

Backyard Conservation News

August 2022



Backyard Conservation shows you how conservation practices that help conserve and improve natural resources on agricultural land across the country can be adapted for use around your home. These practices help the environment and can make your yard more attractive and enjoyable.



https://www.sxcco.com/?category_id=2944081

Xeriscape

A style of landscape design requiring little or no irrigation or other maintenance, used in arid regions.

1). Plan and design for smart water use

Before you plant anything, determine the water resources for your landscape and how to use them properly. You'll also want to take into consider budget, function, aesthetics, and expected maintenance.

2). Improve soil quality

Quality soil retains moisture, which encourages plant growth. Incorporating organic matter into your soil can help improve its quality. However, you must understand the type of soil that will help plants in your region thrive. Some native plants don't require much organic matter, while other can drown in soil that retains too much moisture.

3). Reduce turf and other water-wasting plants

The main goal of xeriscaping it to reduce water waste, which means reducing the size of lawns. Look to replace lawns with drought-tolerant grass that's best suited for your region. You can also replace all or part of your lawn with low-water groundcovers that are drought-tolerant and require little to no fertilizer.

4). Choose the right plants

Pick plants that are drought-tolerant, but also have aesthetic appeal. Select plants that are native to your region or thrive in your type of climate. It's recommended that you select a good mix of plants at various heights that bloom throughout the year. Don't forget that different plants require different amounts of sunlight, so plant accordingly.

5). Water efficiently

No, xeriscaping does not mean you'll never have to water again. However, it does aim to ensure you water wisely and never overwater. Choose drip irrigation systems that directly water the roots and avoid wasteful sprinklers that leave excess water on the sidewalk or street. Aim to water plants deeply at their roots and do so infrequently to help them develop long, healthy drought-tolerant root systems.

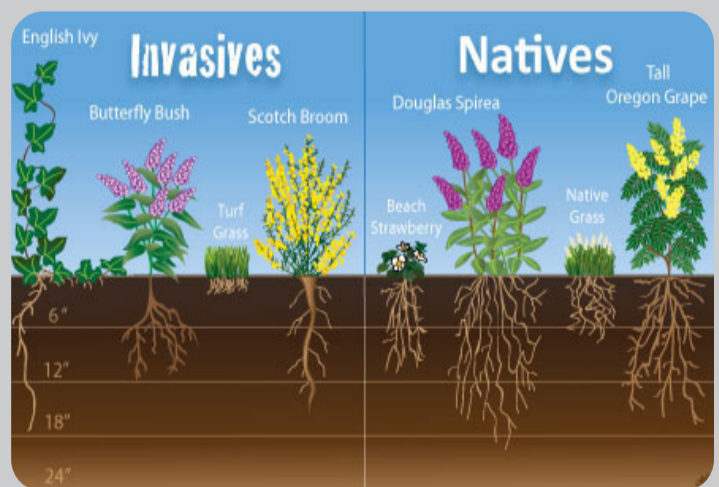
6). Mulch

It's recommended that you use two to three inches of natural mulch. Mulch helps prevent evaporation and prevents weed growth. It's also a way to improve the aesthetics of your landscape.

7). Maintain your landscape

When you do the right amount of planning and research, you'll end up with an attractive, low maintenance yard. But even xeriscaped landscapes still require some maintenance. Pull weeds, prune shrubs and trees, rake, and replace mulch as needed.

<https://frontsteps.com/blog/7-principles-of-xeriscaping/>



TIP

Use regionally-specific, native plants. Exotic species can become invasive and can be spread into the ecosystem by birds and other wildlife.

Drought Tolerant Perennials and Groundcovers



Drought-tolerant landscaping and plants are able to grow or thrive with minimal water or rainfall.

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2020/11/C202-Drought-Tolerant-Perennials-2020.pdf>