

KILL YOUR

LAWN

*HOW TO REPLACE YOUR
WATER-GUZZLING LAWN
WITH A LOW-MAINTENANCE,
BIRD-FRIENDLY GARDEN*



LESS LAWN
MORE HABITAT!

will work
for safe
nest sites

¡VIVA LA NATURALEZA!



CREATED BY
THE STUDENTS OF LOS ANGELES AUDUBON'S

**BALDWIN HILLS
GREENHOUSE PROGRAM**

WHY ONE SHOULD KILL ONE'S LAWN

***'WHY SHOULD I KILL MY LAWN?' YOU ASK?
'IT SOUNDS LIKE SUCH AN ARDUOUS TASK!'
BUT CONSIDERING ITS EVENTUAL PERKS,
YOU'LL REALIZE THAT IT'S REWARDING WORK.
FOR WHEN YOU'VE SWITCHED YOUR LAWN TO NATIVE,
YOUR LANDSCAPING IDEAS WILL BECOME CREATIVE.
AND ONCE YOUR GARDEN HAS TURNED HABITAT,
COUNTLESS CALIFORNIANS WILL THANK YOU FOR THAT!***

We, the students of the Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program, are well acquainted with the many facets that encompass Southern California as a community: family, work, play, environment, livelihood. We've done a lot... Getting elementary school students and their families involved in the green movement, planting gardens for them to maintain and harvest, researching new ways to repair the ecosystem in order to restore habitat for California's wildlife. We really have a strong sense of community! And, although we're all just starting out (some of us in high school, some of us barely college freshmen), we deeply value the importance of making the world a little easier to live in. So, when we considered taking on the relentless job of convincing our fellow neighbors to "kill" their lawns, we had the community in mind. And, because Southern California's climate makes it very time-consuming and ecologically expensive to sustain non-native turf grass, there is a pressing need to switch over to more sustainable landscaping solutions.

Have you ever noticed just how many lawns are in your neighborhood? Ever stop to realize what type of climate you live in? Here in Southern California, we dwell in a Mediterranean climate, which means we get most of our rainfall in the fall and winter and that our summer months are drrrrryyyyy. So, when was the last time you met a nicely groomed lawn that didn't need year-round care and irrigation? With that in mind, do you remember how high your water bill was last month? Of course you do! And your lawn probably contributed more to that bill than your daily thirty-minute showers (its okay, we've all done it). Maybe it's time to consider replacing that water-guzzling lawn with something easier on your bank account and the environment. This comic book is here to guide you through your journey to water efficiency and going native (with native plant species)!

WHY SHOULD YOU KILL YOUR LAWN?

LAWNS USED TO BE A SYMBOL OF WEALTH IN EUROPE (WHERE THERE IS A LOT OF RAIN).



BUT NOW...

EVERYONE HAS A LAWN!

LAWNS TAKE IN A LOT OF WATER. YOU HAVE TO WATER THEM OR PAY SOMEONE ELSE TO DO IT FOR YOU - AND MOWING, TOO...



AND IF YOU DON'T CARE FOR THEM, THEY'LL GROW BIGGER, TURN BROWN, GROW WEEDS, AND GIVE YOU MORE UNNECESSARY WORK



ALSO LAWNS REQUIRE TREATMENTS THAT POLLUTE WATER...



THIS POLLUTION ALSO HARMS OTHER LIVING THINGS

... THAT LATER ON RUN OFF INTO OUR WATER BODIES

AQUATIC PLANTS SUFFER FROM LOW OXYGEN AND SUN-LIGHT

NEED OXYGEN!



AQUATIC ANIMALS TOO...

EVIL LAWNS!

