












Mission

Engaging university-trained volunteers to empower and sustain diverse communities with relevant, unbiased, research-based horticulture and environmental stewardship education.

Become a Master Gardener
New training starts Jan. 2024
Contact Gary-garyf@wsu.edu

Our Program Priorities

 <p>Climate Change: We teach ways to create resilient landscapes that are adapted to our changing climate.</p>	 <p>Soil Health: We encourage building healthy soils to prevent depletion and ensure the long-term viability of local food security & natural resources.</p>	 <p>Plant Biodiversity: We promote stewardship of diverse ecosystems through invasive species management, native species conservation and restoration in landscapes.</p>
 <p>Clean Water: We promote integrated pest management to minimize polluted runoff.</p>	 <p>Pollinators: We teach ways to help native bees and other pollinators thrive in home and community landscapes.</p>	 <p>Nearby Nature: We seek to increase access to plants, green spaces, and public landscapes to benefit the health & well-being of all members of our communities.</p>
 <p>Water Conservation: We promote water-wise gardening and landscaping practices to conserve water.</p>	 <p>Local Food: We promote sustainable techniques to growing local food to improve individual & community health and wellness.</p>	 <p>Wildfire Preparedness: We teach landscaping principles to reduce the risk of loss due to wildfire.</p>



Cowlitz County Master Gardeners



Follow Us On
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@cowlitzcomg.com

WSU Cowlitz Master Gardeners

cowlitzmastergardener@gmail.com

360-577-3014 Ext 1

WSU COWLITZ COUNTY EXTENSION

Master Gardeners



GARDENING AND PLANT PROBLEMS CLINIC

FREE

Ask us!

ADVICE



WSU EXTENSION
Cowlitz County



WHERE? Three ways to reach us!
360-577-3014 Ext.1
cowlitzmastergardener@gmail.com
Extension Office: 304 Cowlitz Way, Kelso, WA



WHEN? Email any time
Office: 10 am – 12pm Mar.-Oct.- MWF
Nov.-Feb.- Wed.

Send your photos. Bring your plant & insect specimens!

Visit our website
Tons of great gardening information
Recordings and slides from past workshops.
cowlitzcomg.com/workshops-videos



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS



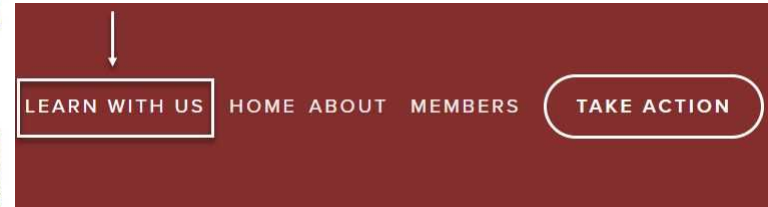
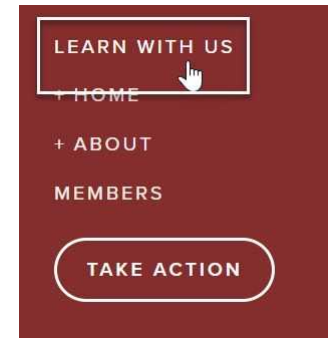
HAVE A GARDENING PROBLEM? ASK A MASTER GARDENER!



SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL-SEE WORKSHOPS YOU MISSED!



MONTH-BY-MONTH GARDEN TIPS



LANDSCAPE GARDENING



FRUITS



VEGETABLE GARDENING



LAWNS/TURF/PASTURE

Cowlitzcomg.com



COMPOSTING



POLLINATORS, SPIDERS, BENEFICIALS, INSECT PESTS



HOW-TO DEMONSTRATIONS- for adults and kids



WEEDS





WSU EXTENSION
Cowlitz County

No-Dig Lawn-to-Garden Bed Transformation!

