TRANSFORMING YOUR LAWN

into a Xeriscape Garden

Presented by:

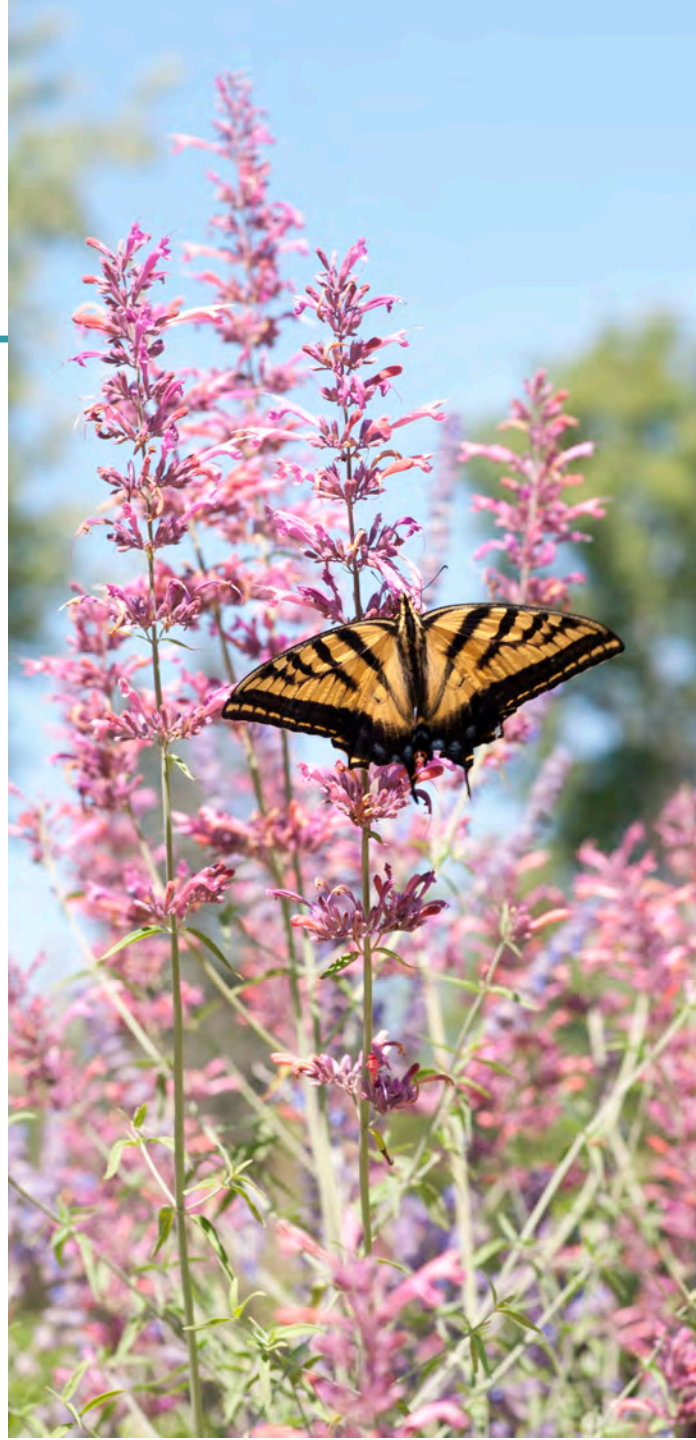
Bill Melvin of Ecoscape

ECOSCAPE
Environmental Design
Caring for your land...Naturally!

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Transforming Your Lawn into a Xeriscape Garden

- **What is a Xeriscaping?**
- **7 Principles of Xeriscape**
- **Transformation Process**
  - **Phase 1: Deconstruction**
  - **Phase 2: Preparation**
  - **Phase 3: Installation**
  - **Phase 4: Maintenance**



WHAT IS XERISCAPING?

Landscaping that promotes water efficiency by using plants that are native and adaptable to Colorado's semi-arid climate.

