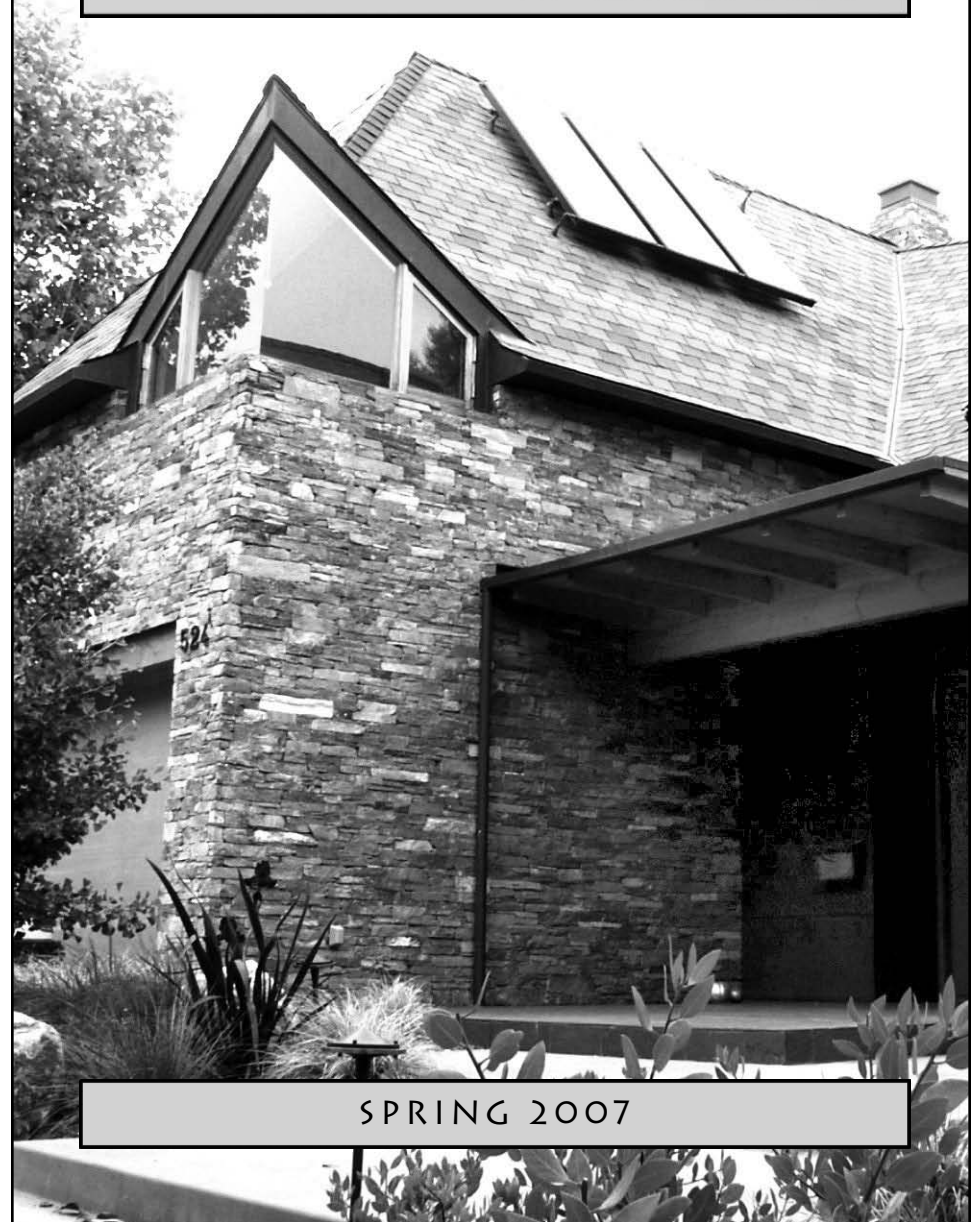


ECOLUTION

THE ECO-HOME
JOURNAL

Bulletin



SPRING 2007

ECO HOME™ NETWORK

4344 RUSSELL AVE

LOS ANGELES, CA 90027

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

ECO-HOME NETWORK™ MEMBER OPEN HOUSE

THE LYON HOUSE

MARY AND BRUCE LYON

524 NORTH BUNDY DRIVE · BRENTWOOD, CA 90049

SATURDAY, JUNE 23RD 2007 – 1PM TO 4PM

ECO-HOME MEMBERS: FREE – GUESTS: \$5 PER PERSON



Backyard terrace with Hobbit Garden to the left

Do you remember the thrill of visiting the Lion House at the Zoo when you were little? Well, your visit to the Lyon House on Saturday, June 23rd will thrill you too, but in a different way. The Lyon House will thrill you as an exciting example of creative attention to detail in considering impact on the Earth in all design and building decisions.

The idea to build an eco-smart house was a shared vision of both Mary Lyon and her husband Bruce. They were inspired long ago by the Disney "House of the Future." When they were ready to build they sought and found their contractor, Randy Cox, and their architect, Warren Wagner, W3 Architects, both of whom were enthusiastic supporters and valuable allies in their earth conscious endeavor.

We are most grateful to Mary and Bruce Lyon for graciously inviting members of the Eco-Home Network to hold our next Open House Forum in their "green" heaven!

Enough from me. Let's hear from Mary, herself:

In 2001, Bruce and I decided we needed to build a new house, from the ground up, rather than remodeling the old one, as there were just too many really serious and exorbitantly expensive problems with the old house to attempt remodeling or individual repairs. So, we tore the old place down, but kept the "footprint," because the layout of the new house repeats where the old house stood – almost exactly.

We determined to invest in serious energy efficiency and resource efficiency, we built it to last and it's already paying off.

As you can see, the roof shingles look like slate but are actually made of chopped-up tires/recycled rubber. They're hugely fire-resistant (good since we live in a canyon), only start to smolder if you hold a blowtorch to it for about 15 minutes, 50-year lifetime guarantee, impervious to wind and rain, lightweight - no need for extra wood usage or other expensive reinforcements, won't crack or chip.