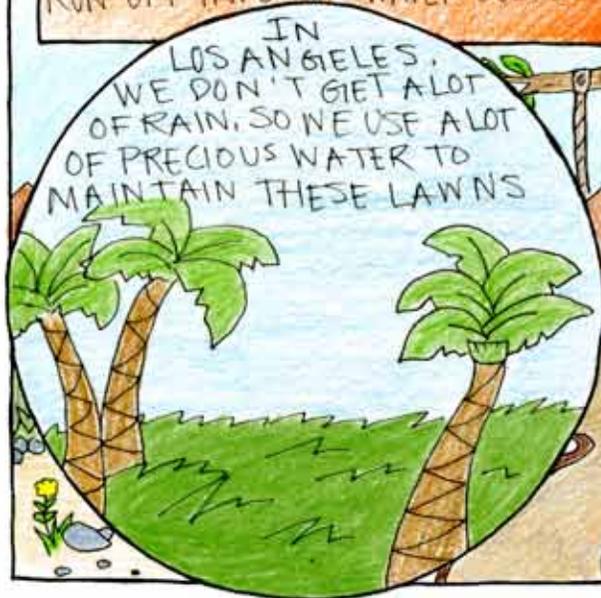


IN 1987, A STUDY FOUND CHILDREN LIVING IN HOMES WHERE LAWN PESTICIDES ARE USED WERE 6.5 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP LEUKEMIA*

I DON'T WANT TO HAVE... LEUKEMIA?



IN LOS ANGELES, WE DON'T GET A LOT OF RAIN, SO WE USE A LOT OF PRECIOUS WATER TO MAINTAIN THESE LAWNS



SO WHAT SHOULD YOU REPLACE YOUR LAWN WITH? HOW ABOUT NATIVE PLANTS... EASY TO MAINTAIN, KEEPS WILDLIFE, BEAUTIFUL, AND NOT EVIL.

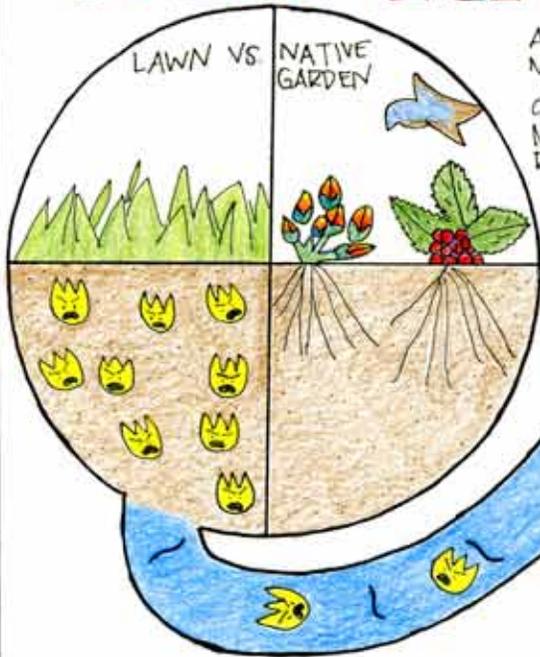
NATIVE PLANTS



-REYNALDA MARTINEZ-2011-

* We found this information in "Turf Grass Madness: Reasons to Reduce the Lawn in Your Landscape" by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, *Sustainable Landscape Series Bulletin #130* (March 2010).

WHY NATIVE PLANTS?



