

## Garden Wise TV Episode 5: Bee Water Wise with Beneficial Bugs

With the help of several special guests, Meg West and the Garden Wise team give viewers the buzz on the importance of native insects in landscaping and agriculture. Native insects are a crucial part of creating a sustainable, ecologically healthy landscape. This episode contains fascinating discussion of how pursuing naturally inspired maintenance practices can make for healthier gardens that tie in with the ecology of the surrounding natural landscape.



We begin with field trips to Lotusland and the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, where we see examples of bug-powered pest control in action. Lotusland's Corey Welles takes Meg on a journey through different areas of this beautiful garden, allowing each area to showcase a different aspect of his ecologically focused maintenance plan. Allowing natural insect relationships to develop in your garden, as they do in nature, fosters healthy plant life and beneficial bug/pest food webs. Corey shows us

how Lotusland organically fertilizes and waters, and how this goes even further to creating a naturally inspired and healthy garden that grows more and more beautiful while requiring less and less maintenance over time.

At the Botanic Garden, Denise Knapp enlightens Meg and viewers even further on the benefits of designing a garden to utilize the amazing power of the co-evolution of plants and their pollinators. Research shows native plants are 4-6 times more likely to attract native pollinators. A diversity of natives will sustain a diversity of pollinators, which in turn diversifies all of the insects and birds that visit your garden or farm. By planting buffer zones of native flowering plants like Manzanita, Salvia, Fuchsia and Goldenrod near other plants, native pollinators will be encouraged to pollinate your landscape or home veggie garden as well.



Next, Meg introduces Todd Bebb of the Santa Barbara Beekeepers Association. Todd describes how crucial the honeybee's contribution to human society really is - many of your favorite fruits are mostly or entirely bee-pollinated! Honeybees have been in the news lately because they are facing incredible adversity, mostly from excessive pesticide use at all levels - at the big farms, all the way down to each small garden. We learn about the plight of the honeybee and how your gardening decisions will help

decide the fate of this incredibly important species (hint: stop using pesticides!) The Beekeeper's Association provides a hotline number to call if a honeybee swarm lands on your property. If you want to BEE a part of the solution, they will even help you set up a hive on your property!

The travels don't stop there - garden gumshoe Billy Goodnick shows viewers why "People Perpetrating Pointlessly Pitiful Pruning on Peaceful Plants" is a terrible *Crime (Against Horticulture)*! Many times around town, trees can be spotted that have been totally 'topped'; that is, fashioned into a giant hat rack, in the words of Detective Billy. In this segment, Billy provides a few choice pruning guidelines- never remove more than 25% of a tree or shrub's foliage at once, for example.

Drastic pruning is ugly, causes health problems for the plant, and leads to more and more maintenance issues. Please, prune responsibly!



The show must go on - Meg West displays several of the beautiful gardens submitted to the first annual Santa Barbara County WaterWise Garden Contest, and announces this year's winner! Native, Mediterranean, and water wise plants fill the yards of the finalists; many of these properties also showcase different water conservation techniques, including rain harvesting, mulching, and drip irrigation. One of these yards could be on your street, and may provide a neighborly way to learn more about water wise

gardening.

Finally, the beloved segment 'What Tree is That?' takes viewers to Ojai to learn about the majestic Valley and Coast Live Oaks that live throughout our region. Leif Skogberg awes Meg with the old age and adaptability of Live Oaks; he explains how these oaks are adapted to the heat, drought, and fires that characterize our region of California. Leif also gives some advice on oak maintenance in a yard setting- proper pruning, mulching and siting are very important, as is ensuring you do not overwater these trees. They don't mind it dry!



### **Addendum**

Lotusland- tours are by reservation only. To schedule a tour call 969-9990 or visit [www.Lotusland.org](http://www.Lotusland.org)

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden- Open to the public every day from 9am-6pm. For more information, visit [www.sbbg.org](http://www.sbbg.org)

Santa Barbara Beekeepers Association: Hotline at 805 699-6229, or visit [www.sbba.org](http://www.sbba.org)

