Help Nature in Your Neighborhood

Biodiversity Guidelines



In 2023, LA County's Chief Sustainability Office and LA City's Department of Sanitation and Environment collaborated to create the LA Biodiversity Guidelines, a landmark document that supports both public and private projects looking to integrate biodiversity into the urban environment.

Read on to learn how any project, from small to large, can be adapted to promote local sustainability!

Habitat

- Use a diverse plant palette when landscaping; aim for mostly natives, and avoid invasive species.
- Source your plants from local nurseries, and retain existing native plants when possible.
- Plant to promote pollinators, both with nectar producing plants and shrubs to host larvae.

Maintenance

- Limit disturbances to pollinators and birds; avoid pruning and trimming during nesting season.
- Use pesticides only as a last resort, using the least toxic first, and avoid rodenticides entirely.
- Strategically prune trees, and consider hiring a certified arborist to plant your trimming schedule.

Water

- Mimic natural hydrology in water features; use sandy soils to infiltrate groundwater.
- Plant in the late fall or early winter to take advantage of the rain season and to establish native species.
- Incorporate a source of freshwater for birds, making sure to circulate to avoid attracting mosquitos.

Healthy Soils

- Reduce artificial light pollution by drawing blinds or putting outside lighting on a timer.
- Minimize hardscape to maximize the ground area that can infiltrate groundwater.
- Build wildlife-friendly; make windows visible to birds and avoid using barbed wire around your property.

Built Elements

- Turn food scraps and yard waste into nutrient-rich compost with a backyard bin!
- Test the soil in your area to look for heavy metals or contaminants that can affect plants.
- Remediate your soils using regenerative practices, and avoid the use of pesticides and herbicides.

Sustainable Practices

- Reduce or remove your lawn, and introduce native shrubs and grasses instead!
- Plant a food garden; you'll learn new skills, increase food security and eat healthily and sustainably.
- Volunteer with local nonprofits, or organize an event in your local community for Earth Day!

Learn More!

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