Alice Slusher

WSU Cowlitz Co. Master Gardener Volunteer



What we'll talk about



- Why
- How
- Examples (Lots of examples!)
- Things to know
- Lawn alternatives: Ecolawns

Why



- Decreased water use
- Reduced lawn waste
- Minimize herbicide use
- Lower air and noise pollution
- Enhanced biodiversity
- Increased property values



Methods to create a garden bed



- Digging: Requirement--hard work.
- Rototill (So many reasons not to)

OR



The EASY WAY-Sheet Mulching requirements--patience and time



- Sheet Mulching simplifies lawn-to-garden bed conversion in three steps.
- Easy, chemical-free alternative
- Sustainable materials are used.
- Prevents weeds, retains moisture, and enriches soil.
- Improves soil quality organically.



Advantages of Sheet Mulching



- **Simplicity:** It's an easy and straightforward composting method.
- **Flexibility:** Can be done gradually as materials become available and works for both small and large-scale projects.
- **Soil Improvement:** Enhances soil quality and can be used to establish new beds or enhance existing ones.
- **Minimal Equipment:** Requires minimal equipment, materials, and time.
- **Expansion:** Convenient for expanding gardens with minimal effort.

Disadvantages of Sheet Mulching:



- **Water and Air Limitation:** The cardboard layer can restrict the flow of water and air into the soil, potentially impacting soil health.
- **Site-Specific Considerations:** Effectiveness may vary based on factors like soil type, precipitation, and regional conditions, affecting the breakdown rate.

Linda Chalker-Scott on Drawbacks of Sheet Mulching



- Pest Attraction
- Limited Effectiveness
- Susceptibility to Wind
- Risk of Anaerobic Conditions
- Hydrophobic when Dry:
- Aesthetic Concerns

However

- Can be effective in well-maintained home gardens with continuous soil work and irrigation
- Arborist wood chips increase survival of shrubs in hot, dry summers

What is sheet mulching?



Smothering weeds with layers of cardboard and mulch

- Prepare the area
- Lay Cardboard
- Apply Mulch
- Water



****As many recipes for this as there is for chocolate chip cookies!**

Prepare the area

- Placement--full sun, shade, drought-tolerant, close to water, eco-lawn?
- Outline bed area
- Scalp the lawn
- Dig a V-shaped trench along edge
- “Pop” the soil with a spading fork (drainage, aeration)
- WATER!!



Lay down cardboard



- Sheets of clean, non-coated corrugated cardboard, remove tape, staples
- Overlap sheets by 8-10 inches
- Water as you go
- Tuck edges into the trenched outline



Add Mulch



- 6-8 inches of grass clippings, leaves, fir/pine needles, bark, or wood chips.
- Nothing with pesticides, herbicides, or weeds, that includes grass clippings if you use a weed-and-feed product
- Add water frequently



Patience and time

- Begin in fall, mulch will break down in 4-6 months.
- Ready to plant in spring!



Other recipes: Lasagna!



- Prepare the bed as described previously
- Add layers of “brown” and “green” organic matter, watering thoroughly as you go (Lasagna)
- Browns (carbon-rich): two-inch carbon layer—straw (not hay), wood chips, dry leaves, or sawdust.
- Greens (Nitrogen-rich): two-inch nitrogen layer, such as compost, well-rotted manure, or green grass clippings.

Other recipes: Lasagna!



- Repeat these two steps until it's piled 12-24 inches thick. Moisten well after every carbon layer.
- Top it all off with arborist wood chips or mulch, and wet it down again. Your mound will compost over the winter, shrink down, and be ready to plant in spring

Note: take care to keep it moist until the fall rains begin

When is it “done” and ready to plant?



Can take 6 months

- ready for planting when the layers have decomposed to the extent that the original materials are no longer identifiable
- Smells and looks like fresh soil
- Shortcut: place some 2-3 inches of garden soil or mulch soil in the mulch and into the lasagna bed.

The REALLY EASY WAY



- Outline, edge your bed, scalp lawn.
- Pile on 8-12 inches of arborist wood chips
- Wait 6 months
- Plant!

REALLY EASY WAY









My daughter's yard TRANSFORMATION!