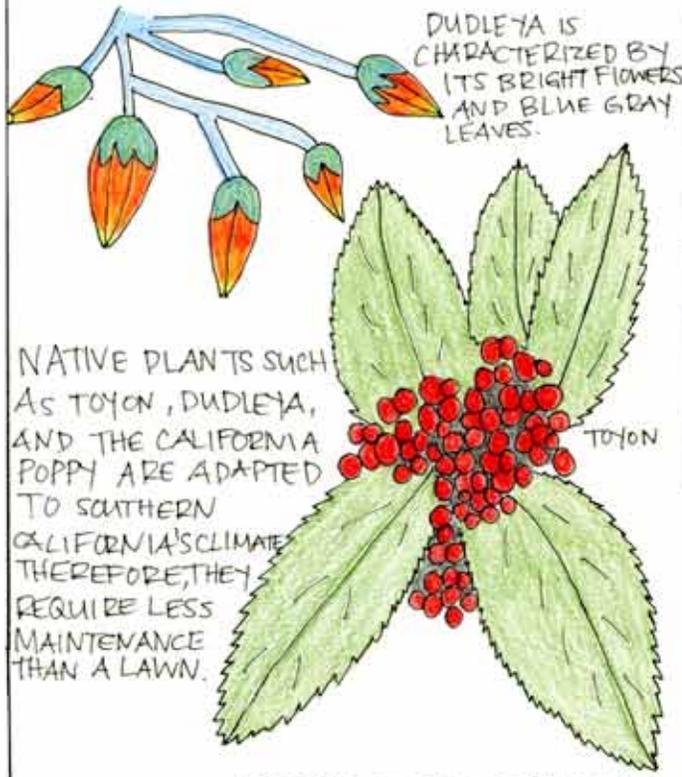
A NATIVE GARDEN BENEFITS NATIVE WILDLIFE.
 COMPARED TO A LAWN, A NATIVE GARDEN DOES NOT REQUIRE THE USE OF PESTICIDE

PESTICIDES ARE EASILY TAKEN INTO OTHER ENVIRONMENTS HARMING ECOSYSTEMS AND NATIVE WILDLIFE.



ELIMINATE THE USE OF PESTICIDE BY INSTALLING A NATIVE PLANT GARDEN!

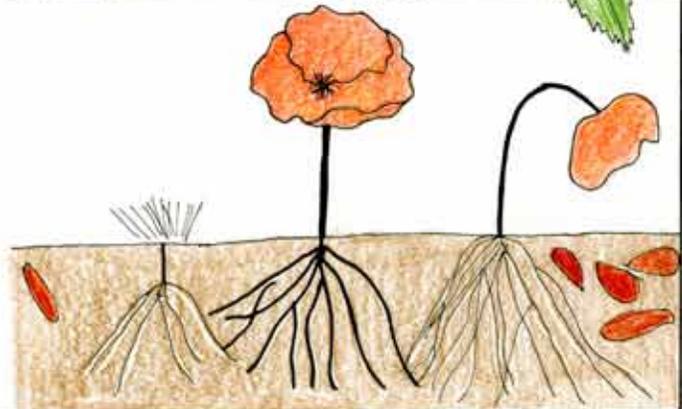
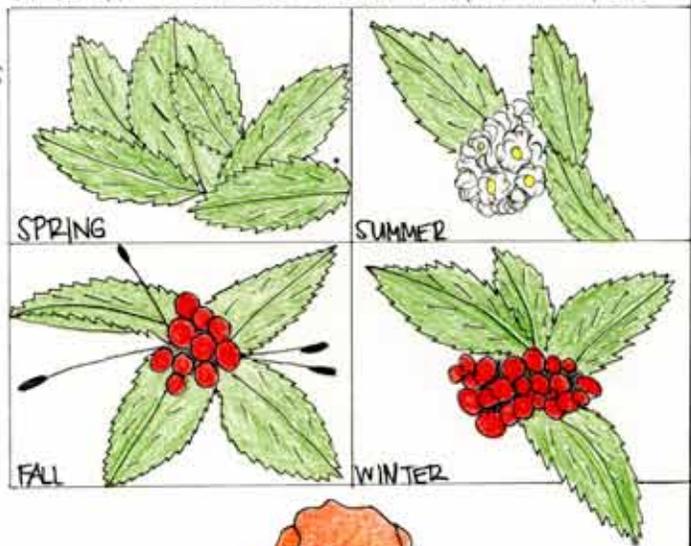
UNLIKE A LAWN, THE NATIVE PLANT, TOYON, IS ALIVE ALL YEAR ROUND WITHOUT THE HELP OF PESTICIDE OR THE USE OF TOO MUCH WATER.



DUDLEYA IS CHARACTERIZED BY ITS BRIGHT FLOWERS AND BLUE GRAY LEAVES.

