

Sustainable Design for Wildlife & Home

with Benjamin Vogt



prairie garden design
monarchgard.com

Your landscape matters for wildlife and climate change. Here's what to do.

➡ Use native plants that have evolved specialized relationships with wildlife

- 90% of insects only reproduce on plants they have an evolutionary history with. Insects are the base of the food chain and key to a healthy landscape.
- Hybrid native plants -- two species bred to make a new one -- are generally not as beneficial for insects as straight species found naturally in the wild.
- Cultivars that are selections -- sports found growing in the wild -- seem to not make a difference for pollinators.
- Plants selected for flower size or plant height also don't seem to effect pollinators, but changes in bloom colors does -- as do double-blooms.
- Try to find local ecotype / genotype plants grown by local nurseries from seed.

➡ Right plant, right place & appeasing neighbors

- Don't spend time and money changing your site if you don't have to. Research the right plants for your soil, climate, drainage, and sunlight.
- Don't just consider above ground growth, but also roots and how they compete with others. Ex: place taprooted plants among more shallow & fibrous-rooted plants.
- If you're going for a wilder look, appease neighbors by: having tall plants in the back or middle of beds, only 2-3 plants blooming at once, clear pathways of lawn or mulch, signs of human purpose like benches or fountains or sculpture, and be friendly (offer a beer).
- Arrange plants in groups of 3 or 5, use masses and drifts, employ plants with interesting winter colors or seed heads.

➡ Reducing energy use with smart planting

- Use a diversity of plants for wildlife habitat and to cool / heat your home while minimizing electric and gas bills.
- Place deciduous trees on the south and west side of a building.
- Place shrubs and trellised vines along structure walls.
- Plant thickly at all levels to reduce site runoff, filter water into the soil, capture more carbon, cool the surrounding environment, and provide habitat for beneficial predator insects.
- If you choose the right plants you won't need to water, mulch, or fertilize. Fertilizer harms soil life and contributes to greenhouse gases.
- Have deeper foundation beds -- 6-12ft vs. 2-3ft. Minimize the lawn. Have more plants!

Suggested Book List

The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden

Doug Tallamy & Rick Darke

Garden Revolution: How Our Landscapes Can be a Source of Environmental Change

Larry Weaner & Thomas Christopher

Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes

Thomas Rainer & Claudia West

The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden: Knowing Your Plants Means Less Work

Roy Diblik

Energy-Wise Landscape Design: A New Approach for Your Home & Garden

Sue Reed

Climate-Wise Landscaping: Practical Actions for a Sustainable Future

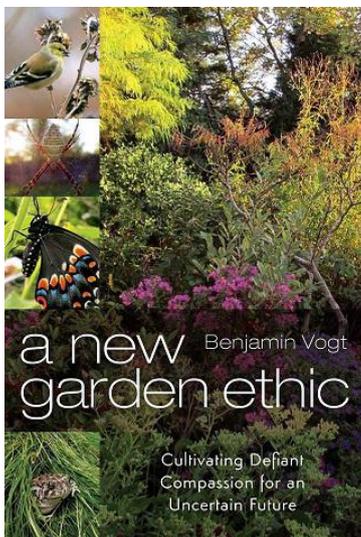
Sue Reed & Ginny Stibolt

Attracting Beneficial Bugs to Your Garden: A Natural Approach to Pest Control

Jessica Walliser

Gardening For Butterflies

The Xerces Society



A New Garden Ethic

Cultivating Defiant Compassion for an Uncertain Future

by Benjamin Vogt

“This book is about so much more than gardening....
A powerful and transformative work written
with honesty and grace.”

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