

1. When did you start working on your landscape?

About four years ago, we used sheet mulching to kill all the grass which made up most of the front yard. Our yard contained Bermuda grass and Calla Lilies which are both invasive. It took about 2 years to remove them.

2. What inspired/motivated you to re-do your landscape? How long did it take to complete your landscape?

We wanted to have a landscape that provides habitat for wildlife, along with being an edible garden. It has taken about 2 yrs to complete the landscape.

3. Did you experience any set-backs or delays while working on your yard?

Yes, COVID created plant availability challenges which is why some areas in our garden still have gaps. We tried to limit the soil removal and compaction in our yard so very little heavy equipment was used for amending and removing the green grass turf netting.

4. How would you describe your yard?

Edible garden with focus on wild life habitat and drought tolerant plants.

5. Did you do it yourself, hire a professional, or a combination of both?

We only hired a bit of labor to amend the soil. Planting and irrigation was all done by my husband and I.

6. What type of plants did you use? Did you have a design plan in mind when choosing plants?

Yes, we did have a design in mind and we focus on plants that require minimum water once established

7. Did you use any rebates that the city offers? Did you take a landscaping class?

We used the mulch rebated once.

8. Do you have background experience in landscaping?

Yes, my background is in landscape architecture design.

9. Does your landscape use any pesticides? If the answer is no, how do you fight against pests?

No pesticides. We try plant flowers and plants that attract beneficial insects. We use also crop rotation for the vegetables beds.

10. How often do you water your yard? What system of irrigation do you use?

We have tried drip irrigation but switched to micro-sprays. In the summer I only deep water once a month. It all depends on what is being watered. There are areas in our yard that don't receive any summer water.

11. Does your landscape attract birds and/or beneficial insects? If so, what kind have you seen? What part of your landscape does wildlife seem the most attracted to?

We have Robins, scrub jays, wood peckers, starlings which nest in the tree cavities, and hummingbirds. Ladybugs, butterflies, and lots of earthworms. Birds seem to use the entire yard for burying peanuts, pecans, or acorns. I often come across their treasures when I adding compost to shrubs.

12. Did you have a budget set? Were you able to stay within that budget or did you go over/under?
We didn't have a budget but we kept our cost low by purchasing smaller planting material whenever possible.

13. How much maintenance does your yard need now vs. before when it was a lawn?
There is more seasonal pruning and mulching but we no longer have a mower so that is a plus.

14. Have you experienced any unforeseen issues with your remodeled yard?
Keeping dogs out of the yard has been a challenge, especially when the plants were small. Now that we have define hedge on all sides, it seems to help create a clear boundary.

15. Where did you get your plants?
Various nurseries: Bay Area, UCD Arboretum, locally and Sacramento area.

16. Do you plan on expanding or making any more changes to your yard?
Yes, we started planting right before the pandemic so a lot of planting material was hard to find in the subsequent years. Some plants have not thrive in some locations so I am trying new species.

17. Why was the change from a green lawn worth it to you?
I love being outdoors and to garden so for me the change has given me the chance to expand on my gardening knowledge and to enjoy nature right outside our door.

18. Anything else you would like to share? This could include any advice or lessons learned from working on your yard.
Some plants will not make it and that's okay. The more you learn about the different areas in your garden the more successful you will be in finding the right plant for the right place. Gardening is an ongoing learning process.