NATIVE PLANTS SUCH AS TOYON, DUDLEYA, AND THE CALIFORNIA POPPY ARE ADAPTED TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S CLIMATE. THEREFORE, THEY REQUIRE LESS MAINTENANCE THAN A LAWN.

THE CALIFORNIA POPPY IS AN ANNUAL NATIVE.

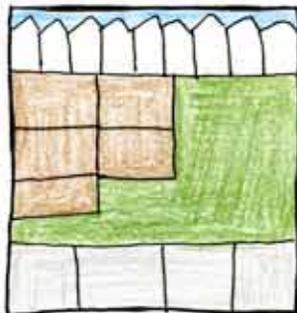


GREEN BLOOD... HOW TO Kill YOUR LAWN

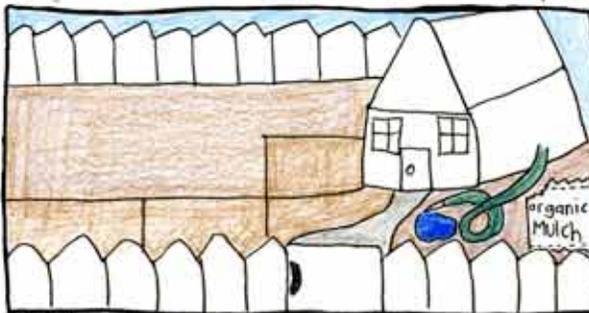


Jimmy Perez 2011

Lawn Lasagna Method

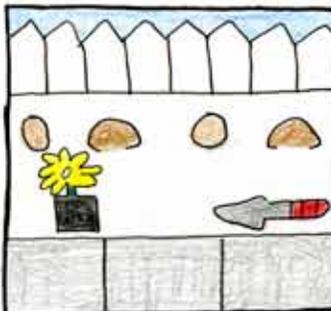


cover lawn with 10 or more layers of cardboard or Newspaper



Add 4 to 6 inches of organic mulch, then water

TWO MONTHS LATER



Dig through to Plant Natives!

Solarizing Method



Use mower to cut grass very short

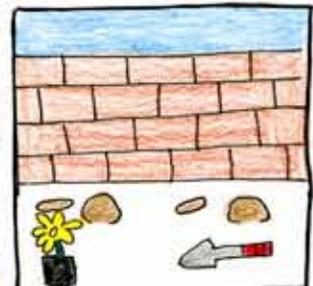


Water lawn then cover it with a tarp



Let the sun cook the lawn

SIX WEEKS LATER



Remove Tarp and Plant Natives!