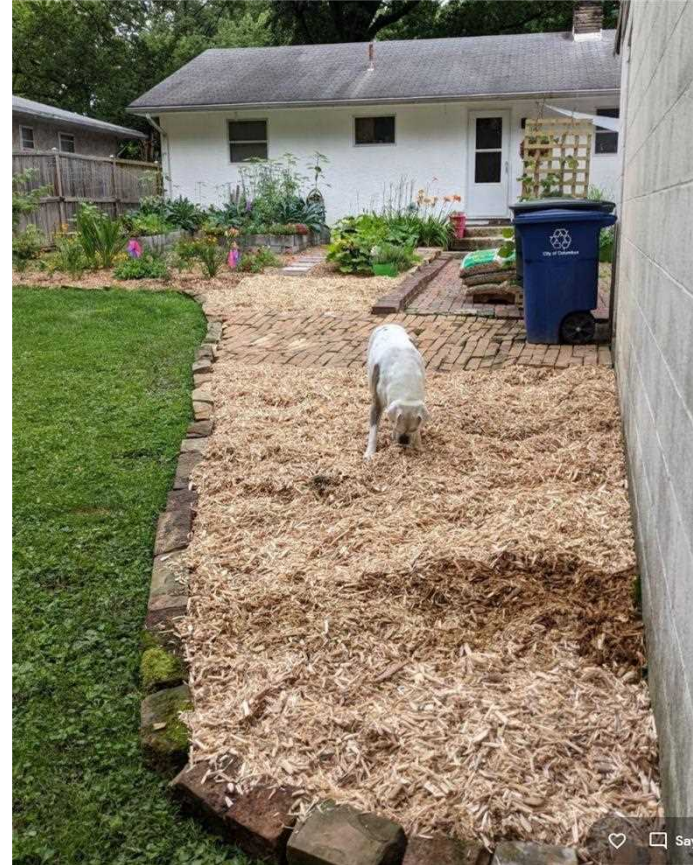












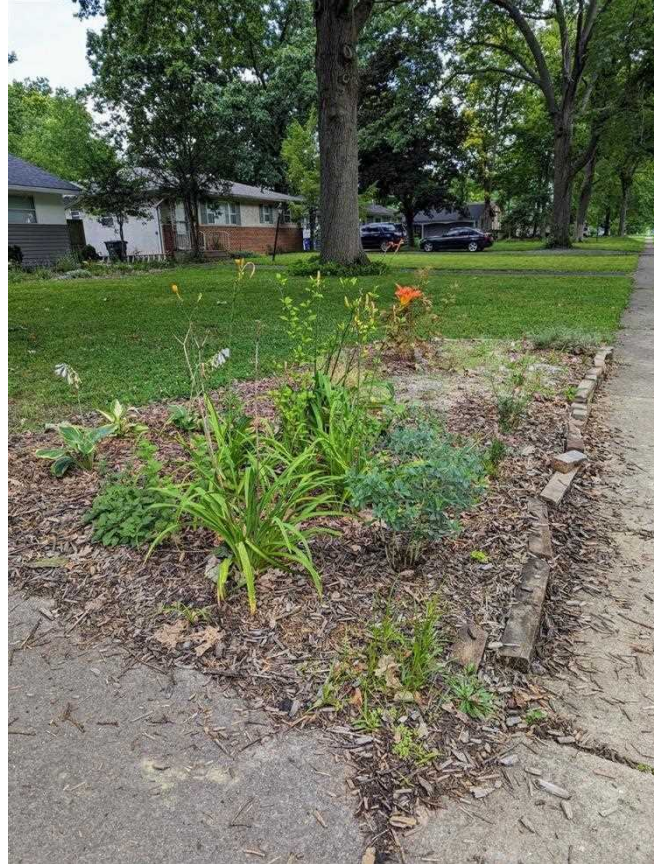








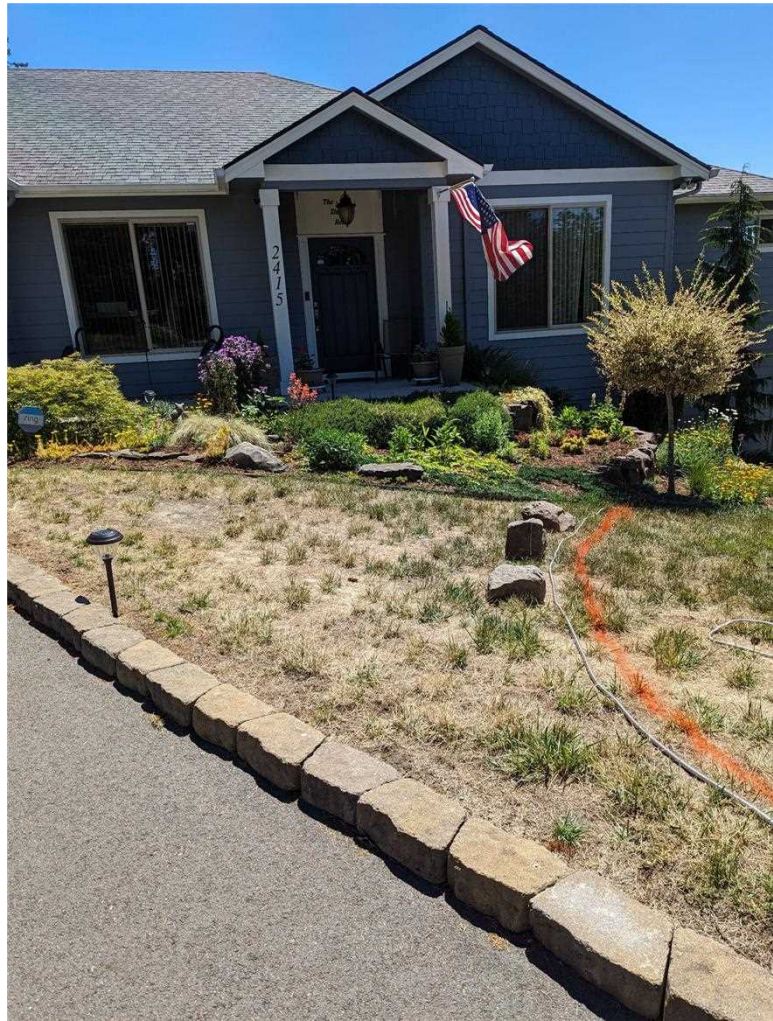
- Works in progress!





My front flower bed

- Combination sheet mulch and solarizing
- Started July 4, 2023











Where to get your plants



- Divide plants
- Help neighbors divide plants
- Fall sales (watch for circling roots!)

Words to the wise



- Just remember to plant the right plant in the right place.
- Plants with similar light and water needs together
- Even drought-tolerant plants will need to be watered during the summer until established.

What about ecolawns?



Ecolawn consists of a blend of grass and broadleaf species that

- Coexist harmoniously and are ecologically sustainable
- Maintain their green color during dry summer periods
- Demand less water compared to regular grass lawns
- Typically necessitate minimal or no fertilizer
- Require less frequent mowing compared to traditional lawns, usually every 2 to 3 weeks in spring, summer, and fall



PT 755 Fleur de Lawn®



PT 769 R&R Eco-Turf Mix with Microclover®



PT 767 Dog Park Eco-Lawn Mix with



PT 799 Microclover®



PT 770 Water Less Eco-Lawn Mix



PT 705 Xeriscape Lawn Alternative--Mow or



PT 764 Verdant Lawn



PT 757 Fleur de Lawn Blanche



PT 706 Herb de Lawn



PT 702 Let It Bee--A No Mow



PT 701 Let It Grow Grasses--A No Mow



PT 710 Flowering Meadow Mix

<https://ptlawnseed.com/collections/eco-and-alternative-lawns>

Possible combinations



- - Dwarf perennial ryegrass and hard fescue: Non-aggressive grasses, stay green in winter, potential summer dormancy based on watering.
- - Yarrow: Drought-resistant, remains green in summer, can be invasive at edges.
- - Clover: Nitrogen-fixing, drought-tolerant, green in summer.
- - Some mixes may include additional flowering broadleaf plants like micro clover, English daisy, Roman chamomile, or alyssum.
- - Dwarf tall fescue blends like Water Warden: Resemble traditional lawns but require significantly less water once they've established.