–Denver Water

7 PRINCIPLES OF XERISCAPING

1. Planning and Design
2. Practical Turf Areas
3. Group Plants of Similar Water Needs
4. Proper Soil Amending
5. Appropriate Mulches
6. Efficient Irrigation
7. Landscape Maintenance

1. PLANNING AND DESIGN

- Have a plan!
- Bubble diagrams are great
- Right plant, right place
- Garden In A Box makes it easy!

GARDEN IN A BOX

makes planning and design a breeze!

2018 GARDEN IN A BOX: GARDEN INFO SHEET

HONEY BEE HEAVEN

Designed by Bill Melvin of Ecoscape Environmental Design

RESOURCE central

1 - Black-Eyed Susan
2 - Blanket Flower
3 - Coronado® Hyssop
4 - English Lavender
5 - Flamenco Red Hot Poker
6 - Garden Sage
7 - Italian Oregano
8 - Lavender Cotton
9 - Native Bee Balm
10 - Pinkleaf Penstemon
11 - Prairie Winecups
12 - Purple Coneflower
13 - Sulphur Flower
14 - Walker's Low Catmint

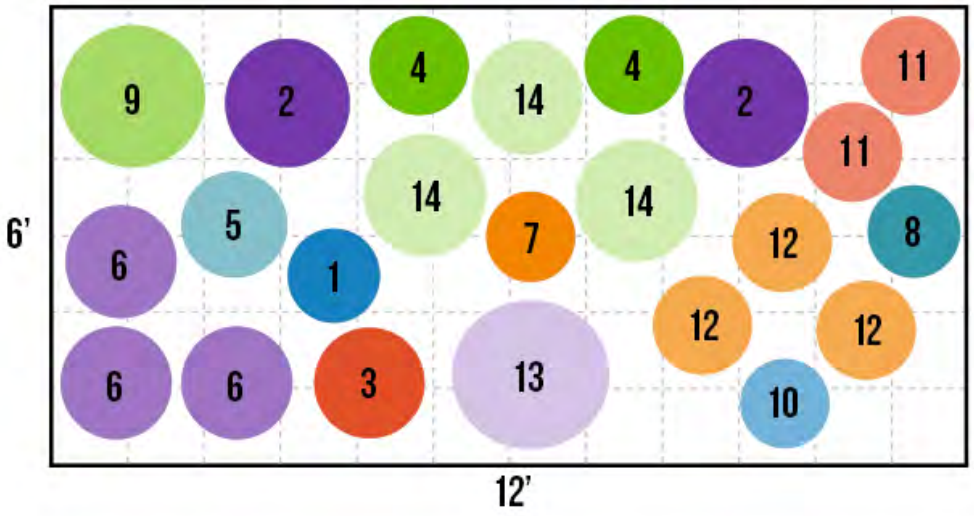
1 Black-Eyed Susan

Latin Name: *Rudbeckia hirta*
Mature Height: 12-42"
Mature Spread: 12-18"
Hardy To: 8,000'
Water: Medium
Exposure: Sun
Flower Color: Bronze-Yellow
Flower Season: Summer
Attracts: Butterflies

Description: This beloved wildflower is native to the Eastern and Central United States. It is easily grown in average, medium moisture, well-drained soils in full sun. Throughout the summer, the cheerful Black-Eyed Susan features a bold, central disc surrounded by bright, yellow ray florets above stiff, hairy stems. They are considered a short-lived perennial that typically survives up to 3 years, but it will spread by seed and can be easily naturalized. To prevent its self-seeding tendancy, be sure to deadhead diligently. Deadheading will also inspire new blooms! However, if you prefer instead to leave the last blooms of autumn to go to seed, then you will enjoy visits from hungry birds and winter interest in the garden.

Care: Deadhead to encourage blooming and to minimize self-seeding. Cut back to the ground in late winter; wait for spring to allow seeding. Plants can also be propagated by division. *Rudbeckia* plants that become taller or bushier than desired can be cut back to about 6" to generate fresh growth.

