

### Garden Beds & Borders



Elements/Examples

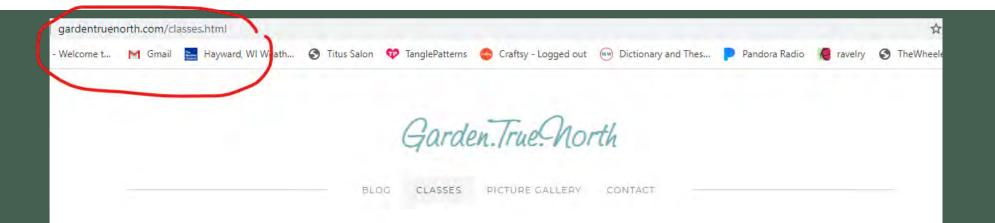


Plants & Combos



Resources



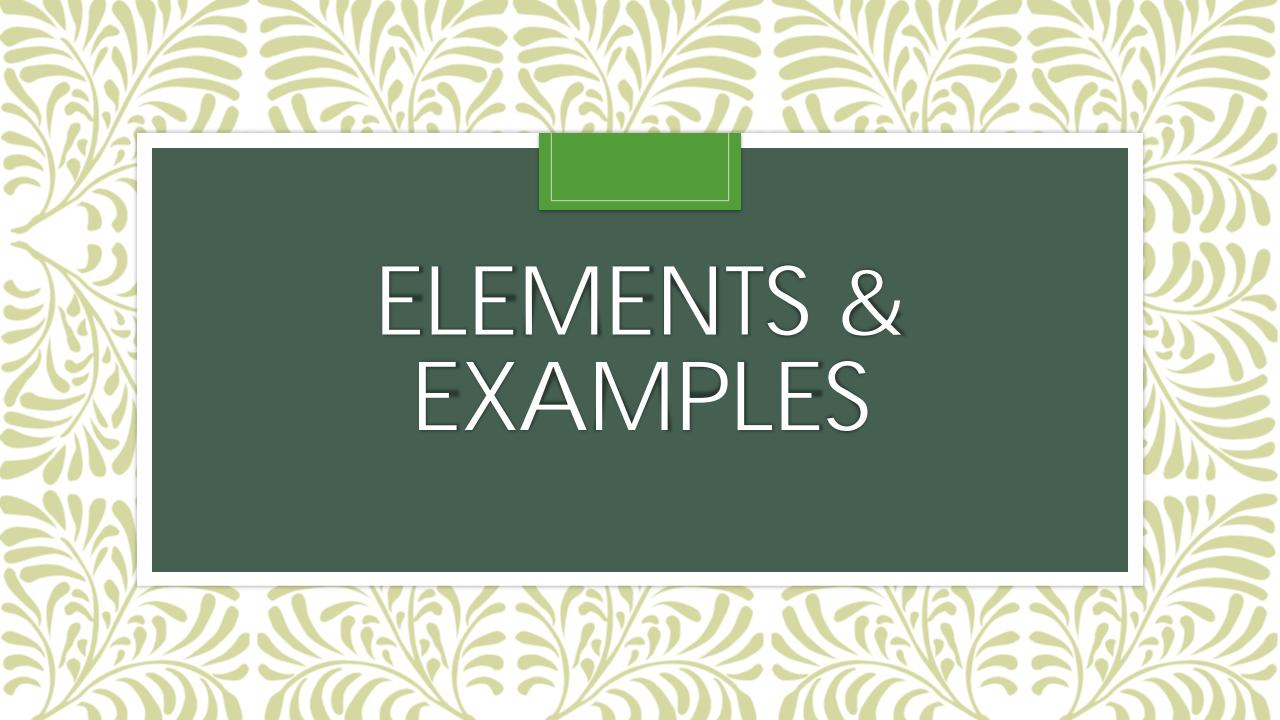


#### Classes & Handouts

#### WITC Classes (click here for registration information)

All are on Thursday, 10:00 to Noon Webinars

- Feb 11, 2021- Intensive Gardening
   Handouts (click on the title for the PDF file):
   Intensive Gardening PowerPoint Notes, Intensive Gardening Comparisons, Crop Rotations and Plants for Small Gardens, Square Foot Gardening Basics
- Mar 4-Mixed Borders
- Mar 25-Ornamental Edibles





