **Water Deeply**

**HEALTHY . . . for PEOPLE, PETS & WILDLIFE**

1. **Start with prevention**
2. **Identify what the problem really is**
  - The Garden Hotline ..... Phone: (206) 633-0224, Email: [help@gardenhotline.org](mailto:help@gardenhotline.org)  
..... [www.gardenhotline.org](http://www.gardenhotline.org)
  - WSU Master Gardeners ..... Email: [ask-a-mastergardener@live.com](mailto:ask-a-mastergardener@live.com)
  - Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife..... [www.wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats](http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats)
3. **Accept a little damage**
4. **Reconsider problem plants / garden areas**
5. **If action is needed:**
  - Insect, Weed, Disease ..... [www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org](http://www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org)
  - Wildlife ..... <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living>

**BOOKS**

- Grow Your Own Native Landscape*, WSU Extension .....<https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/general-gardening>
- Living with Wildlife and Landscaping for Wildlife*, Russell Link
- Maritime Northwest Garden Guide*, Lisa Taylor
- Pacific Northwest Month-by-Month Gardening*, Christina Pfeiffer
- Rain Garden Handbook*, FREE download .. <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1310027.pdf>