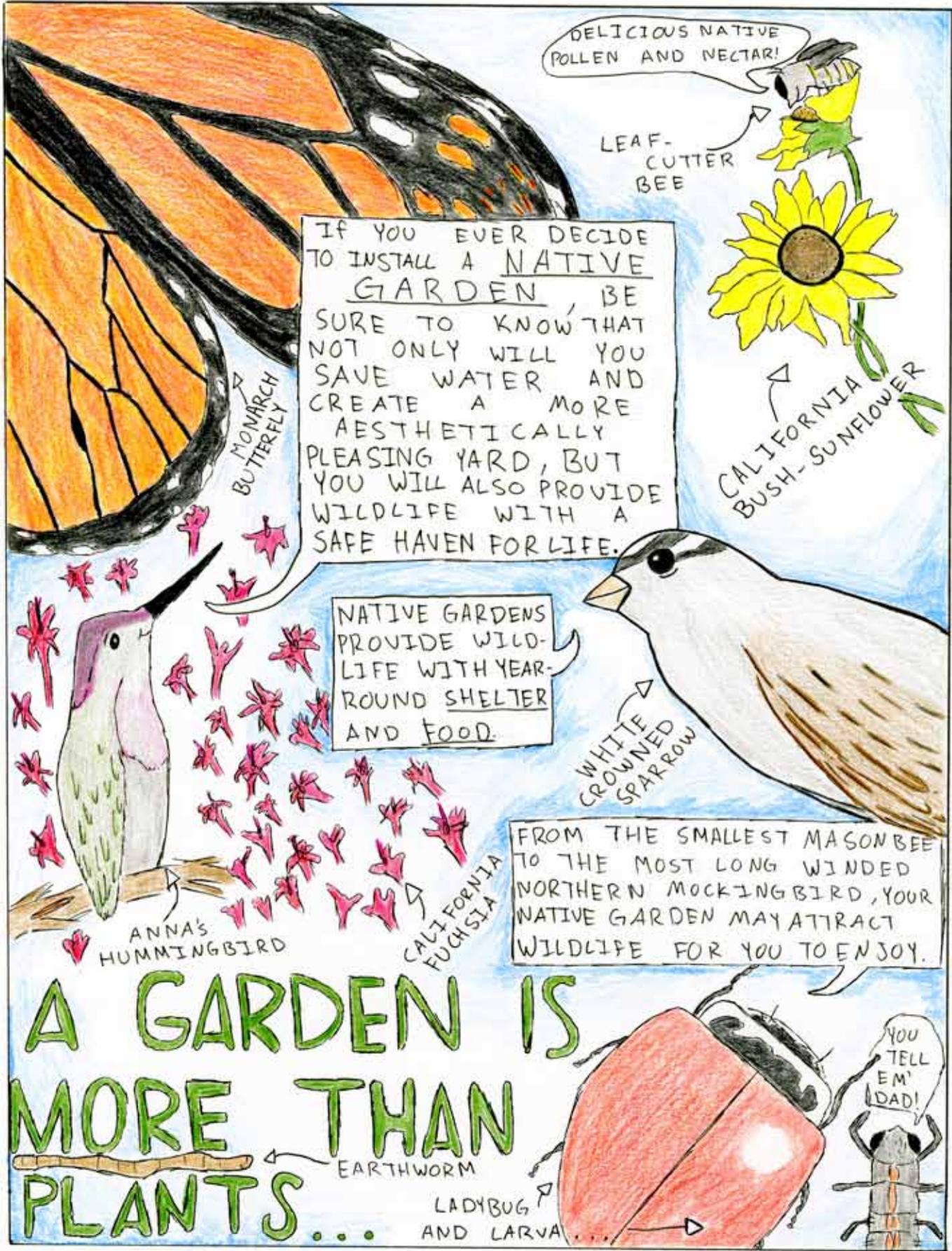
How 2 Care for Natives

MAKE SURE YOUR NEWLY PLANTED PLANT HAS A RAISED BASIN AROUND IT AND DOESN'T SIT ABOVE THE SOIL'S SURFACE.



NATIVE PLANTS SHOULD BE WATERED THOROUGHLY THROUGH WINTER AND SUMMER MONTHS WHEN PLANTED IN FALL.





DELICIOUS NATIVE POLLEN AND NECTAR!

LEAF-CUTTER BEE

IF YOU EVER DECIDE TO INSTALL A NATIVE GARDEN, BE SURE TO KNOW THAT NOT ONLY WILL YOU SAVE WATER AND CREATE A MORE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING YARD, BUT YOU WILL ALSO PROVIDE WILDLIFE WITH A SAFE HAVEN FOR LIFE.

CALIFORNIA BUSH-SUNFLOWER

NATIVE GARDENS PROVIDE WILDLIFE WITH YEAR-ROUND SHELTER AND FOOD.

WHITE CROWNED SPARROW

FROM THE SMALLEST MASON BEE TO THE MOST LONG WINDED NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD, YOUR NATIVE GARDEN MAY ATTRACT WILDLIFE FOR YOU TO ENJOY.

CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD

A GARDEN IS MORE THAN PLANTS...