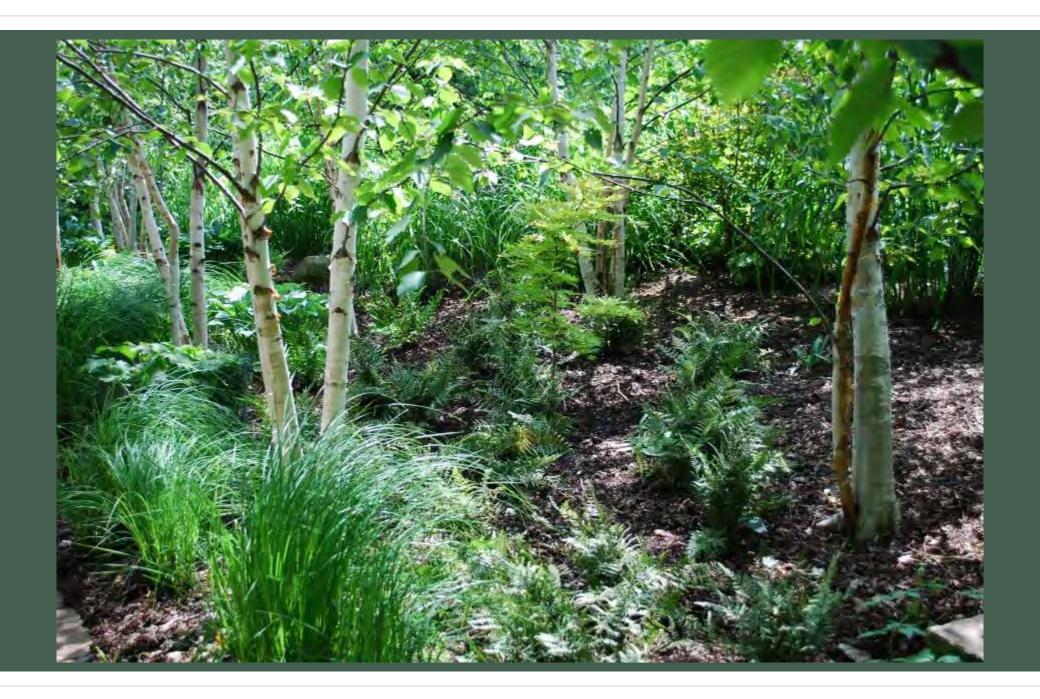
La Foce Tuscany





#### Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Mid-June Border



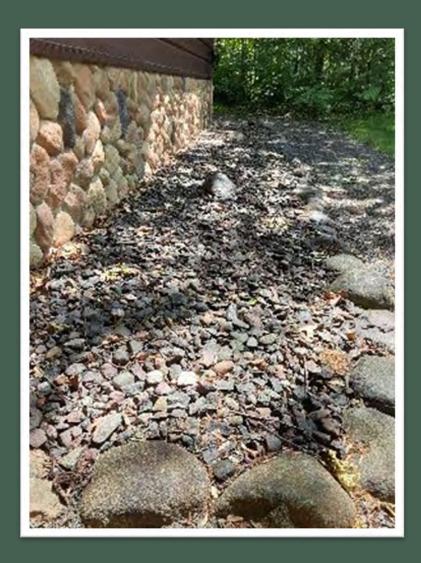


#### Using Sedge as a Ground Cover

Carex flacca - Blue Green Sedge









### Consider the Seasons





### Types of Mixed Garden Borders

- Cottage
- Naturalist
- Woodland
- Prairie/Meadow
- Formal
- Rock
- Zen (Japanese)
- Shrub

Photo: Janesville Rotary Garden



### Components of Borders



- Softscape: Trees, plants, grass, mulches.
- Hardscape: Sidewalks, walls and fences, pavers, rocks, decks and patios.
- Décor: Water features, statuary, tree hangers, pottery, lighting.
- Supporting Features: Birdhouses, beehives, feeders, tree houses, trellises.

