Sustainable Gardening

...or as my great-grandma called it, Gardening

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Sustainable Roots

Christopher, IL ~1930

Christopher, IL today
Where we’re headed

In the near future

• Define sustainable gardening (for this lecture)
• What it’s all about: concepts and strategies
• All aboard
• If you only remember one thing...?
Where we’re headed

Long-term
• Is our existence sustainable?
• Resource depletion without renewal
• New ideas, strategies
• Change perspective

Pacific “Gyre”
Sustainability, by any other name...

Sustainability: *use* resources without using them *up*

- Meet the needs of the present
- Don’t compromise the future

- What does this sound like to you?
Sustainability, by any other name...

• Common sense!
• Why isn’t this common practice?
  o Ice cream
  o Human nature?
Sustainable what?

Broad scale

• Sustainable Living = Permaculture
  o System for human environments
  o Habitat and food production
  o Community development
  o Resource use
    • Sustainable gardening
    • Much more

• Sustainable ≠ Organic
Sustainable what?

Small scale
• Do what you can!
• Small efforts of many add up
• Spread the word
Sustainable Gardening

• The basics:
  1. Tread lightly
  2. Be efficient
  3. Increase biomass
  4. Be a good neighbor

• Right plant, right place
• No garden is an island!
Tread lightly on Mother Nature

• Control pollution
  o Air, water, soil, AND noise
    • What’s under the hood?
    • Alternatives to gas
  o Understand effects
  o Efficiency
Tread lightly on Mother Nature

- Reduce stormwater runoff
  - FFL #8
- Protect the waterfront
  - FFL #9
Tread lightly on Mother Nature

- Right plant, right place
- Manage pests responsibly
  - FFL #7
  - IPM
- Fertilize appropriately
  - FFL #3
Tread lightly on Mother Nature

- Case Study: Jungle Island, Biscayne Bay

Flamingo Lake (10/06) with a pesticide and fertilizer free Environmental lawn.
Be Efficient, Be Frugal, Use Sense

Frugal with Natural resources
• Water Efficiently
  o FFL #2
• Promote Healthy Soils
  o Composting
  o Mulch
    • FFL #4
• Waste
  o Materials selection
  o Recycle
    • FFL #7
Be Efficient, Be Frugal, Use Sense

Frugal with Time, Money, and Labor

• “Resource Inputs”
• Right plant, right place!
• Start with a plan
• Maintenance from the beginning
Be Efficient, Be Frugal, Use Sense

Frugal with Time, Money, Labor...and plants!
• Retrofit over replace
• Tree and shrub management
  o No green meatballs
  o See FFL #1
• Lawns?
  o See FFL #1
Surface Maintenance Requirements

- Turf
- Bare soil
- Gravel
- Stone set in sand
- Asphalt
- Mortared stone
- Concrete
Increase biomass

- Green is good
- Increased photosynthesis = \( \text{O}_2 \)
- Increased transpiration = Decreased heat load
- Better stormwater absorption
- More woodies!
Be a good neighbor

To furry and non-furry neighbors alike:

• Attract wildlife
  o FFL #5
  o Build habitats, not just landscapes

• Promote ecosystems
  o Small- and large-scale
  o Coordinate efforts
Be a good neighbor

To furry and non-furry neighbors alike:

• Look up...and down
  o Power lines
  o Underground action

• Keep it above par
  o Set an example
  o Spread the word!
...and after all that

Remember:
1. Tread lightly on Mother Nature
2. Be Efficient/Frugal/Use Sense
3. Increase biomass
4. Be a good neighbor

Good gardening?
If you remember one thing...

Good gardening = sustainable gardening
• Be “efficient”
• Use your good sense
• Don’t forget to have fun!
Thank you!

Questions?
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