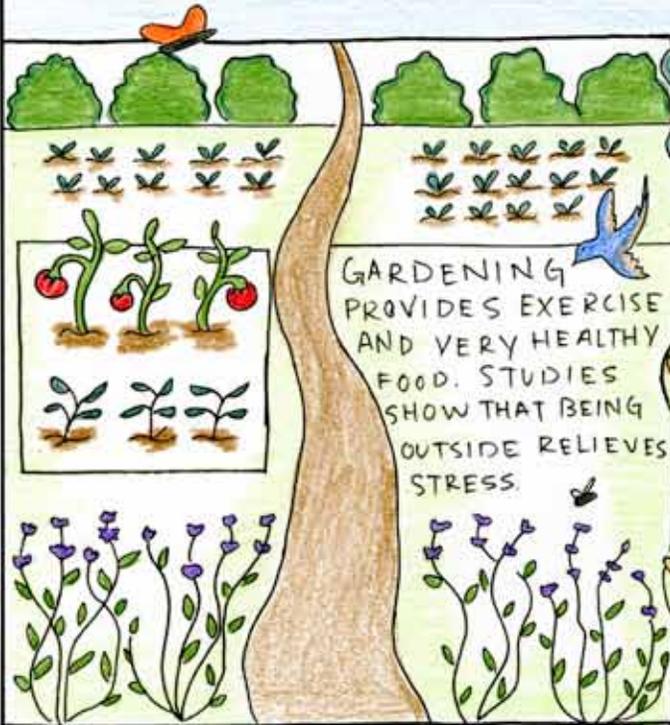
EARTHWORM

LADYBUG AND LARVA

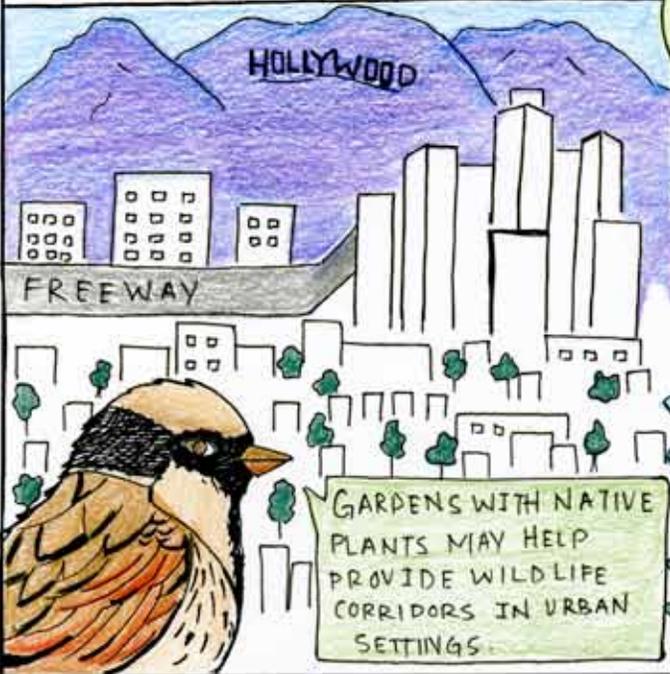
YOU TELL EM' DAD!

