



Sustainable Landscape Design and Maintenance

To incorporate sustainable landscaping into our communities is to value nature's role in our cities and suburbs. Native plants are well adapted to local environmental conditions, maintain or improve soil fertility, reduce erosion, and often require less fertilizer and pesticides than many alien plants. These characteristics save time and money and reduce the amount of harmful runoff threatening the aquatic resources of our streams, rivers and lakes. Functionally healthy and established natural communities are better able to resist invasions by alien plant species. By working with nature while landscaping, we can create beauty and sustainability in our 21st century landscapes.

Restore Our Home Habitats and Our Regional Environment

- Enhance ecosystem functions that celebrate water and biodiversity
- Minimize disturbance to remnant natural areas, creating smallest "footprint"
- Protect natural wetlands, streams and rivers, incorporating natural drainage into design
- Use low-impact construction techniques while building and planting
- Begin with an accurate topographical site plan
- Provide food, shelter and water to support local wildlife
- Plant like nature - in dense layers - avoid mulch wastelands

Protect Trees

- Evaluate trees using a professional arborist
- If trees must be removed, early in the construction process is best
- Avoid grade changes near trees and mounds that smother roots

Conserve Energy and Water

- With less lawn, mowers and blowers consume less fuel and money; reduce pollution and noise
- Minimize household energy use, plant wind breaks and shade trees
- Use hand rather than power tools, electric rather than gas tools, 2-cycle are the worst offenders
- Rely on rain: between rain and irrigation, only one inch per week is necessary
- Celebrate NE Ohio's great resource: capture rain with rain barrels, rain gardens, green roofs, bio-swales and French drains

Laudable Lawns

- Adjust attitudes towards weeds, tolerating a few weeds in favor of heavy pesticides
- Convert lawn to alternative ground-cover or gardens
- Plant no-mow seed when planning lawn sections
- Set mower blade height at 3"
- Test soil to determine nutrient needs
- Use plant-based or organic fertilizer, instead of synthetics with heavy salt and chemicals

Eco-friendly Materials

- Understand a material's origins and contents, including toxicity
- Be aware: some materials become harmful as they break down
- Please reuse or recycle materials
- Use solar lighting or energy efficient fixtures
- Install permeable pavement

Plant to Support the Web of Life

- Reduce yard waste by leaving nitrogen-rich grass clippings on your lawn or composting leaves and grass into rich humus
- Avoid pesticides - use natural controls, such as the Integrated Pest Management methodology
- Use native plants, as they most adapted to local soils and climate
- Learn invasive species, then work to eradicate them
- Spread the word and volunteer to create more sustainable landscapes

