

Nature's Best Hope

a Celebration of the 20th Anniversary
of the Bringing Back the Natives
Garden Tour

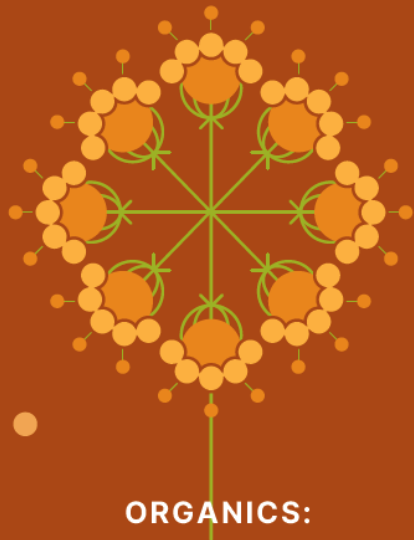
FEATURING
KEYNOTE
SPEAKER
**DOUG
TALLAMY**



Salvia spathacea and
Allen's hummingbird
by Stephanie McKenna,
Bowerbird Atelier

November 16th, 2024
The Oakland Museum

November 17th, 2024
Santa Clara University



ORGANICS:

Organic Composts, Essential Soil,
Organic Vegetable Blend,
Landscape Mix, Biotreatment Mix,
Custom Soil Blends,
Potting Mix, Roof Mix, Mulch,
Soil Amendments & Organic Fertilizers



HARDSCAPES:

Random & Dimensional Flagstone,
Bluestone, Limestone, Sandstone,
Slate, Landscape Boulders, Quartzite,
Thin Veneer Panels, Wall Rock,
Decomposed Granite & Path Fines,
Decorative Gravel & Pebbles,
Ledgestone, Garden Ornaments,
Water Features

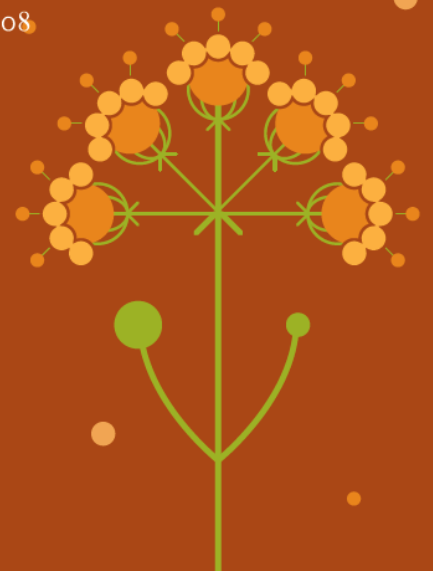
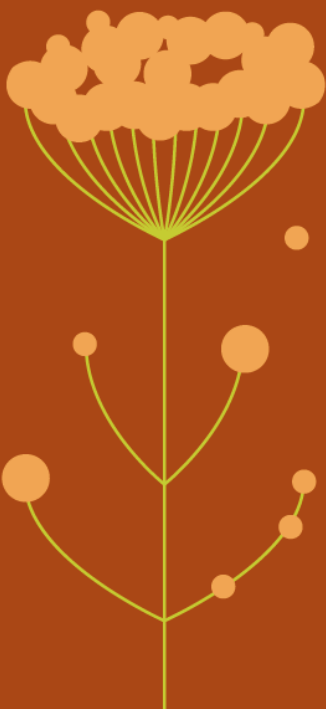
LYNGSØ

GARDEN MATERIALS, INC.

650.364.1730

www.lyngsogarden.com

345 Shoreway Road, San Carlos, CA 94070-2708



Welcome from Kathy Kramer, *Founder, Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour*



As we celebrate the **20th Anniversary of the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour**, I'm delighted to be hosting these two conferences in partnership with the Golden Gate Bird Alliance and the California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter. We are honored to feature keynote speaker **Doug Tallamy**, NY Times bestselling author of *Nature's Best Hope*, and a co-founder of Homegrown National Park. This is especially moving for me, as Doug's message has had such a big impact on my work, and my life.

In 2018, after hearing Doug's message about how each of us can—and must, for the sake of our children and grandchildren—garden for birds, butterflies and bees in our own gardens, and public parks, and in open space, I was completely re-energized. As a result of Doug's talk I expanded the Tour from a one- to a two-day in-person event, created a two-day online tour, and worked with a team of volunteers to develop keystone species signs, and then translate them into Spanish. Of course, I also planted more keystone species in my own garden! Most recently, the Tour launched the Native Plant Resource Teams, a grassroots program that brings together people throughout the Bay Area to advocate for, and garden with, native plants. My most fervent hope is that these efforts have helped motivate you to do the same.

These conferences are both a wonderful way to celebrate the Tour's accomplishments, and also to showcase the many other creative projects taking place in the Bay Area, in hopes that people like you will replicate them where you live and work.

I am grateful to the Conference Coordinating Committee, Anne Chambers, Jennifer Dirking, Janet Flint, Ilene Levinson and Valerie Lipman for all of their hard work on these events, and also to the Golden Gate Bird Alliance and the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society for their partnership in presenting these conferences.

—Kathy



CHECK OUT OUR **ONLINE RESOURCE GUIDE**
WITH EXPANDED COVERAGE FOR NATIVE PLANT
ENTHUSIASTS AND NEWCOMERS ALIKE >



Agenda

Saturday, November 16, 2024

JAMES MOORE THEATER, OAKLAND MUSEUM



9:30 Registration opens: book signing by **Doug Tallamy**

10:30 Welcome from **Glenn Phillips**, *Executive Director of the Golden Gate Bird Alliance*, and **Kathy Kramer**, *Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour Founder and Coordinator*

11:00 Keynote: “Restoring the little things that run the world: Why it matters, and what you can do”
— **Doug Tallamy**, *Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware*

12:00 “Bringing nature home in the Bay Area: From ecological deserts to wildlife habitats”

- + Kathy Kramer’s San Pablo garden — **Kathy Kramer**
- + Stefanie Pruegel’s San Leandro garden — **Stefanie Pruegel**

12:45 Lunch, book signing, and “Meet the Speakers!” lunchtime opportunities

MEET THE SPEAKERS OVER LUNCH!
Choose your topic: bring your brown bag lunch or pick up your prepaid box lunch and join these speakers for a lunch-time discussion:

- + **Stefanie Pruegel**: Home Gardens
- + **Amber Hasselbring**: Green Hairstreak Corridor
- + **Joey and Robin Grossinger**: Pollinator Pathway
- + **Melody Gil and Steve Harrington**: School Gardens
- + **Glen Schneider**: Skyline Gardens Restoration Project

2:00 20th anniversary of the Tour: Retrospective and celebration

2:30 “The green hairstreak corridor: Creating flight ways and habitats for butterflies in parks and open spaces, green schoolyards, home gardens and unused strips and triangles of land along roads”
— **Amber Hasselbring**, *Executive Director, Nature in the City*

3:00 “Creating a pollinator pathway: one traffic circle, two front gardens, and seven parking strips”
— **Joey Grossinger**, *Pollinator Pathway Lead* and **Robin Grossinger**, *Helpful Dad, and Founder, Second Nature Ecology + Design*

3:30 “Bringing nature to the school yard: delighting children, saving water, eliminating pesticide use, reducing labor and creating wildlife habitat”
— **Melody Gil**, *Science Teacher* and **Steve Harrington**, *Facilities Director, Prospect Sierra Elementary School*

4:00 “The Skyline Gardens Restoration Project: From weeds to wildflowers!”
— **Glen Schneider**, *Founder and Coordinator, Skyline Gardens Restoration Project*

4:45 Closing Remarks

Agenda

Sunday, November 17, 2024

MAYER THEATRE, SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY



- 12:00** Registration opens: book signing by **Doug Tallamy**
- 1:00** Welcome from **Glenn Phillips**, *Executive Director of the Golden Gate Bird Alliance*, and **Kathy Kramer**, *Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour Founder and Coordinator*
- 1:30** Keynote: “Nature’s Best Hope” — **Doug Tallamy**, *Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware*
- 2:30** “Bringing nature home in the Bay Area: From ecological desert to wildlife habitat: Kathy Kramer’s San Pablo garden” — **Kathy Kramer**
- 3:00** 20th Anniversary of the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour: a retrospective and celebration, and acknowledgement of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of CNPS and the Growing Natives Garden Tour
- 3:15** Book signing by **Doug Tallamy**
- 4:00** “Nurturing nature together: Easy steps for creating resilient public native plant habitats”
— **Juanita Salisbury**, *Founder, Primrose Way Garden Group*
- 4:30** “Bringing nature home to City Hall: A partnership between the City of San Carlos and the Master Gardeners”
— **Carolyn Dorsch**, *Master Gardener* and **Amy Newby**, *City of San Carlos*
- 5:00** Closing Remarks

Praise for Kathy Kramer on the 20th Anniversary of the Bringing Back the Natives Tour

“Twenty years of excellent work!!! Congratulations!!! I am amazed, yet again, at the depth of your commitment to improving the quality of life on Earth. And your constant search for ways to help increase people’s understandings, and influence their perception and behavior. You’re a master trend-shaper!” —*Michael Thilgen, Four Dimensions Landscape Design*

“I want to say how much I appreciate meeting you so many years ago! Your work and advocacy for native plants changed the trajectory of my career, and I will be forever grateful for the impact you’ve had on me and my thinking towards landscape design.” —*Kelly Marshall, Kelly Marshall Garden Design*

“Thanks for your years of dedicated work for this event! You deserve a medal.” —*Bob Hass*

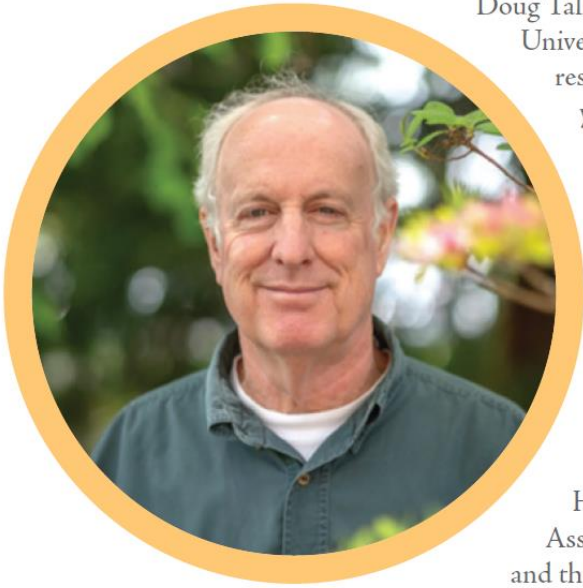
“Thank you, Kathy. The tours are very inspirational and much appreciated!” —*Lynn McGann*

“I want to thank you a thousand times for your persistent activities on behalf of urban biodiversity and for all your hard work to make this ever so special, rain or shine, pandemic or not.” —*Julie Bongers*

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

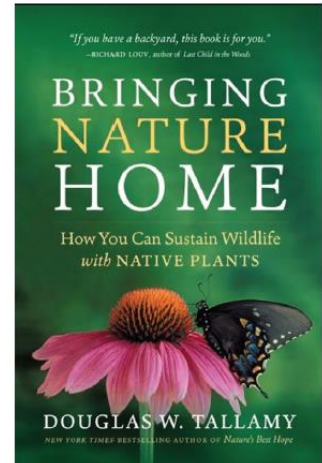
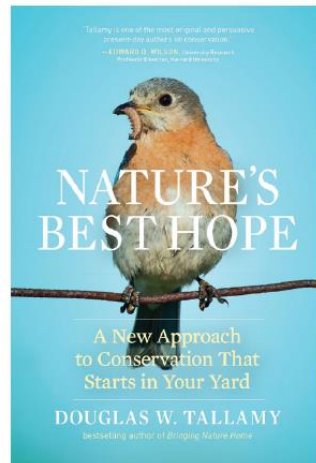
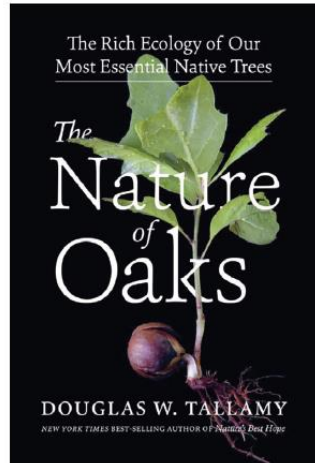
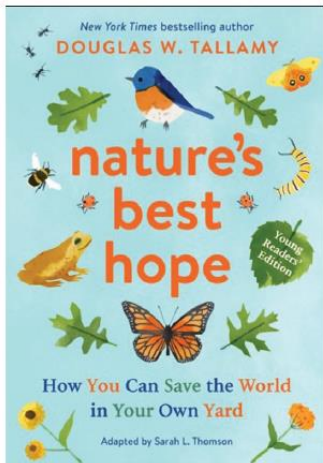
Doug Tallamy

Doug Tallamy is a Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored more than one hundred research publications, and taught insect-related courses for forty-four years. He is a co-founder of Homegrown National Park.