### Guidelines for Mixed Beds

- Keep border less than 3 feet or provide a path
- Plan border at its deepest point to be about 1 ½ times the height of the tallest plant (ex. 9' deep-tallest plant 6')
- Combine plants with similar requirements
- Use basic foliage color and plant shape as unifying elements
- Limit flower colors- too many colors confuse the eye

- Keep taller plants at the back and low creepers at the front
- Mounded plants & those with tall bloom stalks can go almost anywhere
- Limit flowering plants that reseed themselves heavily – they will need continual thinning
- Avoid flowering plants among edibles that demand pesticides to look good

### Add a Path





## Creating a garden border









#### Right Plant, Right Place

Spikenard

Aralia racemosa

Native, herbaceous perennial, part-sun

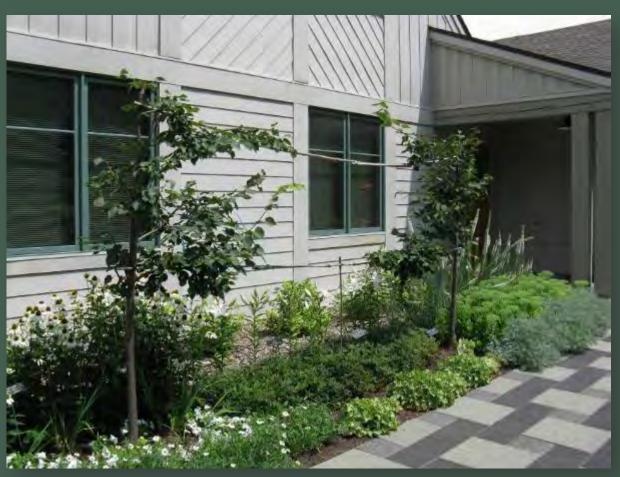
# Tips on Mixing Edibles with Ornamentals

- Don't try to make it all edible
- Mix annuals & perennials but group them for ease of maintenance
- Keep diversity in mind so beneficial insects can help keep your garden healthy

- Light Rule of Thumb
  - If the part you eat is the fruit needs 8 or more hours per day sunshine
  - If the part is a root can tolerate a little less
  - If the part is the stem or leaf can handle slightly shady conditions



### Espalier



- Best used on plants that have flexible woody branches.
- Often used with apple trees
- Want to know more about this technique – go to this Master Gardener article:

https://wimastergardener.org/ article/espalier/



#### Pleaching

Flexible linden trees trained into a raised hedge using a plantshaping technique called Pleaching. Over time, branches are interwoven. Light still reaches plants below.

### Size—Rule of Thirds

- Grouping of 3 plants are more pleasing
- Tallest plant should be 1/3 or 2/3 of the backdrop or focal point, then sequence down to next level by 1/3
- 3's work better than splitting in half
- Width of border should be 1/3 the width of the total area
- Each "height" should have equal space in bed

### Elements of a Garden



- 1. Overstory trees for shade
- 2. Understory
- 3. Tie together with shrubs
- 4. Interesting woodland floor
- 5. Add a few details



#### Olbrich Garden, Madison WI

Shrub bed with arborvitae, spirea, moss

## Tips to growing sun loving plants in the shade

- Plants grow leggier in shade, so buy the bushiest, most compact specimens
- If you like a certain sunloving plant but only have shade – try it there.