NATIVES ^{and} VEGETABLES CAN BE FRIENDS

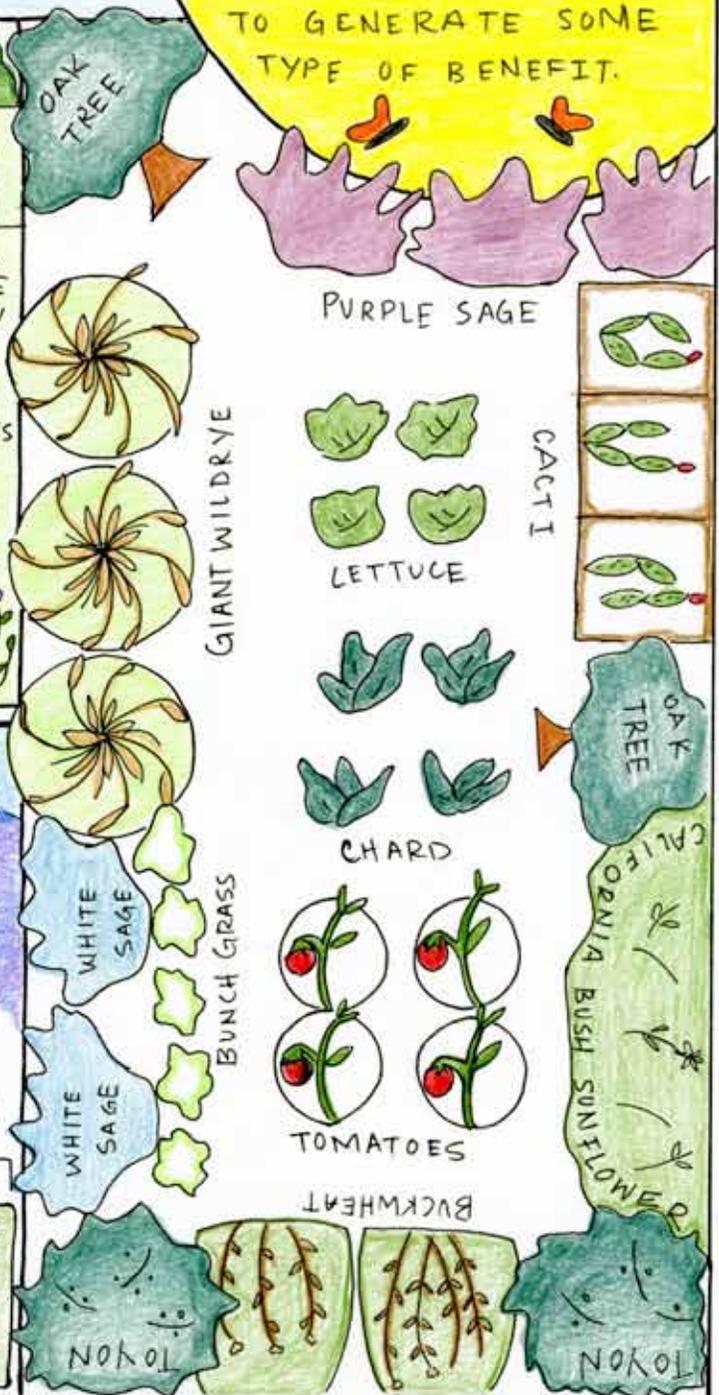
THIS IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS "COMPANION PLANTING". COMPANION PLANTING IS A GARDENING TRADITION THAT INCORPORATES PLANTING TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF PLANTS CLOSE TOGETHER IN ORDER TO GENERATE SOME TYPE OF BENEFIT.



GARDENING PROVIDES EXERCISE AND VERY HEALTHY FOOD. STUDIES SHOW THAT BEING OUTSIDE RELIEVES STRESS.



GARDENS WITH NATIVE PLANTS MAY HELP PROVIDE WILDLIFE CORRIDORS IN URBAN SETTINGS.



OAK TREE

GIANT WILDRYE

PURPLE SAGE

CACTI

LETTUCE

OAK TREE

CHARD

CALIFORNIA BUSH SUNFLOWER

TOMATOES

BUCKWHEAT

WHITE SAGE

BUNCH GRASS

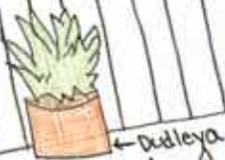
WHITE SAGE

NOKOL

NOKOL

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A LAWN?

YOU CAN PLANT NATIVE PLANTS IN PLANT CONTAINERS.



← Dudleya



← Purple Sage



VOLUNTEER WORK HERE

OR YOU CAN GO TO THE BEACH AND DO SOME RESTORATION WORK THERE BUT YOU MUST ALWAYS USE COMFORTABLE CLOTHES.

BALDWIN HILLS SCIENTIC OVERLOOK.