Doug's books, *Bringing Nature Home*, the NY Times bestseller *Nature's Best Hope*, and *The Nature of Oaks*, convey this message, "Chances are, you have never thought of your garden — indeed, all of the space on your property — as a wildlife preserve that represents the last opportunity we have for sustaining plants and animals that were once common throughout the U.S. But that is exactly the role that built landscapes are now playing and will play even more in the near future."

His awards include recognition from The Garden Writers Association, the Audubon Society, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Garden Club of America. Doug lives with his wife, Cindy, on their restored property in Oxford, PA.



"Fortunately, what sounds like an ecological Armageddon is largely reversible if we adopt a new relationship with nature. We can save nature—and ourselves—if we learn to live with nature. We must shrug off the adversarial relationship with nature that worked for our ancestors but is deadly to us. We must accept the new reality that how each one of us treats our local biological heritage impacts not just us but our neighbors and our neighbors' neighbors. In the future we will generate all of the ecosystem services we need because we will live amidst the natural systems that produce them. The need to destroy the life around us will be replaced by the ethical imperative to sustain it. Fortunately nature is malleable, resilient, and forgiving. It will give us one last chance."

—Doug Tallamy

Native Garden Innovator Speakers:

OAKLAND CONFERENCE



Kathy Kramer's San Pablo garden: From ecological desert to wildlife habitat

Since converting their garden from lawn, non-native ornamentals and weeds to native plants, Kathy Kramer and her husband, Michael May, have seen forty species of birds and sixteen species of butterflies, moths and skippers in their 5,000 sq. ft. lot in San Pablo. After hearing Doug Tallamy speak, they planted many more keystone species, and they leave the leaves, stems, and stalks for small creatures to nest, feed, and shelter in and on, which has notably increased the wildlife use of the garden. Kathy recently took up insect and bird photography: she is looking forward to showing you her garden, and the creatures she has photographed in it.

KATHY KRAMER has gardened with native plants in sunny San Pablo for the last thirty-five years—at times more successfully than others. Her own difficulties with finding a designer familiar with designing native plant gardens, and also with being able to purchase native plants and view them in the garden setting prompted her to start the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour. She hopes it has been helpful!



DOUG TALLAMY ON THE BRINGING BACK THE NATIVES GARDEN TOUR:

"Returning native plants to residential landscapes is essential to restoring basic function in our ecosystems. This is what Kathy Kramer has been doing for 20 years! The length of time Kathy has been educating the public about native plants is not just a measure of her commitment, but of her forward thinking as well. Kathy was way ahead of the curve in recognizing the ecological importance of California native plants. By organizing her native plant garden tours, she has exposed tens of thousands of Californians to the potential of native plant landscaping. Her native plant garden tours have received wide acclaim, garnering local, state and federal awards.

There is urgency in the type of education Kathy Kramer excels in. The biodiversity crisis is real and accelerating. North America has already lost 3 billion breeding birds and we have good evidence of insect declines nearly everywhere. The U.N. predicts that one million species will go extinct in the next 18 years. These losses are not an option if we humans wish to continue happily on this planet, for it is plant and animal diversity that creates the stable and productive ecosystems on which we depend. It is my view that we can successfully address the biodiversity crisis at the grassroots level. Every property owner must improve the ecological integrity of landscapes under his or her control by adding native plants. That is, we all must accept our responsibility toward good earth stewardship because we all depend entirely on quality ecosystems. This is the future of conservation and Kathy Kramer is leading the way."



Stefanie Pruegel's San Leandro garden: From ecological desert to wildlife habitat

In 2017 Stefanie Pruegel purchased a small house surrounded by large areas of dead lawn, with the explicit goal of converting it into a wildlife garden. In her presentation she will share how planting natives transformed the landscape in a surprisingly short amount of time, attracting an abundance of insects, birds and other critters, and discuss some lessons she learned along the way.

STEFANIE PRUEGEL fell in love with California native plants and the wildlife they support in 2017. Her San Leandro garden and fully-electrified home have been on the Bringing Back the Natives Garden & Green Home Features Showcase many times. Stefanie loves sharing her knowledge and passion with others, and she is actively involved with several local native plant and sustainability groups, including Homegrown Habitats San Leandro.



Geometrid Moth Caterpillar, Stefanie Pruegel's Garden

The Green Hairstreak Corridor: Creating flight ways and habitats for butterflies—in parks and open spaces, green schoolyards, home gardens, and unused strips and triangles of land along roads



The Green Hairstreak Corridor is a butterfly conservation corridor of fifteen restored habitat sites on public land for the small, but spectacularly beautiful, green hairstreak butterfly—which was, until its re-discovery in 2006, thought to be locally extinct in this San Francisco neighborhood. Nature in the City's efforts to create "stepping stone" habitats between larger parks and open spaces have helped increase the population of these rare flying jewels. Volunteers in the Backyard Nursery Network collect seeds and cuttings from restoration sites and grow plants that are later used in the Corridor. Come learn how you can create wildlife corridors where you live!

AMBER HASSELBRING is the Executive Director of Nature in the City and co-founder of the Green Hairstreak Corridor. She has been involved in the Corridor since 2006 and has helped cultivate partnerships with City of San Francisco agencies, as well as funders and the local community, to sustain and expand the Corridor. Amber also volunteers on behalf of healthy local ecosystems as an interpretive guide, a steward, and a leader pertaining to all things butterfly, pollinator, and plant.