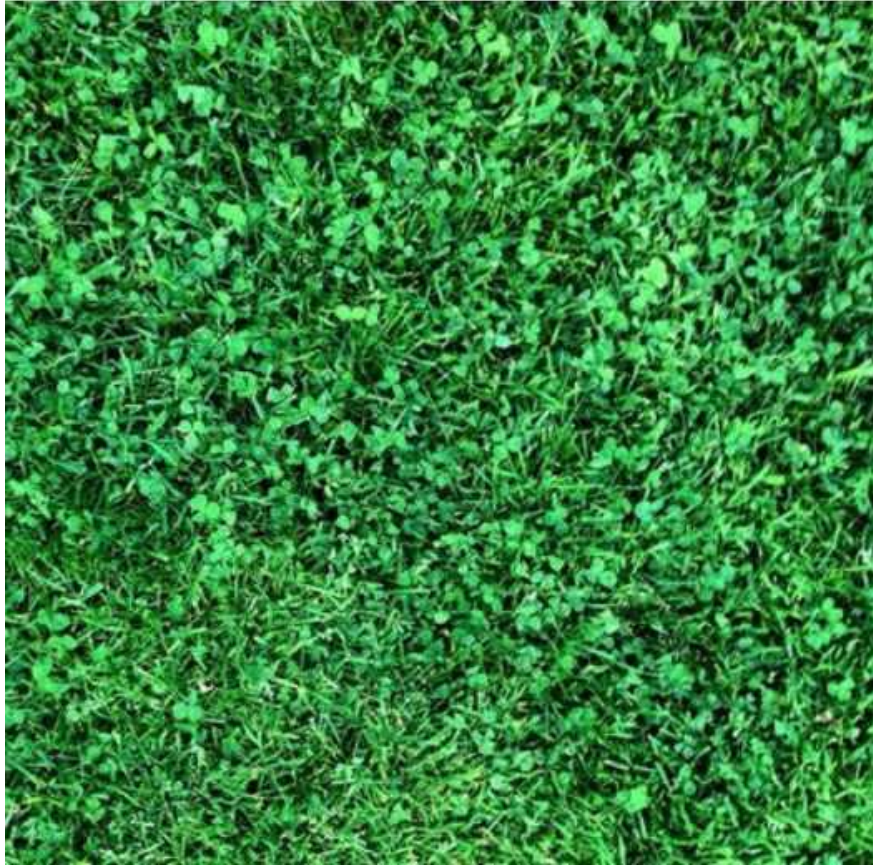
Fleur de Lawn

OSU Turf Specialist Tom Cook.



<https://ptlawnseed.com>

Grass and microclover



<https://ptlawnseed.com>



Things to know



- - Limited summer growth and mowing depend on water supply.
- - Yarrow is your water indicator; water when it wilts.
- - Water thoroughly, aiming for monthly summer watering (soil and shade impact frequency).
- - Mowing frequency correlates with your watering; more water means more mowing.



Things to know



- - Flowers in the mix only last for a couple of seasons.
- - Herbicides cannot be used to remove weeds, as they harm the clover and flowering plants in the mix.
 - Don't use a weed-and-feed product!!
- - Weeds with summer flowers can extend beyond the ecolawn due to less frequent mowing, potentially affecting its appearance.



Things to know



Seeds in these mixes vary in size, leading to non-uniform seeding.

- Clover and yarrow are key for even seeding, with clover providing nitrogen and very drought-tolerant yarrow staying green in summer.
- If feasible, seed clover and yarrow individually.
- Grass seeds are larger and generally easier to seed uniformly.



Water Warden Blend



WATER WARDEN

“THE” Water Conservation Blend

4-Way Turf Type Tall Fescue blend

Features

Advantages

Benefits

Dark Green Color	★	Requires less fertilizer to keep its color throughout the growing season	⌚ \$	Money saved on fertilizer and less time spent on maintenance
Very fine leaf texture	★	Blends well with other fine leaf grasses	✂	A uniform even looking lawn
Very dense turf	★	A dense lawn crowds out weeds	\$	Save money by using less chemicals to control weeds
Excellent Drought Tolerance	★	Requires less frequent watering than other types of lawn grasses	😊	Less watering to maintain a healthy lawn
Great spring density	★	Comes out of winter thick and healthy	⌚ \$	Less overseeding each spring. Less time and money spent on your lawn
Slow growing	★	Less frequent mowing required	⌚	You have more time to enjoy your lawn- Play more!!
Wear resistant	★	Less worn areas reducing weed encroachment and the need to overseed	⌚ \$	Less time and money spent for a beautiful healthy lawn

