



Naturescaping: Letting Your Yard Go Wild!

by Lynne Brosch, UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe

A Naturescape must provide:

- ✱ Clean, accessible water
- ✱ Abundant and diverse food supply
- ✱ Habitat
- ✱ Access to other ecosystems



Access to Water

• Birdbaths, creating shallow areas and fountains in ponds, water filled depressions in rocks and even overhead irrigation sprinklers can all provide drinking and bathing opportunities for wildlife.

Food Supply

- Provide native plants as much as possible!
- Native plants provide the food source at the right time, right type of nutrition and right shelter for native insects and animals.
- Use plants that produce edible berries and fruits, nuts, seeds, sap and flowers rich in nectar and pollen.
- Allow fruit and seed heads to remain on most plants, rather than pruning and deadheading



Habitat

Supply edges where one ecosystem gives way to another. Pond edges move into wildflower, shrubbery, wooded areas, etc.

- Dense shrubbery, evergreen ground covers & large rock outcrops surrounded by vegetation and/or grasses provide protective cover for ground-feeding birds and small animals to evade predators such as hawks, foxes and cats.
- Taller trees provide perches for birds of prey.
- Live with insects, spiders and invertebrates in the garden to provide the bird's essential protein, especially during the breeding season.



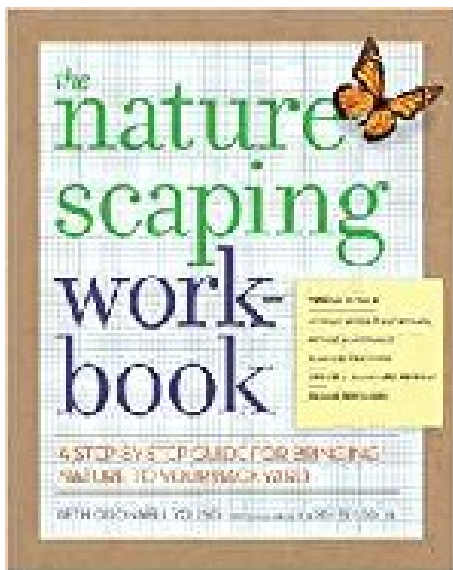
- Your diversity of plantings and use of natives will encourage the types of insects that control other pests. Birds will be welcomed in to also control insect pests.
- You can build small brush piles from branches and trimmings and then plant vines to ramble over them.

Access to Other Ecosystems

This may be difficult depending on where you live. If you can get your neighbors to provide a similar habitat so that animals, birds and insects can travel through a larger ecosystem, this benefit will allow for more space for breeding and young. If you live near open areas such as conservancy land or national forest lands you are able to provide access to a larger ecosystem which will benefit all the wildlife you attract.



Resources for more information:



The Naturescaping Workbook: A Step-by-Step Guide for Bringing Nature to Your Backyard. Beth O'Donnell Young. Timber Press, 2011.

Mini Meadows: Grow a Little Patch of Colorful Flowers Anywhere around Your Yard. Mike Lizotte. Story Publishing, 2019.

calscape.org - Put in your location to get lists of natives for your area.

www.sierrafoothillscnps.org/gardening/ Sierra Foothills CNPS, articles and handouts

http://plantnative.org/how_intro.htm. PlantNative- How to Naturescape

www.humanegardener.com Great blog and resource articles, also the book **The Humane Gardener: Nurturing a Backyard Habitat for Wildlife.** Nancy Lawson. Princeton Architectural Press, 2017.

Grow Native: Bringing Natural Beauty to Your Garden. Lynn M. Steiner. Cool Springs Press, 2016.

Eco-yards. Lauren Rama. New Society Publishers, 2011.

Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants. Douglas W. Tallamy. Timber Press, 2014.

California Native Plants for the Garden. Carol Bornstein, et.al. Cachuma Press, 2009.

Wild Suburbia: Learning to Garden with Native Plants. Barbara Eisenstein. Heyday, 2016.

Gardening with a Wild Heart: Restoring California's Native Landscapes at Home. Judith Larner Lowry. U of Cal Press, 1999.

Cultivating Chaos: How to Enrich Landscapes with Self-Seeding Plants. Jonas Rief, et.al. Timber Press, 2015.

The California Native Landscape: The Homeowner's Design Guide to Restoring Its Beauty and Balance. Greg Rubin & Lucy Warren. Timber Press, 2013.

The Bee-Friendly Garden. Kate Frey and Gretchen LeBuhn. Ten Speed Press, 2016

Landscaping with Wildflowers: An Environmental Approach to Gardening. Jim Wilson. Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

Garden Revolution: How our landscapes can be a source of environmental change. Larry Weaner, Thomas Christopher. Timber Press, 2016.

New Wild Garden: Natural-style planting and practicalities. Ian Hodgson. Frances Lincoln Limited, 2016.