The Green Hairstreak Butterfly

Resources for Green Homes:

Benefits of Electrifying Your Home

Electric homes powered by clean energy don't just help to reduce your carbon footprint. Planned correctly, they can make your home safer and more comfortable, and even save you money at the same time.

The benefits according to Rewiring America's Guide to the Inflation Reduction Act: Savings: A national transition to solar-powered, fully electrified homes and vehicles could save the average household between \$1,050 and \$2,585 per year in energy costs.

Health: Burning fossil fuels indoor is a major source of health problems, like childhood asthma.

Climate: Burning fossil fuels in buildings is a major source of climate warming: 42 percent of energy-related emissions come from the homes and vehicles. Methane is the primary component of natural gas and is from 25 – 80 times as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere.

Comfort: Heat pumps, which can both heat and cool your home, do a better job of keeping your home at a constant, comfortable temperature than an oil or natural gas furnace— while using only 30% of the energy to do so.

Learn More About Stefanie Preugel's Experience

Step by Step: Stefanie's Green Home Journey: [Green Home Features Fact Sheet](#)

Video: [Stefanie's native garden & green home \(2022\)](#)

Free Assistance from QuitCarbon

Home upgrades can be confusing and expensive. The problem is that if you do it yourself, it takes a lot of time and research to get your head around all the options. Many people we know are using QuitCarbon, an organization that will provide a free plan that saves time and money for all home clean energy projects. Their expert team holds your hand throughout the entire process, from planning to finding contractors to maximizing cost savings. And they do it all for free! You can learn more here: [QuitCarbon](#)



Getting Started: Resources for Creating Your Own Native Habitat Garden

Find California native plants specific to your area, and the butterflies & moths that use them as host plants: [Calscape.org](https://www.calscape.org)

Learn more about which plants will work best in your garden, and prioritize Keystone Plants – here are some resources:

Bringing Back the Natives *Keystone Species* Signs: <https://bit.ly/Keystone-Plant-Signs>

Link: Description of [Stefanie's garden](#) and additional resources

Video: “[Gardening with California native plants \(2020\)](#) – Stefanie Preugel

Video: [Keystone Native Plants for Sun](#) (plus [sun slide deck](#) for skimming) – Jennifer Dirking

Video: [Keystone Native Plants for Shade](#) (plus [shade slide deck](#) for skimming) – Jennifer Dirking

Design Your Garden:

Use the Calscape Garden Planner: [calscape.org/garden-planner](https://www.calscape.org/garden-planner)

Watch this Video: [You Can Do It: Designing a Native Plant Garden with Kelly Marshall](#)

Buy native California plants at local nurseries. These are listed in the [Bringing Back the Natives Nursery List](#) and on the [CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter Nursery List](#) We encourage you to support the nurseries who sponsored this tour – look for their colorful promotions throughout this booklet!

Buy native California seeds at [Larnerseed.com](https://www.larnerseed.com), [CANativeSeeds](#) (in Castro Valley) or from many other vendors listed here: [CNPS SCV - Native Seed Vendors](#)

Attend Native Garden Tours in the Spring – they are free!

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour (East Bay) www.bringingbackthenatives.net

Growing Natives Garden Tour (Santa Clara/San Mateo Counties) <https://bit.ly/GrowingNatives-Tour>

Visit the Bringing Back the Natives (BBTN) website for a wide variety of resources for habitat gardening: [Gardening info - Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#) [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#)

The Santa Clara Valley chapter's gardening page is here: <https://cnps-scv.org/gardening>

Join BBTN's grassroots movement, the Native Plant Resource Teams and collaborate with over 700 members from all around the Bay Area – it is free! [Native Plant Resource Teams](#)

Join the California Native Plant Society – Bay Area chapters include Santa Clara Valley (Santa Clara & San Mateo Counties), Yerba Buena (San Francisco), East Bay, Marin, and Willis Lin Jepson (Solano County)

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) website is here: <https://bit.ly/CNPSChapters>;

Be sure to watch Doug Tallamy's *inspiring and entertaining* call to action and share it with friends and neighbors: [Restoring the Little Things that Run the World](#)





Creating a Pollinator Pathway: 1 traffic circle, 2 front gardens, and 7 parking strips

It was a desire to recreate the lost habitats of the East Bay—the wildflower meadows, grasslands, and oak savannas that existed here hundreds of years ago, and to provide resources for the wildlife that depend upon native plants for food, shelter, and nesting areas—that started this project. In 2019 tween brothers Leo and Joey Grossinger began rewilding their neighborhood: as a result, curious and interested neighbors on two blocks offered planting areas in their own gardens, and funds to purchase more plants... Join us to learn about the outcome!



JOEY GROSSINGER is a freshman at Berkeley High School. He has been working on the Pollinator Pathway for the past five years, and enjoys bird identification and native plant cultivation.

ROBIN GROSSINGER is the Founder of Second Nature Ecology + Design, where he works with cities, corporations, and communities to redesign our cities with nature.

The Summer-Dry Project
Climate-Ready Garden Plants



www.summer-dry.com Insta@summerdry.gardens
Gardens matter. Every small act we do adds resiliency.

FOUR DIMENSIONS
LANDSCAPE CO-OP

DESIGN - BUILD - GARDEN CARE
www.FourDimensionsLandscape.com

Berkeley Pollinator Pathway: Gardening for Monarchs & More

The gardens consist of one traffic circle 20' in diameter; seven parking strips, ranging in size from 20' to 80' long x 3' wide and totaling 200 running feet, 100% native; one front garden is 400 sq. ft.; the adjacent front garden is 250 square feet. The oak in the traffic circle was planted in 2005; the rest of the Pollinator Pathway was installed in stages between 2019 and 2023

Garden Attractions and Tips for Gardening for Wildlife

- Gaps in the sidewalk strip plantings were provided to allow passengers to enter and exit their cars.
- Leave the leaves in your garden as the young of many moths and butterflies spend the winter sheltering in leaf litter.
- Eliminate pesticide use; rejoice when you see bugs are using the plants in your garden; they're supposed to!
- Change up your lighting. Lights are one of the main drivers of insect and bird decline; you can help by shielding your lights, so they shine down, not up (look for Dark Skies at Night-approved light fixtures—you can buy these at Home Depot); using motion sensors instead of leaving lights on all night; installing yellow bulbs, which are less harmful to wildlife than white or bluish lights, and drawing your blinds after dark. Click here to learn more: [Lighting to Save Wildlife](#)

Gardening for Wildlife

In the 1990s more than a million monarchs overwintered in forested groves on the California coast. Now, only a fraction of the population remains—a decline of more than 99% has been seen in California, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature has listed the Western monarch as in danger of extinction. But here in these Berkeley parking strips and gardens monarch butterflies flutter about, sipping nectar before laying eggs on milkweed—the only plant they can reproduce on. In late spring through early summer their yellow, black, and white banded caterpillars can be seen noshing happily on the narrow leaf milkweed leaves. In summer, the sharp-eyed among us might be able to spot the chrysalis of the monarch—bright green, with an amazing gold band, attached with a silk pad to a branch, which can be some distance from the milkweed patch.

