

Robbins Park Food Forest Original Sign Content

Robbins Food Forest – Initial Large Sign – April 2012 through August 2022. Updated and replaced due to fading and a broken acrylic covering.

Front Side:

ROBBINS PARK WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN (3 PHOTOS)

Welcome, please enjoy this beautiful, productive and water-wise landscape. Not long ago it was a thirsty lawn!

In April 2012, the Town of Windsor and Daily Acts, a Sonoma County based nonprofit, teamed up with Permaculture Artisans, students from the WISE Academy at Windsor High School and community volunteers to transform 5,750 ft² of water-thirsty lawn here at Robbins Park into a water-wise demonstration garden. This productive ecological garden now grows both food and medicine, provides wildlife habitat, and builds community, while serving as an inspiring demonstration site for neighbors.

Rather than physically removing, the entire 5,750 ft² of lawn was sheet mulched in place. This simple process creates the necessary conditions for lawn to decompose under layers of compost, cardboard and mulch, providing both a weed barrier and the components for building healthy soil. With the inclusion of constructed bioswales, this lush landscape is capturing more rainfall through improved water infiltration into the soil and reducing overall water use by more than 70,000 precious gallons each year as compared to the original lawn. Even with less water, this garden features a cornucopia of color, fragrance, food and habitat than can be enjoyed year round. From delicious apples to bee-loving California Lilac, water-wise gardens can produce an incredible bounty, with a little something for everyone!

Please wait until the fruit is ripe before picking!

RESOURCES

The Town of Windsor provides a variety of resources for water customers interested in creating more water-wise landscapes. For more information, call (707) 838-5357 or search online for “Windsor Water Conservation.” Also, check out the pamphlet below for a self-guided tour of the water-wise demonstration plant at Robbins Park.

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Back Side:

WANT TO CREATE YOUR OWN WATER-WISE GARDEN? (5 PHOTOS – one beside each topic below)

THE RIGHT PLANTS

Every water-wise garden needs the right plants grown in the right places. Native plants are always a good choice, as they are adapted to California's Mediterranean climate. A majority of non-native plants from locations with similar Mediterranean climates will also do well. Hardy perennial food plants provide multiple benefits, and even annual fruits and vegetables can be grown with water efficiency in mind.

MULCH

Increase the living sponge of your site with a thick layer of mulch. Mulch reduces erosion, slows evaporation and builds better soil over time. Better soil in turn absorbs and holds more water. Recycle fallen leaves onsite by using them as mulch.

BIOSWALES AND BERMS

Bioswales and berms enable the rain water flowing over the surface to slow, spread and sink into the soil. Depending on how you design your bioswales, they may be mostly hidden like they are here (*refers to photo*). Capturing water in the soil is the cheapest and easiest way to harvest large amounts of rain, hydrating your landscape and recharging ground water.

PERMEABLE SURFACES

Remove hardscape to maximize rain absorbing garden space. Permeable pathways of gravel, mulch and even brick allow more water to soak into the ground. Consider installing permeable pavers or vegetative planting strips in place of concrete in driveways or plant rain gardens in parkway strips along the sidewalk to increase permeability and reduce runoff at your site.

DRIP IRRIGATION

Forget sprinklers. A simple system of tubing and emitters delivers the right amount of water right where it's needed. An automatic timer can be added to ensure consistent watering. If you don't have an irrigation system, get in the habit of hand watering. You'll use less water and get better results because you'll be giving each plant just what it needs.

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