

Kill Your Lawn!

Removing or reducing the amount of turf you have on your property to make way for a native landscape is a wonderfully rewarding experience! Say goodbye to the maintenance headache, high water use, and lawnmower hum of your tired lawn and prepare to welcome the sound of songbirds and the sight of hummingbirds and butterflies in your landscape.

STEP ONE, (WHICH CAN BE A CHALLENGING ONE!), IS KILLING THE LAWN.

Why should you 'Kill Your Lawn' ?

By removing some or all of your turf you will:

- Reduce water use dramatically
- Reduce or eliminate fertilizer and associated polluted runoff
- Eliminate weekly maintenance labor and expense
- Free up square footage for more attractive and beneficial native plants!

2. HOW TO KILL YOUR LAWN

Identify the type of turf you have

- Cool season grass: Fescue, Marathon, Bluegrass and grass blends that stay green in the winter
- Warm season grass: Bermuda, St Augustine, Zoysia and any rhizomatous grass that is brown in winter

3. DETERMINE A STRATEGY FOR REMOVAL BASED UPON THESE FACTORS

- Grass type
- Season of removal
- Timeline



4. COOL SEASON GRASSES: HARD TO GROW, EASY TO KILL, QUICK TO REPLACE

- Smother with mulch, no plastic
- Strip and flip using a sod-cutting machine, mark and avoid sprinkler heads that may be retrofitted for the new garden.
- Rototill, only if no rhizomatous weedy grasses are present
- Herbicide- typically not necessary with cool season grasses

5. WARM SEASON GRASSES: EASY TO GROW, HARD TO KILL, SLOW TO REPLACE

- DO NOT ROTOTILL
- Hand removal by weeding, digging out roots (difficult)
- Herbicide- controversial but effective, each gardener needs to make their own cost/benefit analysis of this method

6. GROW AND KILL

- Glyphosate-based herbicides (Roundup, Rodeo, others) low toxicity, short residual
- Non-selective herbicide, tailor application method to site conditions to avoid damage to desirable plants
- Seasonal- most effective and fastest when plants are metabolically active, warm season for these grasses
- Exhaust stored food reserves in their extensive root systems by repeated cycles: water, grow, spray, kill.
- Dormancy resembles death. Premature planting of your new garden will mean years of follow-up hand pulling. Patience and diligence are required to eliminate these types of grasses.