GLENWOOD SPRINGS

2024 Water-Smart Garden Tour Map





- Bosco residence - 809 N. Traver Trail
- Carr residence - 2103 Bennett Ave.
- Lambe residence - 501 Hyland Park Dr.
- Minch residence - 819 N. Traver Trail
- Pearson residence - 101 Polo Rd.
- Schuemaker residence - 2110 Blake Ave.
- Springer residence - 1032 Bennett Ave.
- Van Nostrand residence - 517 W. 13th St.

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GLENWOOD SPRINGS 2024 WATER-SMART GARDEN TOUR

Bosco residence – 809 N. Traver Trail



After seven years of living in their home with its large lawn, Sharon and Gary Bosco decided it was time to dress up the landscaping. Several mugo (dwarf) pines along the south side of the house offered a bit of interest, but they made mowing difficult. Plus, the large expanse of turf was costing a lot to water. "We're becoming more aware of our water usage and being responsible with water," says Sharon. "We will be doing further downsizing of our lawn in the future."

For this project, Gary laid out the turf-removal area on a computer, and selected drought- and deer-resistant plants from a list provided by their landscaping contractor. Beyond that, they mostly left it up to the contractor to design the garden and decide where to put the plants. Most of the pines were removed to make way for the new landscaping.

Project specs:

Project size: 1,400 square feet

Project cost: $12,000

City rebate: $2,000

Water bill savings: project was completed in 2024, so a year-on-year comparison is not yet possible

Contractor: Mountain View Landscaping

Plants: stonecrop, creeping phlox, center glow ninebark, yellow barberry, purple broom, aronia berry, orange rocket barberry, ash leaf spirea, balsomador echinacea; smoke tree, snowball bush; decorative grasses [Mountain View Tree Farm and Nursery]

Surface materials: gravel [Flag Sand & Gravel], large rocks [supplied by contractor], stained softwood mulch, bark [Lowe's]

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Carr residence - 2103 Bennett Ave.

Ron Carr had three reasons for converting his front yard to water-smart landscaping. First, to save water and the cost of watering. Second, to save time on mowing, edging and trimming. The third reason – the City's turf-replacement rebate – was "the icing on the cake."



Ron hired a landscaping firm on the recommendation of a neighbor, and had them do the entire job: removing turf with a machine, reconfiguring irrigation, laying down landscaping fabric, planting plants and spreading cobble, mulch and decorative rocks.

Ron's advice, based on his experience: If you're thinking of using a contractor, get recommendations and be sure to take a look at a couple of their past projects. And try to pin them down on a definite timeline - the company that Ron used worked on his project intermittently over a period of five or six weeks.

Project specs:

Project size: 1,538 square feet

Project cost: $15,000

City rebate: $2,000

Water bill savings: unknown

Contractor: Fresh Start Landscaping

Plants: blanket flower, blue oatgrass, buddleia, coreopsis, dianthus, Russian sage, shrubby cinquefoil and spirea; [West Canyon Nurseries]

Surface materials: 1-2" cobble, large rocks and mulch [supplied by contractor]

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Lambe residence – 501 Hyland Park Dr.



Beth and Chris Lambe were water-wise veterans when they took on this project, having xeriscaped their previous home in Aurora. The fact that the lawn had no permanet irrigation system made it a no-brainer to replace the turf. Being experienced – and to save money – they opted to do all the work themselves.

The Lambes knew they wanted to add steps up from the Blake Avenue side of their property with an undulating "dry streambed" look, so that helped set the tone for the project. They rented a machine to remove the turf, built a retaining wall and hauled all the rocks and other materials in Chris's truck. They selected plant species from plantselect.org (affiliated with the Denver Botanic Gardens) and then bought the plants locally. Beth notes that she saved up to 50% on plants by buying them in the fall.

Project specs:

Project size: 1,000 square feet

Project cost: $3,400

City rebate: $2,000

Water bill savings: N/A because the previous lawn was not irrigated

Contractor: Self

Plants: dianthus, Russian sage, yarrow, snow in summer, coreopsis, catmint, coral bells, salvia, creeping phlox, Ben Fhada rock rose, shasta daisy, wooly thyme, cinquefoil, emerald gaiety euonymus, iceplant, yucca, sedum, succulents, blue fescue (Cool as Ice), feather reed grass (Karl Foerster), little bluestem, grama grass, silver mound, creeping jenny, and juniper green mound; [West Canyon Nurseries, Eagle Crest Nursery] and irises from a neighbor

Surface materials: pea gravel, river rocks & cobble [Western Slope Materials]; rocks (onsite, job site); quartzite stepping stones [Lowe's]; mulch [Mountain View Tree Farm & Nursery]

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Minch residence - 819 Traver Trail

To view this garden, please park on the street and follow the signs up the driveway and around the side of the house to the backyard.



Ginny and Jim Minch had been feeling for several years that their water-thirsty lawn was out of step with their environmental values. Last year, the death of their lawnmower and the announcement of the City's turf-replacement program prompted them to take the plunge and trade lawn for water-smart landscaping.

The Minches developed their ideas for the garden with the help of a landscaper friend and hired an independent contractor to realize the concept. A serpentine path, contrasting surface treatments, a central fountain and native plants (chosen from the City's drought-tolerant species guide) combine to create a zen-like sanctuary.

Project specs:

Project size: 1,900 square feet

Project cost: Prefer not to say

City rebate: $2,000

Water bill savings: 60% compared to previous year

Contractors: Creative Endeavors, Inc.