 When buying shade-tolerant plants, pick varieties that bloom early, before deciduous trees block the light during their most active growth

### Colors

- Dominate shade colors: white, blue, mauve, pink
- Daylilies can add splash of color
- Start with "anchor" plants like hydrangea or viburnum
- Light colors will stand out in shade





### Tips for planting under trees

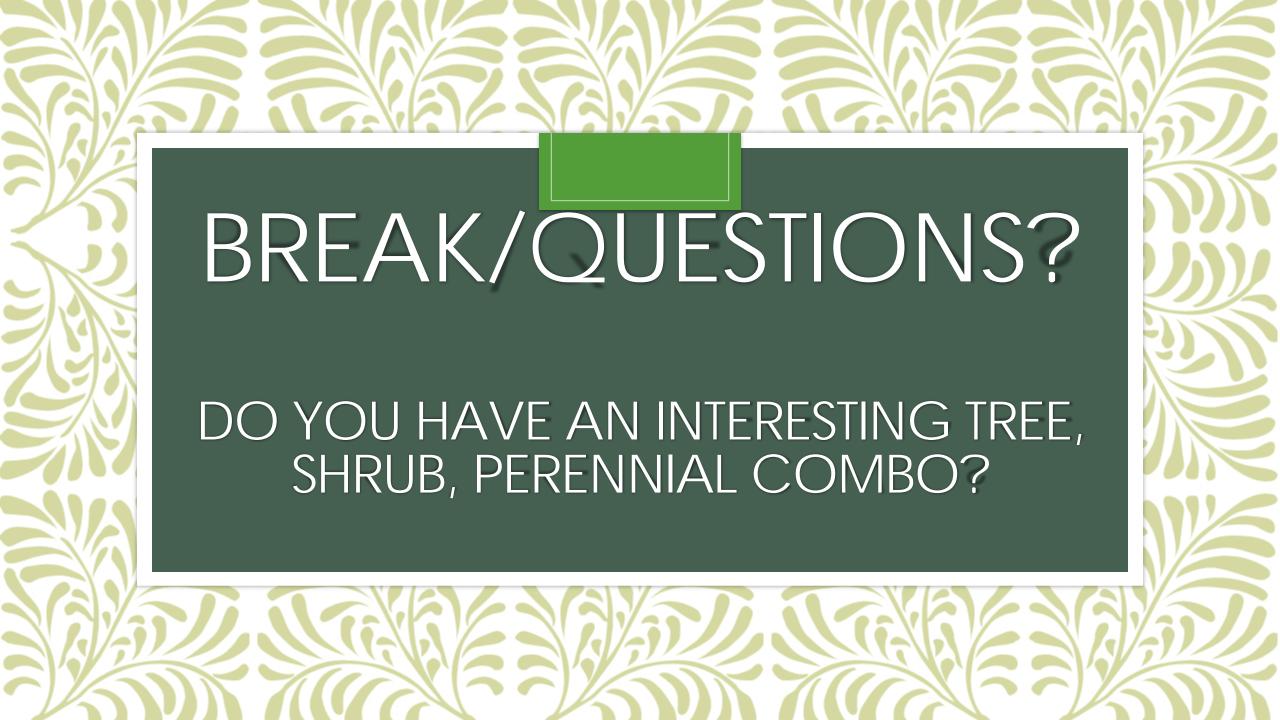
- Avoid damaging tree roots
  - do not add soil on top of tree roots
  - gently plant between roots
  - do not cut into roots 2" or larger
  - use a layer of mulch no deeper than 2-4" thick
- Look to nature for inspiration in plant selection
- Be prepared to water the first year or two until plants are established
- Use containers to add color



### Add Containers

- To provide attractive elements to the garden
- To contain aggressive plants like mints
- To have some spare plants to move to perennial beds elsewhere
- To provide succession plantings







### Four Seasons of Interest

- Spring bulbs, garden art
- Summer perennials; blooming shrubs
- Fall color, color, color

• Winter - Evergreens, seed heads and grasses







### Layers, borders, Drifts .....

- Layers: ground level, middle, understory, canopy
- Planting beds: mounded, perennial drifts, island, borders



### Ground Covers

- Good alternative to grass
- Less competitive than grass under trees and shrubs
- Relatively low maintenance
- Proper planting prep to avoid weeds
- Use instead of bark mulch





