

## Garden Wise TV Episode 6: Now Showing at a Garden Near You



The first leg of the journey this episode takes us to the Santa Barbara Association of Realtors located at 1415 Chapala Street to see their new rain water demonstration garden. Daniel Wilson of Wilson Environmental Contracting told us all about how the SBAOR decided to make their landscaping more water wise to create better curb appeal as an example to realtors and home buyers. A key component of the new garden was sculpting the soil so

that storm water runoff from the storm drain and gutter will flow through the yard rather than into the street ultimately into the Ocean.

The next stop on our trip is the Alice Keck Memorial Gardens. The water wise section of the park was nearly 18 years old and was in dire need of a makeover. The renovation is based on microclimate, so customers are able to see how to water properly within zones - shady, sunny, etc. It also gives a wide perspective of how many plants can be used to create a lush and beautiful garden at your own home.

Next, Cathie Paré instructs us on how to use the Watering Percent Adjust feature on your sprinkler timer. It's important to realize that while we here in Santa Barbara don't have the striking change in seasons that many other areas do, we still have a responsibility to water properly and with the change in weather. If you are unsure as to the percentage you should be using at any given time, simply go to [WaterWiseSB.org](http://WaterWiseSB.org). This adjustment is essential to the successful growth of your landscape because most people overwater by 5 feet per year!



It's time to get the low down from Billy Goodnick in this most recent Crimes Against Horticulture. In this episode Billy talks to us about choosing plants to fit the space, not just because you think they're pretty. For example, bougainvilleas tend to take over the area that they're planted and unless you have a very large, blank space for them to grow, eventually they are going to outgrow their planted area. It's always better to gauge your plant buying based on certain factors – how much sun or shade will the plant get, what kind of soil works best for the plant, and how much water the plant requires.



And now we get back to our travels through two more Water Wise Demonstration Gardens. The first stop is Goleta Valley Water District, located at 4699 Hollister Avenue. At Goleta Valley Water District's Edible Landscape Demonstration Garden they are trying to display as many possible ways to conserve water. One of these is a rainwater catchment system. Another

landscaping idea that Goleta Valley Water District has taken on is called hugelkultur – a German landscaping technique of burying logs under soil that will act as a sponge and hold water for longer, thus allowing for less watering! If the idea of a catchment system seems a bit more than you're willing to commit to, how about an infiltration system? Runoff from the gutter is piped underground to an area of the landscaping with an opening that will allow the runoff to fill up the landscaped area and then allow it to slowly settle back into the ground.

The last stop this episode is Santa Ynez Botanic Garden, located at Riverview Park in Buellton – 151 Sycamore Drive. The Botanic Garden was brought into reality by a foundation established by citizens who felt that the area wasn't going to be an effective habitat for wildlife. It is maintained by local community volunteers. Because of this, lots of vegetation is allowed to be dormant, there is a lot of mulching, and the landscape is made up entirely



of native plants which don't require much maintenance or water. The Botanic Garden also has a children's educational program. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade children from all around the area are being taught about the California Missions and are brought to the Botanic Garden to learn about native landscape firsthand.

This episode's Plant Rant focuses Canyon Prince Wild Rye, a great plant for a rainwater garden. It was discovered at the Channel Islands and is a rhizomatous grass that spreads underground. It has blue foliage and in the summer wields a plume of seed ball that makes it even more visually appealing. It is very fast growing and extremely drought tolerant.