- Water conservation via landscape change
- Comprehensive Plant and Care Guide
- 1-3 Plant by Number Maps
- 14-30 Xeric Starter Plants



2. PRACTICAL TURF AREAS

Turfgrass Options

- Turf Type Tall Fescue
- Buffalo Grass
- Gramma Grass
- Nature's Prairie Turf
- And, yes, even Bluegrass!

3. GROUPING PLANTS

- Similar water needs go together
- Modify irrigation…if you know how!
- Overwatering can create problems

4. PROPER SOIL AMENDING

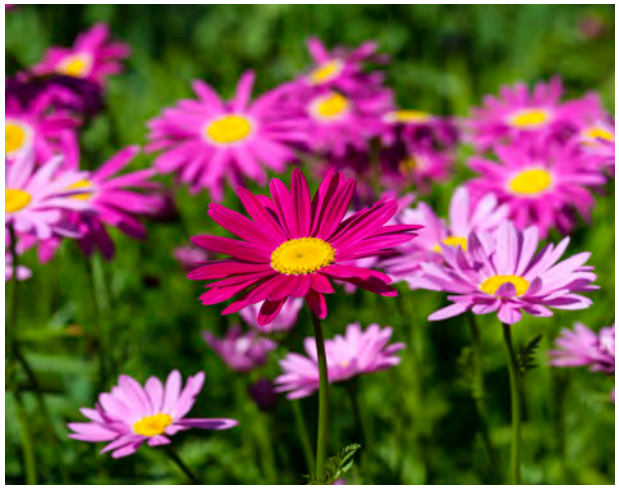
- Most important step!
- Feed the soil, and soil will feed plants
- Cultivation and aeration
- Compost – home, local municipality or supplier

5. APPROPRIATE MULCHES

- Inorganic (stone) vs. organic (wood)
- Keeps moisture in and weeds out
- Cools the soil
- Minimizes erosion

6. EFFICIENT IRRIGATION

- What is appropriate?
- Overhead vs. Drip vs. Hand Watering
- Pop ups vs. Micro-spray


7. LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

- Protect your investment!
- Budget for it
- Know your weeds!

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS:
PHASE 1 - DECONSTRUCTION

Step 1

Select the right location

refer to 7 Principles of Xeriscape

Step 2

Turf mgmt. and disposal

let's explore these options

TURF MGMT. OPTION #1:

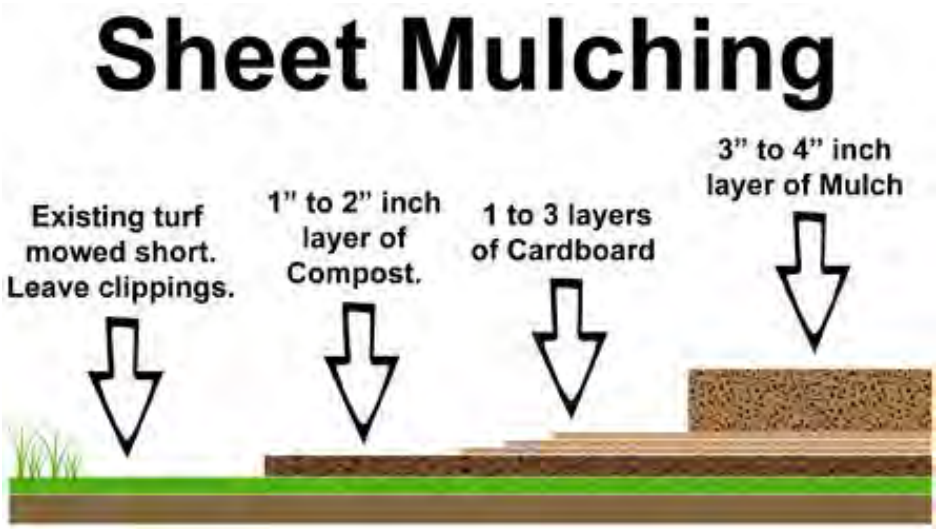
Sheet Mulching: killing your turf by covering it with newspaper or cardboard and layering it with organic matter and mulch.