### Tips on When to Consider Ground Covers

- Problem areas
- Transition between lawn and taller plants
- Where grass doesn't grow
- Select based on year-round interest and plant needs
- Consider height

- Prepare soil as for other plants
- Look out for aggressive growers
- Good resource:
   University of Illinois
   <a href="http://urbanext.illinois.edu/groundcovers/about.html">http://urbanext.illinois.edu/groundcovers/about.html</a>

# Bugleweed (Ajuga reptans)

- Evergreen, green, bronze or variegated
- One plant can fill a 3 foot square
- Full sun to part shade
- Avoid open or exposed areas may suffer winter kill
- Minimal fertilization needed to keep plants healthy



# Deadnettle (Lamium maculatum)

- Excellent ground cover for shaded areas
- Prefers moist, well drained soil
- Part to full shade
- Pest free
- Lift and divide overgrown plants
- Can be aggressive
- Cultivars: Beacon Silver, White Nancy



# Moneywort (Lysimachus nummularia)

- Aggressive-common name: Creeping Jenny
- Tolerate wide range of conditions, prefers shade with moist to wet organic soil
- Minimal fertilizer needed
- Monitor planting, pruning back and pulling plants that have overgrown space
- Cultivar: 'Aurea' less aggressive



# Creeping Phlox (Phlox subulata)

- Full sun, moist well-drained soil
- Up to 8 inches high
- Trim up after flowering
- Slow growing



# Sedum Stonecrop



- Full sun to part shade
- Low-growing, can tolerate dry conditions
- Easy care

### Middle Layer

- Perennials and annuals
- Create some vertical interest
- Flowering shrubs
- Create multiple layers of interest from spring through fall
- Add annuals for consistent blooms or to fill in a bare spot for a season (can be a container plants)
- Mounded or plants with bloom stems can go almost anywhere
- Weave in self-seeders for a natural look



### Bulb and Perennial combos

#### Hot, Dry Sun

- Bulbs: Daffadil, Hyacinth, Tulip
- Perennials: Bearded iris, Lamb's ear, yarrow

#### Moist Soil (part shade)

- Bulbs: Fritillaria, Spanish Bluebell
- Perennials: Astilbe, Cardinal flower, Goatsbeard, Ligularia



#### "Carefree Turf Blend" -Olbrich Gardens

Find a low-mow blend (using a blend of fine fescue grasses)

Chewings Fescue
Creeping Red Fescue
Hard Fescue
Slender Red Fescue
Blue Fescue

# Native Midwest Prairie Grasses

- Tallgrass species
  - Big Bluestem
  - Switchgrass
  - Prairie Cordgrass
- Midgrass Species
  - Little Bluestem
  - Prairie Dropseed
  - Sideoats Grama
- Shortgrass Species
  - Buffalograss
  - Blue Grama