ANOTHER THING YOU CAN DO IS VOLUNTEER WORK. FOR EXAMPLE YOU CAN VOLUNTEER AT THE BALDWIN HILLS SCIENTIC OVERLOOK.

CLOTHING: MAKE SURE TO WEAR COMFORTABLE CLOTHES THAT YOU DON'T MIND GETTING DIRTY.



Boots

Sneakers

Sources that were useful to us and might be useful to you too...

This comic book was based on and inspired by Garry George's original "Kill Your Lawn" article, published in the *Western Tanager*, Los Angeles Audubon's newsletter (Vol 69, Issue 1, September/October 2002). You can view an updated version of this article (Vol 77, Issue 2, November/December 2010) in the newsletter archives at www.losangelesaudubon.org

Native Plant Nurseries near Los Angeles:

Theodore Payne Foundation - theodorepayne.org

Las Pilitas Nursery - laspilitas.com

Tree of Life Nursery - californianativeplants.com

Great online resources:

Audubon at Home – just type "audubon at home" into a search engine for the most up-to-date web address

Calflora - calflora.org

California Native Plant Society - cnps.org

California Invasive Plant Council - cal-ipc.org

Stuff we read that helped with this comic book...

Books:

Birds of the Los Angeles Region by Kimball Garrett, Jon Dunn, and Bob Morse (2006).

National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds by Miklos Udvardy (1977).

Insects of the Los Angeles Basin by Charles Hogue (1993).

Designing California Native Gardens: The Plant Community Approach to Artful, Ecological Gardens by Glenn Keator and Alrie Middlebrook (2007).

Introduction to California Native Plant Life by Robert Ornduff, Phyllis Faber, and Todd Keeler-Wolf (2003).

Articles (you can find these online with a little detective work):

"Turf Grass Madness: Reasons to Reduce the Lawn in Your Landscape" by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, *Sustainable Landscape Series Bulletin* #130 (March 2010).

"Turf War" by Elizabeth Kolbert, *The New Yorker* (July 2008).

"Why Mow? The Case Against Lawns" by Michael Pollan, *The New York Times Magazine* (May 1989).

Crazy about backyard wildlife? Here's more to think about...

Once you've killed your lawn and replaced it with native plants, you might also want to consider adding a water feature to attract even more wildlife. There are many options out there for water-wise water features. They can be as simple as a birdbath or as fancy as a stream with a pump for recycling the water used. There are also ways to collect and use our seasonal rainwater as well. The National Wildlife Federation offers some good advice on their website: www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife/Create-a-Habitat.aspx

The authors would like to thank their friends and families for supporting them in undertaking this project; Robert Jeffers at Dorsey High School for coordinating studio space and A/V support all summer; Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook State Park for being an essential part of the Greenhouse Program; Dr. Margot Griswold for guidance on content; Garry George and Martha Balkan for supporting the idea of this project all these years; and TogetherGreen for funding.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING AN INTEREST IN YOUR FUTURE AND THE FUTURE OF CALIFORNIA!

BY PICKING UP THIS PARTICULAR COMIC BOOK YOU...

- CONSCIOUSLY MADE THE DECISION TO CARE ABOUT THE AREA IN WHICH YOU RESIDE.
- ARE OPEN TO THE IDEA OF TURNING YOUR YARD INTO A LIVING, THRIVING WORK OF ART, MAKING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD A LITTLE SPIFFIER.
- JUST MIGHT ALLOW FRIENDS, LIKE MR. ELDERBERRY AND MS. CACTUS WREN, THE CHANCE TO FLOURISH AND PROSPER.
- STARTED ON YOUR WAY TO MAKE LIVING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S DRY CLIMATE ALL THE MORE SUSTAINABLE.

This project was made possible by a grant from the TogetherGreen Conservation Leadership Program and a generous donation to Los Angeles Audubon. For more information about these organizations visit their websites at

togethergreen.org

losangelesaudubon.org

