



[Nature's]Choice

Lawn Alternatives

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Nature's Choice Design

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Average North American homeowner spends 150 hours per year on lawn care

*Cutting,...weeding...watering...aerating...watering....fertilizing...cutting...watering....
weeding...watering...*

[Permaculture: permacultureprinciples.com](http://permacultureprinciples.com)

[Xeriscaping: okanaganxeriscape.org](http://okanaganxeriscape.org)

- Permaculture is a design system inspired by nature
- Based on ethics and design principles that can be used to guide you, your household and your community 'beyond sustainability'.
- This practical approach to life encourages a closed system to landscaping - nothing goes to waste.

- Requires healthy plants
- Even drought tolerant plants need time to establish
- Create a sustaining system
- Encourages extensive root growth.
- Requires good design and preparation.
- Right plant, right place!

[Naturescaping: naturescapebc.ca](http://naturescapebc.ca)

"When each of us, alone and in community, on acreage and in small backyards, for reasons of ecology, economy, or style has done all that can be done to restore the abundance of the land, many other animals will surely rejoin us.

Then it will work. Then there will be plenty. Then we will have reason for thanksgiving"

Sara Stein - Author and Native plant specialist

A New Normal?

- Social acceptance is changing regarding green lawns.
- More people view “perfect lawns” as an inconsiderate choice to our local ecology.
- Dormant lawns are embraced as a natural occurrence, rather than unsightly.
- Encouraging grasses to have natural cycles creates a healthy landscape.

Alternatives to Turf

- Groundcovers
- Patio's & paths
- Integrating meadows
- Xeriscaping
- Alpine planting
- Naturescaping & native plants
- Permeable pavers
- Integrating Edibles
- Permaculture Practices

Consider Edibles!

- Edibles such as herbs, veggies, berries and fruits can be utilized to achieve an ornamental effect, that provides food value too!
- Raised planter boxes can be creatively designed using rock and wood
- Integration into ornamental gardens is becoming more common.
- Many people find it convenient and seasonally enjoyable!

How to lose the lawn

- Smothering: newspaper, cardboard, geo-textiles, tarps. Mulch can be applied on top of any material.
- Soil Solarization: Effective but has some adverse side effects.
- Roto-tilling: Applicable to some types of lawns.
- Sod cutting: Mow lawn on lowest setting. Bag the cuttings for use later. Cut sod and turn over to be used to create soil or remove entirely.
- Spray: vinegar, boiling water etc..
- Corn Gluten: prevents re emergence of (most) weeds by preventing germination.

Applying herbicidal foliar sprays to plants

- Read the directions, go online to learn more.
- Spray the crown of the plant not just the leaves.
- Never spray when windy.
- Shield your desired plants using:
 - cardboard
 - Large plastic bottles
 - “Dog cones” aka. “Cone’s of shame”
- Apply in the heat of the day or morning.
- Do not mix different products in one application.
- Use a backpack sprayer for large areas or a hand held pressurized tank sprayer.
- Homemade remedies
 - Vinegar spray: 2 part vinegar (10% Acetic Acid) to .5 part water (use less water for established weeds)
 - Alcohol mist spray: 5 tbsp to 1 Litre of water (shade gardens)
 - Boiling water: Cautious application required!

Before applying any Herbicide or pesticide please contact your local municipal for current application bylaws.

Sourcing materials

- Soil & Mulches
 - Cultivate Garden - bagged material
 - Buckerfields - variety of bagged material
 - Sea Soil - fish and lumber fines - bulk @ Nanoose Edibles & Art Knapp Nan.
 - Earthman - Fir mulch, wood chips, fish compost etc..
 - ShareCost - Bulk materials, and ornamental stone etc
 - EarthBank- Parksville company that sells fish compost
- Plant material
 - Investigate the companies you purchase from, ask questions about plant distributors
- Local plant suppliers:
 - Cultivate Garden- Unique, healthy, and diverse plant selections
 - Streamside (Bowser) - All native plants locally & organically grown
 - Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) – Nursery in Cassidy propagates and sells native plants

Helpful links!

www.stepables.com

- Fun lawn alternative website, very interactive.

www.jeeperscreepers.info

- Informative ground cover website, an reliable source of information.

www.landscapecalculator.com

- Measuring tool!
- Useful for any product and plant spacing.

www.naturescapebc.ca

- Great source of information and online access to information
"provincial guide to naturescaping"

www.natureschoicedesign.com/links

- Lots of additional information
- other informative links

After thoughts with Amy...

- Be honest. What isn't working? What is?
- Your property will have certain unique qualities that will need to be addressed.
- Native plants may have to be integrated to non native landscapes.
- Combine various styles and materials to achieve your desired affect.
- Be creative! Increase the quality of your life by looking at your property holistically.
- Right plant, right place! (From Cultivate)



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