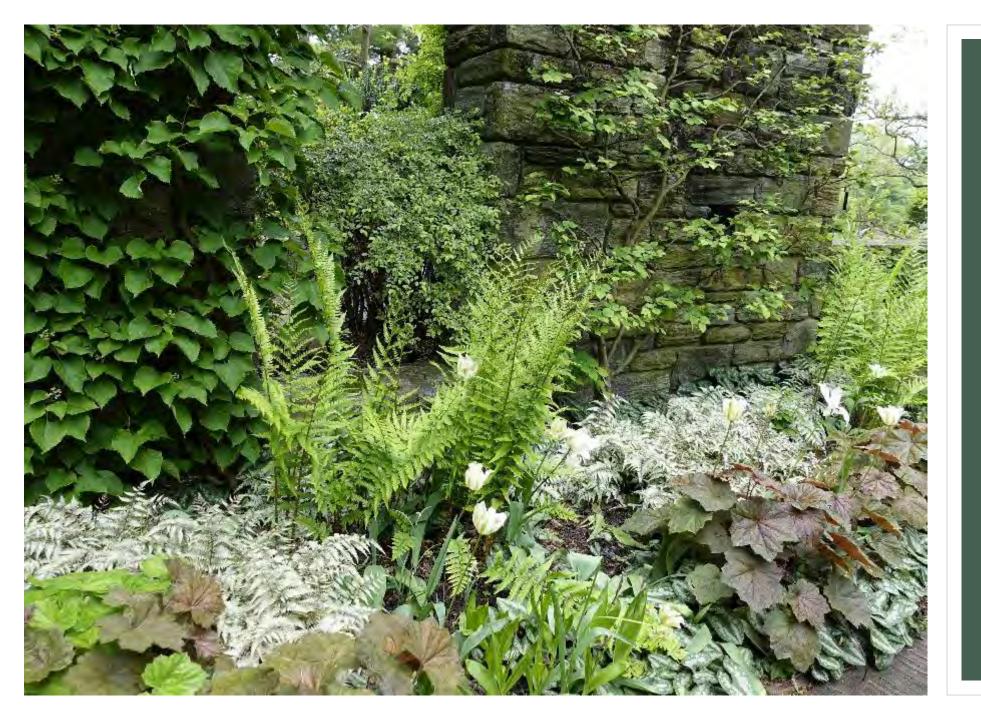
Native Bluestem



Lettuce, viola, annuals, espalier tree, potted plants

Chanticleer Gardens, Delaware

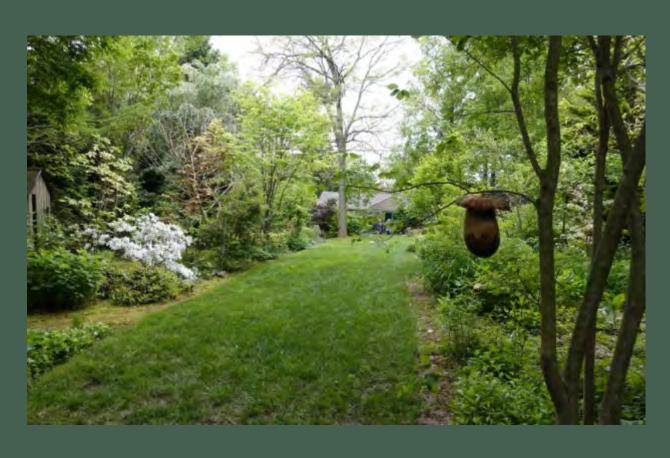




#### Chanticleer Gardens

Ferns, coral bells, espalier shrub, climbing vine, tulips, Pulmonaria (lungwort)

# Understory & Shrub - layer



- Provides shelter, windbreaks, background, vertical interest
- Can screen unwanted views and create privacy
- Creates interest in all seasons

# Understory-Small Trees & Shrubs

- Serviceberry (Amelanchier)
- Black Chokeberry (Aronia)
- Dogwood (Cornus)
- Hazelnut (Corylus)
- Bush Honeysuckle (Diervilla)
- Forsythia
- Hydrangea
- Winterberry (Ilex)
- Ninebark (Physocarpus)
- Rhododendron
- Sumac
- Elderberry (Sambucus)
- Spirea
- Viburnum





