



Native Plants at The Water Conservation Garden

## Re-doing Your Landscape? Plant Native!

Ah, September. A time when we say goodbye to the summer tourists and get back all the advantages of being a local San Diegan. And as summer gives way to fall, it's also the perfect time to learn more about those other San Diego natives...native plants that is, which also have advantages.

Over the decades, the region has become home to a whole smorgasbord of landscaping—trees, grasses, flowers and shrubs—that are not native to Southern California.

Non-native plants require a lot of water to thrive. If you've been reading the paper (or your smart phone), you know that water shortages have been, and are projected to be, a consistent problem in Southern California.

So here's an idea: plant native.

California plants have survived all of these years because they know how to be stingy with water. They're pros at it.

Some of these plants bring the added benefit of being more fire resistant because they don't have as much fuel to burn. Now that fire season is approaching—it's time to clear dead leaves and brush around your home—it's a good time to consider native plants as smart alternatives.

Consider this: These plants are beautiful to boot. Check out the Showy Penstemon. It's positively showy.

Now we're not saying you should dig up your lawn and do a complete California-shrub makeover. When adding new plants or shrubbery, why not go this route?

Native plants have other benefits as well. They normally don't require as much fertilizer since they naturally thrive in an arid climate. That means less chemicals end up being washed to our waterways.

One last thing: You don't have to be a horticulturist to get moving in the right direction. There are a number of easy-to-access resources that can help. For instance, the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department, the Water Conservation Garden and others have come up with a "Nifty Fifty" list of plants that fit the bill.

So [click here](#) for tips and plant native.



### IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The message to "waste no water" and the Water Conservation team are out in your neighborhood. Join us at the:

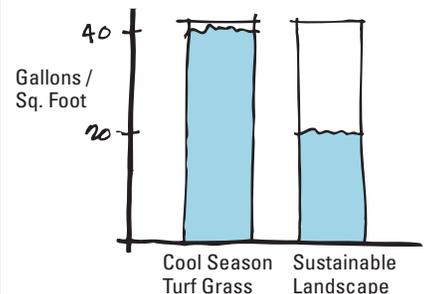
**OCEAN FRIENDLY GARDEN WORKSHOP**  
Thursday, Sept. 15, 2011, 6 p.m.–9 p.m.  
Buena Vista Lagoon Nature Center  
To learn about this workshop series, [click here](#).

**FALL HOME/GARDEN SHOW**  
Friday, Sept. 16, 2011, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.  
Saturday, Sept. 17, 2011, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.  
Sunday, Sept. 18, 2011, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Del Mar Fairgrounds  
For an entire list of exhibits, [click here](#).

**MIRA MESA STREET FAIR**  
Saturday, Sept. 17, 2011, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Camino Ruiz, north of Mira Mesa Blvd.  
For directions and event details, [click here](#).

### DID YOU KNOW?

#### How much water does a sustainable landscape save?



Once established, low to moderate water-using plants can flourish with **less than half of the water** cool season turfgrass requires. Typically, cool season turfgrass uses up to 40 gallons of water per square foot annually, depending on site conditions.

Source: City of San Diego's Water Conservation Program

## HOA in Tierrasanta “Wastes No Water”

In Tierrasanta, a Homeowner Association’s (HOA) Landscape Committee is a model of conservation for its community. This month, we spoke with HOA Chair Robert Derman, who helped lead the committee to invest in redesigning its HOA’s landscapes to “waste no water” and be more sustainable. Through these efforts, the HOA was able to take advantage of rebates available through the City of San Diego’s Commercial-Multifamily Outdoor Water Conservation Rebate Program for water-wise landscape redesigns.

**Q:** Why did your HOA decide to participate in the rebate program?

**A:** We wanted to save water and save on the cost of water. We have 13 acres total in our HOA and that’s a lot of turf to water every day to keep it green. Our landscape architect helped us incorporate native and low-water plants in one of our cul-de-sacs which will help us save and looks great.

**Q:** How long did it take you, from conception to landscape installation, to complete this project?

**A:** From start to finish, it took 17 months to convert one cul-de-sac. It took more time than we anticipated to get an agreement on the landscape design. It’s challenging to be shown a sketch of our yards and be able to visualize what exactly it will look like.

**Q:** How much water are you expecting to save?

**A:** Our goal is to decrease our water consumption at this cul-de-sac by 33%. Our landscape designer worked with us to pick the perfect combination of plants to achieve this water reduction as well as have great looking landscape. Once these plants adapt and are well established in this area, we’ll conduct an evaluation to relandscape our entire community.

**Q:** What rebates did you qualify for through your efforts?

**A:** After everything, we qualified for three rebates. The first was for replacing our turfgrass with a low-water landscape. The second was for installing weather-based irrigation controllers,

which automatically adjust the irrigation run times depending on the weather. The third rebate was for replacing the irrigation nozzles to more water-efficient ones. These three rebates combined for more than \$12,000 in savings.

**Q:** Where do you see the most water waste throughout San Diego?

**A:** Most definitely in people’s outdoor landscape. It’s hard to conserve water and use it wisely if you have thirsty plants.

**Q:** How can San Diegans change this?

**A:** Simple changes in plant selection can help decrease water consumption and save on money.

**Q:** Would you recommend this rebate program to others?

**A:** Of course! Everyone should do a water-wise landscape. Why not? The rebates are very fair and you’ll continually save money on your water bill.

For more information on the Outdoor Water Conservation Rebate Program, [click here](#).



Water-wise Landscaping

## Connecting with Families at Fiesta del Sol

### Waste No Water Campaign—Out & About

On July 13th & 14th, Justice Overcoming Boundaries held its 6th Annual Fiesta del Sol, a free street festival celebrating the history, diverse cultures, and engagement of the people of San Diego. It is a family-friendly event focused on creating positive change by empowering our communities.

The Water Conservation Team attended the festival this year promoting and educating families about water conservation. Those who visited the *Waste No Water* booth had the opportunity to win prizes and have their picture taken telling us why and how to save water.

To view all of the *Waste No Water* pictures from Fiesta del Sol, [click here](#).



Public Outreach In Action

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Help Us Help You Save Water

The City of San Diego’s Public Utilities Department invites you to help evaluate its Outdoor Water Conservation Rebate Program. Our partner, the Think Blue team, is looking for rebate recipients to volunteer as participants in a monitoring effort. To learn more about participating in Think Blue’s Rebate Program Assessment Pilot Project, [click here](#).

### Fire-resistant Plants

California Friendly® plants aren’t only drought-tolerant, they are beautiful too. Many of these plants are also fire-resistant. To view a list of some of the most popular fire-resistant California Friendly® plants, [click here](#).

### 100 Ways to Save Water

For information on 100 different ways to save water, [click here](#).

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