Skippers and other butterflies are drawn to the clusters of blossoms on the red flowering buckwheat. Bumblebees roll like puppies in the poppies and gather pollen from lupines and California lilacs. Hummingbirds are attracted to the long, tubular flowers of the California fuchsia.

Keystone species in the Pollinator Pathway (watch [this talk](#) by Doug Tallamy!) Keystone species—our own, local ecological powerhouse plants — in the Pollinator Pathway include coast live oak, holly leaf cherry, California lilac, manzanita, redbud, lupine, sage, buckwheat, and penstemon.

Learn more about the Pollinator Pathway in Berkeley here:
[Berkeley Pollinator Pathway](#)



Bringing Nature to the School Yard: delighting children, saving water, eliminating pesticide use, reducing labor, and creating wildlife habitat

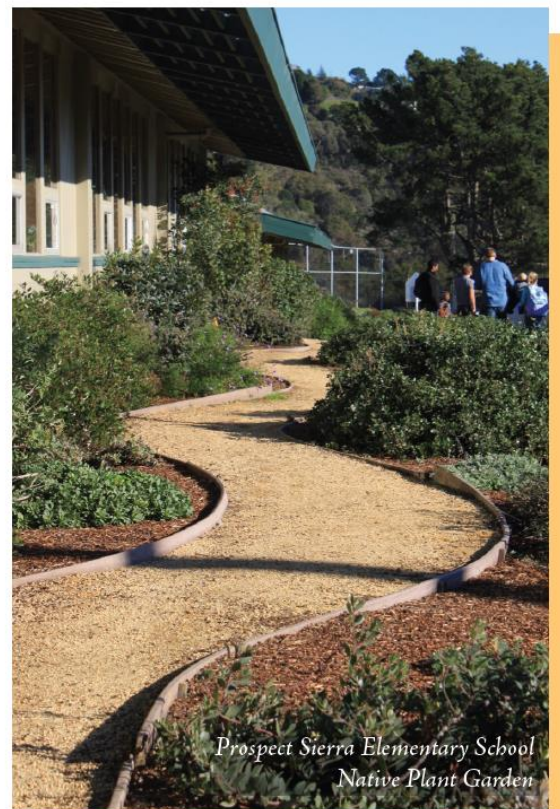
Prospect Sierra Elementary School's Learning Specialist Genie Barry and then-Kindergarten now-Science teacher Melody Gil saw the large, ecological wasteland of a lawn at the school's entrance as potential habitat for birds, bees, and butterflies, envisioning an inviting and attractive outdoor learning lab for the children. With support from the Facilities Director, Steve Harrington, the lawn was replaced with beautiful, sun-loving, low water-consuming natives that attract wildlife, as well as children. The native plant garden in the front of the school was such a success that a series of garden beds inside the school grounds have also been transformed. The children love walking on the winding path through the native garden during morning during drop-off. In spring, the flowers provide places to find ladybugs and adult butterflies, and in fall the children find monarch caterpillars and hear songbirds. Join us to learn how school grounds can be turned into colorful, sustainable, low-maintenance, cost-saving and inviting spaces for wildlife of the winged and the two-legged varieties!



MELODY ESQUER GIL, the Science teacher at Prospect Sierra Elementary School in El Cerrito, has used the native gardens at the school to teach Tk-4th grade students about indigenous uses of plants, and to involve the children in nature sketching, observation making, and plant care - aka weeding, planting and watering. Melody notes: "The beautiful gardens at the school have inspired the faculty, staff, and parent body to look more closely into including native plants in their own gardens, and they have enriched our studies. The children enjoy the days when we go to the garden to weed, instead of staying indoors, and the garden has helped students develop empathy for the living things they see. The colorful front garden looks so much better than the lawn did, and the children love being close to the natural world in our native gardens." Melody's own home garden has been featured on the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour numerous times.

STEVE HARRINGTON

is the Director of Facilities at Prospect Sierra Elementary School. He says, "Originally, the concept of installing native gardens emerged from the recognition that traditional lawns were not environmentally sustainable. However, it quickly became clear that these gardens were not only a solution, but also a powerful reflection of our mission and values. Along with significant savings in water use, the gardens have provided a rich educational resource and a meaningful way to honor our growing knowledge of the indigenous peoples of this region by restoring native plants to our campus. The project embodies financial responsibility, environmental stewardship, educational enrichment, and cultural respect."



*Prospect Sierra Elementary School
Native Plant Garden*

Resources for Creating a School Garden

Native plants help students learn the vital connection between plants and higher forms of life. Plants are at the bottom of the food chain, and native plants are a primary component of healthy ecosystems. Just as edible plants are important for human health and survival, native plants are equally necessary to other forms of life. Native plants help pollinator populations survive and thrive, which in turn help pollinate edible crops. Some ideas for incorporating native plants in school gardens: Pollinator Garden, Butterfly Garden, Bird-friendly Garden, Hummingbird Garden, Ethnobotanical Garden, Habitat Garden



The California Native Plant Society offers ideas and resources here: [School Garden Ideas - California Native Plant Society](#) and includes this complete guide: [Native Plants for School and Urban Gardens: A Survival Guide](#)

This is how the Prospect Sierra Elementary School Native Plant Garden Project began. You can use this as a sample letter to customize for your own school garden.

