



Healthy Gardens

Our gardens do not only provide a function of beauty but also serve to feed organisms that work as part of the infrastructure in nature.

This infrastructure is the support mechanism that scrubs the air, cleans our water, disposes of our waste and provides the food that feed the insects and animals we depend on higher in the food chain. Everything **IS** interconnected! The choices you make on a day to day basis do not end with the one activity but trigger a long line of effects. Take for example, the use of compost as a nutritional supplement for your plants versus chemical fertilizer.

Compost

- Using compost reduces the amount of waste you send to the landfill.
- Provides the habitat for other beneficial organisms that aid in plant development.
- Composted beds will require less irrigation.
- Saves money, as you convert products that you have already purchased into nutritional soil.
- The vegetables that you grow in the compost can be renewed into new compost.

Chemical

- Requires petroleum products for manufacture and shipping.
- Limits the activity of beneficial microorganisms.
- Contributes to the landfill through packaging.
- Non-renewable.

Look at the degrees of separation between the functions of your garden and you will find that many of the relationships are complimentary. Any action we impart one organism will have an effect on another. For example; If we were to apply a pesticide to control earwigs on the lupine flowers we are eliminating the earwig as a predator of aphids on the dahlias. A sick dahlia does not produce flowers which in turn limits the amount of food for bees. A low bee population reduces the amount of pollination in your fruit trees. Less fruit on your trees means less food on your table.

Diversity is the key to a healthy garden. The greater the population of insects, animals and plants the better your garden is protected against disease, pests and stress. Using this knowledge as the fundamental base for your gardening strategy will lead to a healthier environment and a safer place for you and those you love. Take our test to see how healthy your garden is.