<http://baileysseed.com/products/water-warden-blend/>

Bottom line



- NOT a substitute for traditional grass lawns--alternative for people who don't want to or can't maintain conventional grass lawns
- RE: planting for pollinators-not many plants that flower when cut short. After the first year, practically no flowers--grass competition (Better idea--grow pollinator plants at lawn edges)
- Not a “plant it and forget it” lawn. When people replace their lawn with an ecolawn mix, they are either very happy with it, or hate it.

ns?



Alice Slusher

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Gardener Volunteer

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Website: Cowlitzcomg.com

For information about becoming a **WSU Extension Master Gardener in Cowlitz Co.**, contact Gary Fredricks, garyf@wsu.edu, 360-577-3014 ext. 3



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

Resources: Sheet mulching



- Sheet mulching — aka lasagna composting — builds soil, saves time
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/soil-compost/sheet-mulching-aka-lasagna-composting-builds-soil-saves-time>
- Rip out your lawn (and replace it with subalpine meadow)
- <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/podcast/pollination-podcast/241-rip-out-your-lawn-replace-it-subalpine-meadow>
- Sheet mulching — aka lasagna composting — builds soil, saves time
- <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/soil-compost/sheet-mulching-aka-lasagna-composting-builds-soil-saves-time>
- Sheet Mulching Made Easy
- <https://permaculturedlife.com/sheet-mulching-made-easy/>
- Sheet Mulching Tutorial
- <https://www.gardensthatmatter.com/sheet-mulching-tutorial/>
- Create New Garden Beds with Sheet Composting and Sheet Mulching
- <https://extension.psu.edu/create-new-garden-beds-with-sheet-composting-and-sheet-mulching>

Resources: Creating beds using Arborist Wood Chips



All about the benefits of using arborist wood chips

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/403/2015/03/wood-chips.pdf>

Using arborist woodchips as a landscape mulch

<https://www.landscaperinsequim.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NewApproachToMulch.pdf>

Wonderful Woodchips

<https://gardenprofessors.com/wonderful-wood-chips/>

Cowlitz County resource--[FREE ARBORIST WOODCHIPS](#)

Resources: Lawn Alternatives



- Ecolawn: Less work and water
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/techniques/ecolawn-less-work-water>
- What's a sustainable, low-maintenance lawn with a tidy-ish look?
<https://www.oregonlive.com/advice/2023/05/i-want-a-sustainable-low-maintenance-lawn-with-a-tidy-ish-look-ask-extension-expert.html>
- Looking to plant an ecolawn? Clover by itself won't provide a consistently functional lawn:
<https://www.oregonlive.com/hg/2022/02/looking-to-plant-an-ecolawn-clover-by-itself-wont-provide-a-consistently-functional-lawn-ask-an-expert.html>
- Eco-friendly lawns require forethought to attract pollinators
<https://today.oregonstate.edu/news/eco-friendly-lawns-require-forethought-attract-pollinators>
- Through thoughtful practices, lawns can be climate-friendly
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/lawn/through-thoughtful-practices-lawns-can-be-climate-friendly>
- Green Lawns that Save Water and Money!
<https://hooddriverswcd.org/HomePage/Drought%20Tolerant%20Turf%20Brochure.pdf>

Resources: Where to find seeds and info about lawn alternatives



- EXCELLENT resource for planting and caring for ANY lawn alternatives:
<https://ptlawnseed.com/pages/lawn-tips>
- ProTime Eco-Lawns and Meadows
<https://ptlawnseed.com/collections/eco-and-alternative-lawns>
- Home Depot Water Saver Lawn Seed mix
- <https://images.thdstatic.com/catalog/pdfImages/4c/4cd9de74-f6fc-4f40-b072-dbed65871720.pdf>
- Water Warden – slow-grow, low water option.
<http://baileyseed.com/products/water-warden-blend/>
- Envirolawn – blend of grass, clover and flower seeds.
<http://baileyseed.com/products/enviro-lawn-grass-seed/>