Note: Hosta, grasses, perennials, shrubs

Chanticleer Gardens, Delaware



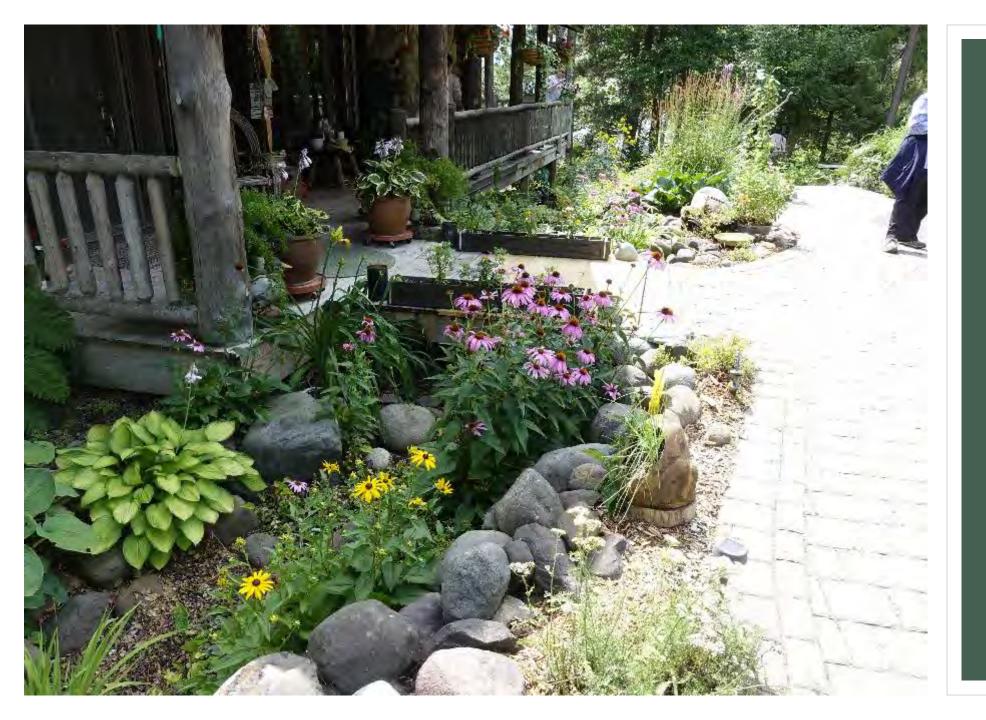
#### Chanticleer Gardens

Azalea, tulips, hosta, ferns, oriental lilies, Bergenia (Pig Squeak)