Plants: tanacetum partridge feather, spires, rose bushes, day lilies, yarrow, purple cone flower, peony, Russian sage, little blue stem, red hot poker, dianthus, vervain, veronica, rudbeckia, lily of the valley, cor-al bells, lady's mantle, bearded Iris, columbine, daisy, hostas (several varieties), and feather reed grass (Karl Foerster) [Eagle Crest Nursery, West Canyon Nurseries and Lowe's]

Surface materials: river rock [Pine's Stone Co.], Red rock aggregate [The Rock Shop], 1 ½-2" Colorado river rock [Rifle Creek Stone Inc.], large river rocks [locally sourced from a friend]

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Pearson residence - 101 Polo Rd.



Brian and Christina Pearson have been on a long-term campaign to replace their lawn with lower-maintenance landscaping. They started transforming the strip along the west side of the house a few years ago, and when the City launched its turf-replacement program they decided to tackle the front yard.

"The rebate helped, but we just wanted to get rid of the grass," Brian says. "The mowing was a hassle and the spray heads were inefficient."

They did all the work themselves, except for hiring workers to pour the concrete walkway. To remove the turf, they smothered it with landscape fabric and then Brian dug it up by hand. He was able to haul all the gravel, rocks and mulch in his pickup, although it took many trips. Like many other participants in this tour, they selected their materials for both aesthetic and functional reasons – for example, mulch is used to retain moisture where plants are intended to spread, while gravel works better in the strip decorated with non-spreading grasses.

Project specs:

Project size 1,100 square feet

Project cost: $4,000

City rebate: $2,000

Water bill savings: no estimate

Contractor: day laborers and self

Plants: blue oat grass, feather reed grasses, red and green ferns, lavender, meadow sage, yarrow, catmint, tickseed, Jupiter's beard, wormwood [West Canyon Nurseries, Lowe's and High Country Gardens - mail order]

Surface materials: wood chip mulch [Aspen Tree Service - SavATree], gravel [Flag Sand & Gravel], large rocks [salvaged from a construction site]; concrete pavers [mixed onsite]

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Schuemaker residence - 2110 Blake Ave.



Small but steep, Linda and Mark Schuemaker's front yard was hard to mow, and when Mark needed knee surgery they decided it was time to cut out the turf. Taking advantage of the City's rebate program, they planned a relatively low-maintenance garden - and a year later, they're very pleased with the result.

"It definitely has its own personality," says Linda. "It isn't really a blooming garden. It's more ground cover and low shrubs. We wanted something that was more natural."

They chose gravel as the main surface material, which makes it easy to blow the leaves that fall from an overspreading maple. In selecting plants, the main consideration was drought resistance, with plants under the tree having to be shade tolerant as well. Large rocks recovered from a debris flow complete the picture of a pleasing rock garden.

Project specs:

Project size: 650 square feet

Project cost: $9,000

City rebate: $1,300

Water bill savings: $25/month in summer

Contractor: Fresh Start Landscaping

Plants: creeping thyme, yarrow, lavender, Sierra blue mist shrubs, pygmy rabbitbrush, ice plant, coreopsis, cotoneaster (mounding and spreading), Japanese blood grass, flag grass, lime excitement sedum, red zinger sedum, Chieftain manzanita [West Canyon Nurseries]

Surface materials: tri-tip gravel, crusher fines, large boulders, stone edging [Flag's Sand and Gravel], red cedar mulch and soil amendments [West Canyon Nurseries]

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Springer residence - 1032 Bennett Ave.



If anyone knows how to do a turf-replacement project on the cheap, it's Lynne Springer. Granted, her project was small in area. But she did it all herself (with the help of a friend), and found ways to economize every step of the way.

To avoid the labor-intensive task of removing turf, Lynne simply covered the steep slope with landscape fabric and constructed terraced beds on top of it. The large river rocks that form the terraces and a dry "streambed" were salvaged from a debris flow and transported over the course of many car trips. She got free irises from the city and bought the rest of the plants on sale at the end of the season. The project took five months, so as Lynne observes, "it wasn't cheap that way."

Lynne says her main goal with her garden is to provide habitat for pollinators and critters, and by the look of it she's off to a good start.

Project specs:

Project size: 290 square feet

Project cost: $300

City rebate: $600

Water bill savings: no estimate

Contractor: self

Plants: iris, coral bells, yarrow, sedum, astilbe, veronica, echinacea, boxwood, boxwood shrub, scabiosa, calendula, columbine, salvia, catalpa [Lowe's].

Surface materials: river rocks from debris flow cleanup; wood chip mulch

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Van Nostrand residence - 517 W. 13th St.



A year and a half ago, when Katy and John Van Nostrand bought their Glenwood Springs home, the front yard was all grass and not much to look at. Katy says she wanted to replace it with a garden that was "better for the environment, better for our pocketbook, and way prettier."

Now, she enthuses, "I love my front yard. It brings me so much joy!"

Katy hired a local contractor to do the hard work of removing the turf and delivering and spreading the wood chips so that she could devote her time to the "fun part" of the project: selecting, placing and tending the plants. She sourced most of the plants from Lowe's manager's specials, and ordered some seeds online from BBB Seed. She also got some plants by swapping with neighbors and through the RFV Plant Enthusiasts Facebook group, which she says is a great way to get rooted in the community.

She figures it will take another three summers for the garden to fully grow out. In the meantime, the main priority is battling the bindweed - a persistent pest in our region.

Project specs:

Project size: 1,240 square feet

Project cost: $5,000

City rebate: $2,000

Water bill savings: about $100/month in summer

Contractor: contractor declined to be mentioned

Plants: beebalm, salvia, coreopsis, blue fescue, Russian sage, yarrow, lavendar, sedum, various annuals [Lowe's, Bookcliff Gardens; from seed, and via trade]

Surface materials: wood chips, mulch [Garfield County Landfill]; rocks [supplied by contractor]

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