Benefits

- Efficient
- Inexpensive
- Minimal labor
- Minimal environmental impact

Challenges

- Slower method – about 6 months (starting in the fall)
- Not practical for steep slopes
- Not ideal for large lawns



TURF MGMT. OPTION #2:

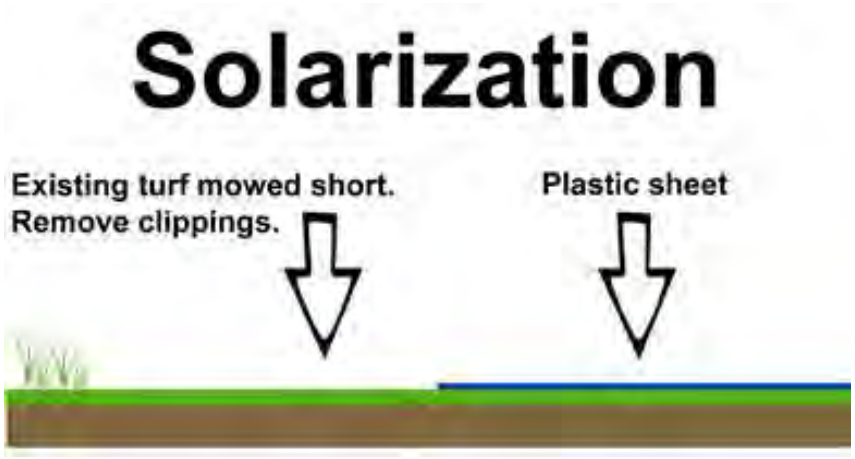
Solarization: killing your turf with a black plastic sheet, creating a sun-powered sauna that is an uninhabitable place for your grass it to live.

Benefits

- Efficient
- Inexpensive
- Minimal labor needed
- Minimal environmental impact
- Create compost from your dead grass
- Good for hot, sunny areas

Challenges

- Slower method – 6 wks. to 1 yr.
- Unsightly
- Does not work in cool, shady areas



TURF MGMT. OPTION #3:

Sod Cutter: removing your turf with a sod cutter.

Benefits

- Fastest way to remove turf
- Removed sod makes great compost
- Leaves the majority of your soil intact
- Good for areas 100 sq. ft. or more

Challenges

- Labor-intensive
- Higher chance of turf regrowth
- Sod cutter does not remove deep roots
- May need to rent/buy equipment

TURF MGMT. OPTION #4:

Till: breaking up and removing your sod with a tiller.

Benefits

- Quicker and easier than digging
- Retains organic matter
- Allows for immediate planting

Challenges

- Difficult on rocky sites and in wet, clay soils
- Turns up weed seeds
- Weed and grass mgmt. during year 1
- Access to equipment

Compost it!

Take it to a local disposal facility!

- Pioneer
- Midwest Materials
- Colorado Materials

DISPOSAL OPTIONS

Check in with your local municipal facility!

City of Lafayette

Check Additional Resource List!

Located at registration table and online at ResourceCentral.org

RESOURCE central
CONSERVATION MADE EASY

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS:
PHASE 2 - PREPARATION

Step 1
Proper grading and drainage

Step 2
Soil amendments

Step 3
Irrigation retrofit

Let's explore steps #1-3 of prep!

PROPER GRADING AND DRAINAGE

What you need to know!

- Proper grading should provide positive drainage
  - Positive drainage = away from permanent structure

SOIL AMENDMENTS

What you need to know!

- **Organic matter** = something that was alive
  - Types: compost, mushroom compost, sphagnum peat, wood chips, grass clippings, etc.
- **Buy in bulk, from:**
  - Pioneer, Midwest Materials, Colorado Materials
- **Buy in bags, from:**
  - Mayfield's, Harlequins
- Spread 1 to 3 inches deep
- Cultivate into soil

IRRIGATION RETROFIT

What you need to know!