### Spooner Agricultural Research Station

Ninebark, sedum, grasses



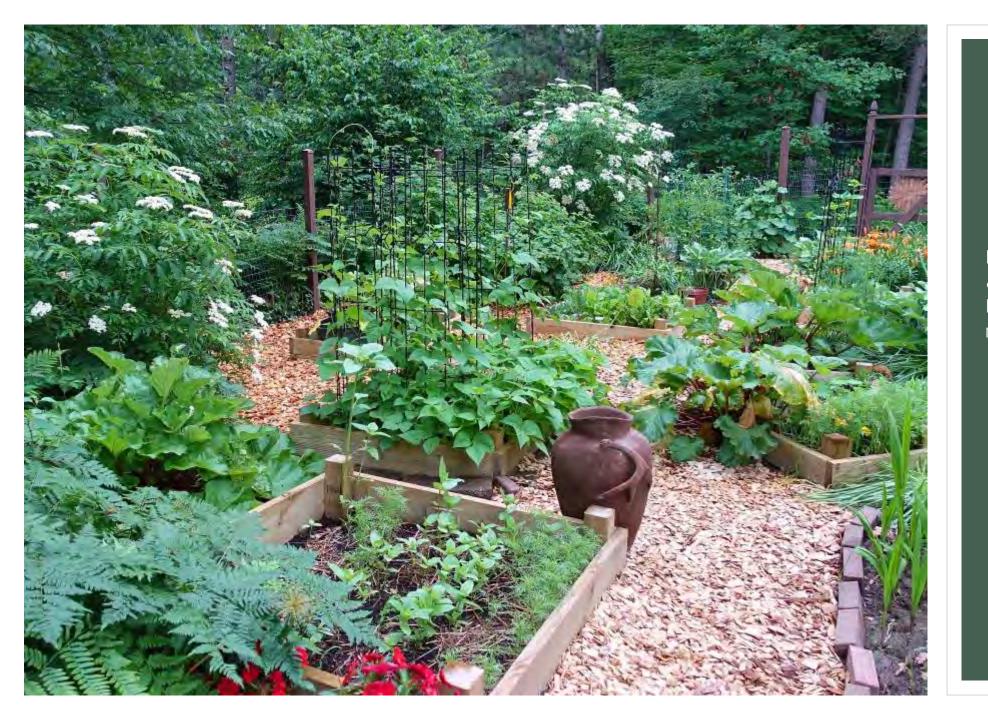
### Private Garden Siren, WI

Hosta, coneflower, grasses, Rubeckia



#### Spooner Ag Research Station

Rubeckia, Coneflower, Hydrangea, Joe Pye Weed, Phlox, grasses



### Potager

Raised beds for Veggies & Annual Flowers, Elderberry, raspberries, rhubarb, ferns

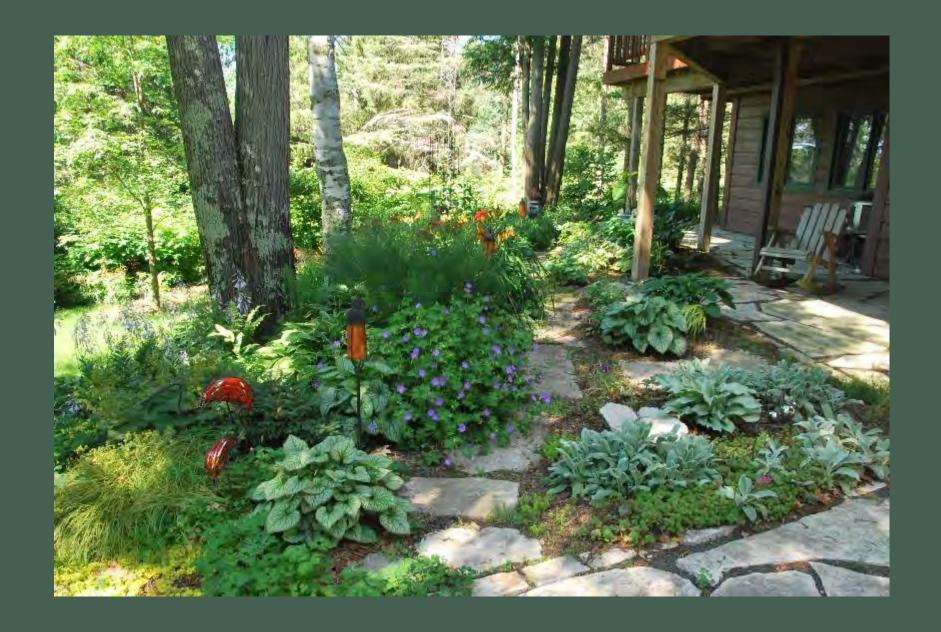


## Think about Maintenance













### **UW Extension Publications**

- www.learningstore.uwex.edu UW Extension gardening publications
- www.wihort.uwex.edu UW Urban Horticulture website

All can be downloaded free or a paper copy purchased at the <a href="http://learningstore.uwex.edu">http://learningstore.uwex.edu</a>

## Books

- The Garden Book of Wisconsin\_ Melinda Myers
- Cold Climate Gardening, Lewis Hill
- Flowerbeds & Borders in Deer Country, Vincent Drzewucki Jr.
- Landscaping with Native Plants of Wisconsin and Grow Native, Lynn M. Steiner
- The Well-Tended Perennial Garden, Tracy DiSabato-Aust

## More Books

- The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden, Roy Diblik
- The Layered Garden, David L. Culp
- W. George Schmid's **An Encyclopedia of Shade Perennials** -- book contains an extensive list of shade perennial plants
- Planting in a Post-Wild World, Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes,
   Thomas Rainer and Claudia West

### Web

- <u>www.hostalibrary.org</u> official directory of the American Hosta Society
- <a href="https://woodyplants.nres.uiuc.edu/">https://woodyplants.nres.uiuc.edu/</a> searchable woody plant database
- http://garden.org/plantfinder/ National Gardening Association search engine for locating plants
- <u>www.perennialresource.com</u> Online library maintained by Walters Gardens

