

From Lawn to Life: Creating Beautiful Eco-Friendly Gardens

In this day of shrinking natural areas and habitat for the creatures that live in them, it's more important than ever to create gardens that are not only beautiful for us to look at, but also provide homes and food for our insects, birds and other urban dwelling friends.

Jeff will share environmentally sound gardening design ideas and favorite plants and gardening techniques he has learned through his many years at Olbrich Botanical Gardens and practiced through his design and consulting business. He will show you how he has transformed his small suburban lot with its typical bluegrass lawn and mundane foundation plantings into a beautiful, bio-diverse, low maintenance, no lawn garden that is teeming with life.

Bees, butterflies and furry fauna live harmoniously in a pesticide free refuge that is also home to a wide range of friendly insects that provide food for the many bird species that nest in or visit his garden. Learn from what he has done to create your own little garden sanctuary where all can live together and enjoy each other's company.

Biography

Jeff's passion for plants and gardening is reflected in his 35-year career as an award-winning horticulturist and garden designer. During his 28 years as Director of Horticulture at Olbrich Botanical Gardens, he transformed a lawn-laden landscape into a nationally acclaimed public garden, known for its artistic and innovative, plant-driven designs and ecologically sound gardening techniques. Alongside that role, he also ran his own design and consulting business for 25 years and continues to do so today. *Epping Design & Consulting* specializes in eco-conscious gardening guidance and designs for projects ranging from small private gardens to large public landscapes and expansive business campuses.

Jeff generously shares his expertise through classes, workshops, tours, and lectures. His insightful writing has been featured in leading gardening publications like *Fine Gardening*, *Martha Stewart Living* and *Better Homes and Gardens*, and his work has been recognized by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, among others. Beyond print, he's also contributed to radio, television, online videos, and podcasts. He has received prestigious awards from both the American Public Gardens Association and the Perennial Plant Association, honoring his significant contributions to horticulture. He is currently writing a book on the eco-conscious technique of gravel gardening with *Timber Press*, to be released in early 2026.