August 18, 2013

Dear Steve,

We (Melody Esquer and Genie Barry) would like to propose a project to transform the small plot that lies between the Staff Workroom and the Kindergarten Yard. It is currently filled with struggling blue fescue. We'd like to replace it with California native plants, which would not only suit our school's mission as a Green School, but which could also be cared for by kindergarten students, involving them in learning about and caring for their environment. For instance, one idea we have is to plant wild strawberries. The kindergarteners could be Strawberry Stewards, monitoring their water needs and harvesting the fruit. Other plants would be more self-sustaining, but could also enrich students' experience and knowledge.

Here's the plan:

We'd like to create a small native plant habitat that the kindergarteners could help tend and which would be a welcoming, attractive invitation to the rest of the campus.

To do that—

- We'd dig up the old plants and refresh the soil, being careful of any pipes or conduits that might be buried.
- We'd supply and plant native California plants, suitable to the site (a canyon-like E-W exposure). (*The Watershed Nursery in Pt. Richmond has many of the plants.*)
- We'd either take over the watering duties or collaborate with the Maintenance staff to water appropriately and conservatively, with an eye to the Bay Area's typical water needs. (If like-minded parents wanted to join us, all the better!)

What we need now is permission to begin!

Getting started on this project soon would ensure that the plants would get a good root system going in time for the fall and winter rains, with healthy growth for next spring. Please consider this project and let us know if there is anything we need to do or consider, ourselves. We are very excited to begin!

Yours, Genie and Melody

The Skyline Gardens Restoration Project: From weeds to wildflowers!



The Skyline Gardens Restoration Project is an all-volunteer project sponsored by East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. The Project, located south of the Tilden Steam Train in the Berkeley hills on EBMUD watershed land, began in 2016. Hand weeding, mowing, and vinegar spray are used to exhaust the seed bank of invasives and make space for restoring the local native perennials and annuals. As a result, plants not seen in a hundred years are now popping up. This path-breaking project proves that heavily-degraded meadow lands can be fully restored over a three to four year timeline — with volunteers and minimal expense — and that the results are simply glorious.

Naturalist and East Bay native **GLEN SCHNEIDER** grew up in a Diablo Valley nursery family and was a native plant garden landscape designer/builder for more than forty years. His local native plant garden in Berkeley has been on the **Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour** seventeen times. Glen founded and has led the Skyline Gardens project for seven years.



A restored area at Skyline Gardens in the Berkeley/Oakland hills



Native Garden Innovator Speakers:

SANTA CLARA CONFERENCE

Nurturing Nature Together: Easy steps for creating resilient public native plant habitats



In 2016 Juanita Salisbury, a landscape architect, saw an opportunity to transform underutilized spaces in Palo Alto into vibrant native plant habitats. She approached the city with a proposal to convert a strip of lawn along Primrose Way and Embarcadero Road into a native plant demonstration garden. With a combination of persistence, persuasive design plans, and a commitment to community engagement, Juanita secured the city's approval and rallied volunteers to help bring her vision to life. The success of the Primrose Way Garden sparked further initiatives, leading to the establishment of six additional native plant habitats on city-owned land.

JUANITA SALISBURY has a Ph.D. in Biopsychology. Her passion for creating beautiful and functional outdoor spaces eventually led her to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture. She is the founder of both Juanita Salisbury Landscape Architecture and the Primrose Way Garden Group.

Bringing Nature Home to City Hall:

A partnership between the City of San Carlos and the Master Gardeners

In 2019 the City of San Carlos and the San Mateo/San Francisco county Master Gardener program began collaborating on the creation of an 8,000 sq. ft. native plant habitat garden at the San Carlos Civic Center. The goals were to show how beautiful water-conserving California native plants are, and to educate the public about the value of native plants to birds, butterflies, bees, and other fauna. Come learn about our partnership and the inviting garden we brought to life together!

Master Gardener **CAROLYN DORSCH** has been one of the project leaders for the San Carlos Native Plant Habitat Garden since its inception. Her work at the garden involves managing weekly maintenance with the Master Gardener volunteers, and providing year-round educational activities for the public.



From the San Carlos Native Plant Habitat Garden, San Francisco/San Mateo County Master Gardeners

For the last five years **AMY NEWBY**, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of San Carlos, has been the City's liaison to the Native Plant Habitat Garden project. Amy reports: "It has been my pleasure to coordinate with the Master Gardeners, shepherd this project through the proper channels, obtain approvals, find funding, have interpretive signs printed, and enjoy the beautiful native plant garden and the wildlife that frequents it every time I leave my office."



The Primrose Way Garden

The Primrose Way Garden wasn't simply planned; it sprouted from a desire to transform a space into a thriving habitat. The project began with a simple vision: to create a beautiful, functional, and ecologically responsible landscape using native plants.

Crucially, obtaining permission was the first step. A well-developed plan, a demonstrated commitment to ongoing maintenance, and proactive outreach to adjacent homeowners were essential in gaining approval and fostering community support.



Nurturing a Living Landscape: The Importance of Ongoing Care

The Primrose Way Garden demonstrates that gardens are not "one and done" creations. They require ongoing care and attention to truly thrive. Each habitat is meticulously checked weekly, with photographs documenting the ever-evolving ecosystem of insects and other species.

The initial design incorporates both keystone and pioneer species, providing a foundation for a healthy ecosystem. But the habitat's evolution doesn't stop there. New plants are added each planting season to increase biodiversity, ensuring a dynamic and resilient landscape. Once established, maintenance primarily involves weeding, allowing the native plants to flourish and create a self-sustaining habitat.

From One Garden to a Flourishing Habitat Network

What started with a single habitat, the Primrose Way Garden, has now blossomed into a network of eight thriving native plant habitats. Additionally, a broader initiative to connect these habitats through the current Embarcadero Road Pollinator Corridor Project will further enhance biodiversity and ecological resiliency.