- Transforming from sprinkler ⟶ drip
  - Choose an area within **1** zone!
  - From a head: Rain Bird 1800 Retro Kit - Video
  - From the manifold/valve box
- Hand watering is also effective
  - *You can still qualify for the program even if you do not have an in-ground irrigation system.*
- When is it time to call a professional?

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS:
PHASE 3 - INSTALLATION

Step 1
Replacement options

Step 2
Planting & watering

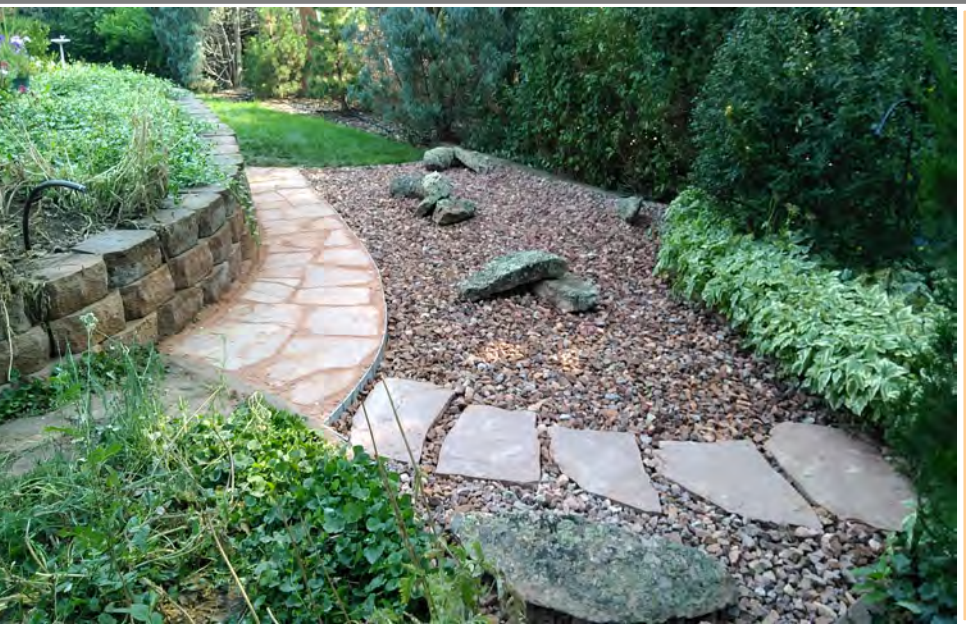
Step 3
Mulch

Let's explore steps #1-3 of install!

REPLACEMENT OPTIONS

SOFTSCAPE

- Replacing your turf with Xeric (low-water) perennials
- Ex: Garden In A Box



HARDSCAPE

- Replacing your turf with *permeable* materials that have long-term or permanent qualities
- Ex: rocks and pavers


INSPIRATION... from past participants!

SOFTSCAPE #1: BEFORE & AFTER

SOFTSCAPE #2: BEFORE & AFTER

HARDSCAPE #1: BEFORE & AFTER

SOFTSACPE + HARDSCAPE #1: BEFORE & AFTER

SOFTSACPE + HARDSCAPE #1: AFTER

More perspectives from the same project!

PLANTING Xeric Perennials

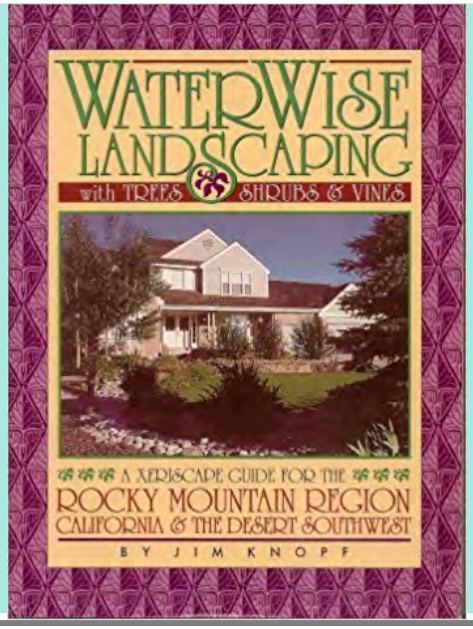
When planting, consider the following:

- **Proper Size** – shrubs vs. perennials vs. ground covers
- **Exposure Requirements** – sun, shade, adaptable
- **Natives** – you can't go wrong… they just like it here!
- **Edibles** – require more water, but…
- **Neonicotinoids** – systemic insecticide
  - *Garden In A Box plants are <u>not</u> treated with neonics!*
- **Invaluable Resources** – books (next slide)!

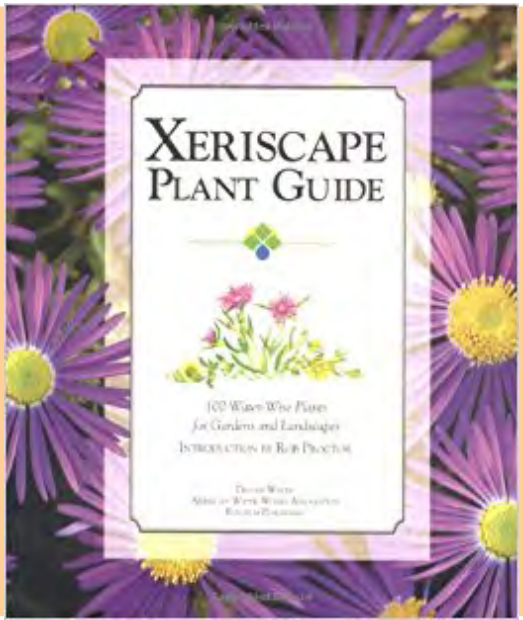
WaterWise Landscaping with Trees, Shrubs & Vines

A Xeriscape Guide for the Rocky Mountain Region

- Jim Knopf



INVALUABLE RESOURCES



Xeriscape Plant Guide

100 Water-Wise Plants for Gardens and Landscapes

- Denver Water

PLANTING Perennials 101

How to plant perennials:

- **Dig a hole**
  - **Width**: 2x as wide as container
  - **Depth**: as deep as container
  - Top of root ball = level with top of soil
- **Loosen the roots**
  With your hands or a shovel
- **Backfill the hole and tuck in the plant**
  With soil and compost
- **Mulch around base of plant and water!**
  We'll talk more about mulch & water…

Tools and Supplies!

- ✓ Shovel / Trowel
- ✓ Compost
- ✓ Mulch
- ✓ Water

WATERING Xeric Perennials

With a drip system, water:

In Apr, May, Sept, Oct:
45-60 min, 1x/wk.*

From June-Aug:
45-60 min, 2x/wk.*

When watering, consider…

- **High Water Use Plants**
  20 gallons / square foot / growing season
- **Moderate Water Use Plants**
  10 gallons / square foot / growing season
- **Low Water Use Plants**
  1-3 gallons / square foot / growing season
- **Observe your garden and make adjustments**
  Check soil moisture with your finger!

MULCH

For Xeric Perennials!

- Moisture in, weeds out
- Feeds the soil
- Organic vs. inorganic mulch
    1) **Organic**
        - ➢ Ex: wood chips, grass clippings, etc.
    2) **Inorganic**
        - ➢ Ex: gravel, stone, etc.
- So…which one should I use?

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS:
PHASE 4 - MAINTENANCE

Step 1

Care during the 1st year and beyond!

Let's explore maintenance!

MAINTENANCE

During the 1st year and beyond

- **Watering** year 1 to year 2+
- **Mulch** as necessary
- **Fertilize** as directed & if needed
- **Remove** dead plant debris
- **Prune** woody plants when dormant
- **Weeding** to reduce competition
- **Additional resources:**
  - Contact your county's local Master Gardner Extension
  - Landscape Companies – *know when to talk to a pro!*

GOOD LUCK and HAVE FUN!