Learn more by watching Juanita's [Palo Alto Parks and Recreation Commission Presentation](#) in January 2020:

Visit the [Primrose Way Pollinator Garden website](#), which includes a link to the The Friends of the Palo Alto Parks website (that links directly to these projects):

Consider supporting this important work: [Primrose Way Pollinator Garden Group — Friends of the Palo Alto Parks](#)

Tips from Juanita Salisbury for Starting Your Own Habitat Project

Inspired by the Primrose Way Garden? Here are some tips to embark on your own transformative landscape project:

- **Secure Permission:** If your project involves public or shared spaces, obtaining necessary approvals is crucial. Present a well-thought-out plan and demonstrate your commitment to long-term maintenance.
- **Engage the Community:** Reach out to neighbors and stakeholders early in the process. Their support can be invaluable.
- **Partner with a Non-Profit or Start Your Own:** Consider collaborating with an existing organization or creating your own to facilitate fundraising and community involvement.
- **Choose an Accessible Location:** Select a site close to your home for easy access during preparation, planting, monitoring, and maintenance.
- **Understand Your Site:** Analyze your soil, sunlight, and water conditions. This knowledge will guide your plant selection and design decisions.
- **Plant Native:** Choose plants that are adapted to your local climate and support biodiversity.
- **Commit to Ongoing Care:** Habitats require regular maintenance to thrive. Plan for weeding and seasonal adjustments. Be prepared to pick up trash out of your habitats. Remember that the habitat provides food and shelter for wildlife. Allow natural processes to unfold.
- **Document and Share Your Progress and Lessons Learned:** Take photographs and notes to track the evolution of your habitat and knowledge.
- **Start Small and Expand:** Begin with a manageable area and gradually expand your project over time.
- **Seek Inspiration:** Visit public gardens, natural areas, read books, and explore online resources to gather ideas and learn from others.
- **Don't Be Afraid to Experiment:** Building a habitat is a journey of discovery. Realize that knowledge is not static; it's a continuous unfolding. Knowledge isn't simply acquired; it's revealed over time.
- **Thank your volunteers and people who fund your efforts.** The importance of gratitude and *written thank you notes* cannot be understated.



NATURE'S BEST HOPE CONFERENCE—

Thank You to Our Sponsors

It has taken a village to present the Nature's Best Hope conference, and we are grateful to all of our generous sponsors, whose support now, and commitment to helping the environment, is deeply appreciated!

CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA

Lyngso

LUPINE

Jennifer & Brian Dirking
Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the
California Native Plant Society
SummerWinds Nursery

OAK

Eco Performance Builders

MANZANITA

California Nativescapes
Anne Chambers & Ed McAlpine

GOLDENROD

California Academy of Sciences
Yerba Buena Chapter of the
California Native Plant Society
Four Dimensions Landscape Co-op
Dorothy Gregor
Hedgerow Farms
Hillside Gardeners of Montclair
Kat Weiss Landscape Design
Los Gatos Birdwatcher
Plantify
Saxon Holt Photography
Water Efficient Gardens
Louise Velasquez
*in honor of Jennifer Dirking's
commitment to the environment*



©Saxon Holt / PhotoBotanic

DOUGLAS IRIS

Butterfly Effect Gardens
East Bay Wilds
El Cerrito Community Garden Network
El Cerrito Garden Club
Gardening by Nature's Design
Napa Valley Chapter of the
California Native Plant Society
Watershed Nursery

POPPY

Agi Kehoe Landscaping
Green Thumb Works
Kelly Marshall Garden Design

GIFTS IN-KIND

Kristen Azevedo, videographer
Mike Azevedo, videographer
Carol Bray, videographer
Leslie Buck, Native Plant Floral Design,
Oakland Museum
Becca Nelson, Native Plant Floral Design,
Santa Clara University
Pro-Bono Photo

Thank you to the many volunteers who gave their time and talent to make this conference possible.

Special thanks to Golden Gate Bird Alliance for co-sponsoring this event; to Stephanie McKenna of Bowerbird Atelier for conference artwork and program layout; and to Saxon Holt, of PhotoBotanic, for use of his images.

The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour and Green Home Features Showcase

JOIN US IN 2025!



2025 TOUR DATES:
VIRTUAL TOUR APRIL 5 & 6
IN-PERSON TOUR MAY 3 & 4

Over the last 20 years this award-winning tour has inspired countless people in the East Bay...and beyond...to work on creating livable cities—for ourselves and our children, and also for the birds, bees, and butterflies that depend upon us for their survival.

“Thank you, Kathy, for your amazing, visionary, and inspiring leadership for more than two decades to “Bring Back the Natives” to our gardens!” — JOHN STEERE

To get involved, consider joining the **Native Plant Resource Teams**, a program of the Bringing Back the Natives Tour

The Native Plant Resource Teams bring together individuals from around the San Francisco Bay Area to plant and promote California native plants. Teams are organized by interest areas such as Pollinator Pathways, City Trees & Public Policy, HOAs & Communal Living, and Sharing Native Seeds & Plants. They are also organized by region, so that neighbors can assist each other with projects, advocate for native plants on the local level, and get together to share plants and visit each others gardens. Visit www.nativeplantresourceteams.net to learn more.



JASON LACHICK

butterflyeffectgardens.com ~ 347.729.8304



Gardening by Nature's Design

Restoring balance to the landscape one garden at a time.

Lois Simonds

Artisanal design and installation following permaculture principles.

(510) 501-0243

www.gardeningbynaturesdesign.com

CA LICENSE # 893957

Kathy Kramer's Suggestions for What You Can Do to Help the Environment

1. Plant natives – aim for 70%, by cover and plant list, many keystone species, use local native plants
2. Leave the leaves
3. Advocate for natives to city staff and elected officials
4. Turn exterior lights off
5. Put screens up, or treat your windows to prevent bird/glass collisions
6. Keep your cats indoors – your cat will likely live longer, and it's better for the birds
7. Stop using pesticides
8. Buy organic produce





**HILLSIDE GARDENERS
of MONTCLAIR**

Serving the
greater
Oakland area
since 1947

Hillside Gardeners of Montclair is an enthusiastic community dedicated to promoting the love of gardening and the conservation of native plants and wildlife.

Please visit our website for membership and event information.

www.hillsidegardeners.org

Congratulations to Bringing Back the Natives on your 20th Anniversary



plantify
Environmental Non-Profit | Connecting People to Nature

JOIN OUR BOARD

We're reviewing applications for directors

www.plantify.org/join-our-board



California Nativescapes

Restoring California One Yard At A Time!

Design - Build - Maintenance

Contractor's License #944670

www.calnativescapes.com





LOS GATOS
Birdwatcher



The Store for Nature Lovers

We have everything you need for observing birds in the wild, and attracting birds to your garden:

- quality seed
- birdbaths
- field guides
- avian housing
- feeders
- tours

...plus a large selection of gift items!

Come visit us!

792 Blossom Hill Rd.
Los Gatos, CA
95032

*(King's Court Shopping
Center at Los Gatos Blvd.)*

408.358.9453

losgatosbirdwatcher.com



*Townsend's Warbler
© Brooke Miller*



KAT WEISS
LANDSCAPE DESIGN
Artful California Native Gardens

925.518.9083
Kat@KWLandDesign.com

*Serving the Tri-Valley area of Livermore,
Pleasanton, Dublin/San Ramon with
engaging design*


DIY'ers welcome, I'll show you how

East Bay Wilds

Open Fridays from 9:30-4
28th Ave at Foothill Blvd in Oakland



www.eastbaywilds.com



CNPS Napa Valley Chapter
Protecting and celebrating our local flora

**CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

Dedicated to celebrating California's native plant heritage
and preserving it for future generations.

<https://chapters.cnps.org/napa/>

El Cerrito Garden Club
*Monthly meetings, speakers,
plant sales, knowledge sharing,
and friendly gatherings for
gardeners and garden lovers
since 1956.*

Join us!
www.elcerritogardenclub.org




**THE
WATERSHED
NURSERY**

601 A Canal Blvd. Richmond, CA
(510) 234-2222
sales@thewatershednursery.com

*Employee-owned nursery
providing California native
plants from your backyard to
the bay!*



Growing Natives Garden Tour April 12-13, 2025

Visit California native
gardens in
Santa Clara Valley &
the Peninsula

South: Sat. 4/12 10am - 4pm
North: Sun. 4/13 10am - 4pm

Register at gngt.org (free)



Transform your yard
into a stunning
native garden!

WaterEfficientGardens.com



see support 60,000 creatures today.
countless creatures tomorrow.



CALIFORNIA
ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES

Take in our vibrant California Coast exhibit and help us restore biodiversity for a thriving California—and planet. Because every visit supports our mission to regenerate the natural world.
Get tickets at calacademy.org

AQUARIUM + PLANETARIUM + RAINFOREST + LIVING MUSEUM

• 35 YEARS IN OPERATION

• LOCAL ECOTYPES

• CUSTOM NATIVE SEED COLLECTION & PRODUCTION

• TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & CONSULTATION



eco performance
BUILDERS

How Does Your Home Perform?

Home Performance and Electrification Retrofits

Home Performance:



Our company can enhance your home's insulation, air sealing, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. We design and build customized solutions designed to elevate the comfort, efficiency, and performance of your home.

Electrification:



We are dedicated to electrifying and optimizing your home's performance by installing engineered, more efficient, and resilient heat pump solutions that are customized for your needs.

Air Quality:



Your health is our top priority. By implementing targeted strategies such as improved ventilation, precise air sealing, and advanced air filtration systems on your heat pump, we significantly reduce indoor pollutants and particulates.

Why Choose Us



- **Personalized Solutions:**

Every home is unique, which is why we tailor our services to meet your specific needs.

- **Future-Ready:**

We prepare your home for tomorrow's technology today, ensuring longevity and efficiency.

- **Health-Focused:**

Improving your home's air quality is a promise, not just a possibility with us.

- **Sustainability:**

Opt for greener, cleaner, and more resilient whole home performance solutions that benefit both you and the planet.

License B944856

General, HVAC and Insulation

 **925.363.4498**

 Sales@epbuilders.com

 1511 2nd Ave Walnut
Creek, CA 94597

READY TO TRANSFORM YOUR HOME? CONTACT US TODAY AND TAKE THE FIRST STEP
TOWARDS A MORE COMFORTABLE, EFFICIENT, AND HEALTHY LIVING SPACE.

Attract More Pollinators

with sustainable native plants




SummerWinds[®]
Nursery
We Guarantee Success!

» SummerWindsNursery.com/ca/
FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM & FACEBOOK

5 Bay Area SummerWinds Nursery Locations:

Campbell - 2460 S. Winchester Blvd. | (408) 866-0171

Cupertino - 1491 S. De Anza Blvd. | (408) 996-8355

Dublin - 7360 San Ramon Rd. | (925) 551-0231

Novato - 1430 S. Novato Blvd. | (415) 878-0493

Palo Alto - 725 San Antonio Road | (650) 493-5136



Since the award-winning **Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour** began in 2005 nearly 230,000 visits have been made to native plant gardens in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. The Tour has grown into a two-day in-person tour, a two-day online-tour (with a robust YouTube channel), and it has incorporated electrification education into its mission.

WWW.BRINGINGBACKTHENATIVES.NET

A new Bay Area-wide Tour program, the **Native Plant Resource Teams**, brings people together to help each other with their native plant projects. Make a friend: Join the Teams!

WWW.NATIVEPLANTRESOURCETEAMS.NET



The **California Native Plant Society (CNPS)** is dedicated to the protection of California's native plants and their natural habitats, today and into the future, through science, education, stewardship, gardening, and advocacy. The Santa Clara Valley Chapter of CNPS serves Santa Clara County and the southern reaches of San Mateo County. It provides a wide range of activities that explore the various facets of native plants, including gardening, plant identification, photography, conservation, and the study of rare species through talks, workshops, field trips, native plant sales, wildflower shows, restoration workdays, and more.

WWW.CNPS-SCV.ORG



For over 100 years the **Golden Gate Bird Alliance** (formerly the Golden Gate Audubon Society) has advocated for the protection and conservation of birds and wildlife around the Bay Area and beyond. GGBA's mission is to inspire people to protect Bay Area birds and our shared natural environment. The Alliance envisions a world where birds, wildlife, and people flourish together.

WWW.GOLDENGATEBIRDALLIANCE.ORG



Homegrown National Park's mission is to raise awareness and urgently inspire everyone to address the biodiversity crisis by adding native plants and removing invasive ones where they live, work, learn, pray, and play. We are at a critical point of losing so many species from local ecosystems that their ability to produce the oxygen, clean water, flood control, pollination, pest control, carbon storage, etc, that is—the ecosystem services that sustain us—will become seriously compromised. We hope you'll respond to our call-to-action and restore habitat around your home, office, or place of worship, in local parks and wherever else you can weed and plant.

WWW.HOMEGROWNNATIONALPARK.ORG