Entering the house, immediately to your left is a water feature that serves both an aesthetic and symbolic function. It's a big, tall panel of beautiful granite. As the water flows over it, it brings out all the natural colors in the granite. The artist is Blue McWright. Across the top are three bronze stylized dowsing rods. There are little circles of light pierced in the panels forming a light map of all the water outlets in the house, every sink, every bathroom, etc. It's a way to honor the importance of water in our lives, as well as an audio/visual enhancement just as you enter the house.

The 8-inch thick concrete walls are covered in "High Desert" style stonework using quartzite from the So Cal desert area. The stone adds several inches to the thickness of the walls, enabling further



ECOLUTION BULLETIN

E-co-lu-tion
is derived from ecology,
evolution & solution

Spring 2007

Editor: Julia S. Russell

Proofreader: Michelle Stabio,
Dessa Kaye

Design/Layout: MMP Glendale

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Ecolution Bulletin is published by

Eco-Home™ Network

4344 Russell Avenue

LA CA 90027

(323)662-5207

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<http://www.ecohome.org>

Printed on recycled paper

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passive heating during the cold weather and cooling during hot months. Sort of like a latter-day twist on the well-known, age-old natural insulation effect of adobe walls.

We used insulation made of the



diameter wood together, avoiding the harvesting of old growth timber.

The exposed 4x4's are reclaimed from an old auto garage. Much of the wood trim and some of the structural elements throughout the house are salvaged. Several large wooden beams inside and out (over the garage, for example) are from old, torn-down buildings, so no beautiful old trees have to be sacrificed. Both our contractor and our architect shared our interest in resource conservation of this sort so we made a great team. Not much got by us!

26 skylights throughout the house, electronically programmed by my husband, Bruce, using the Vantage System to respond intelligently to outside conditions. A little weather gauge at the southeast corner of the overhang above my son's window detects wind gusts and rain/moisture levels to prevent the unsafe, inappropriate, or wrongly-timed opening of

byproducts of blue jean manufacturing - looks like thick blue dryer lint! All cotton, treated with fire-proofing but no fiberglass or toxic chemicals.

The large (2 x 12) beams in the cathedral ceiling in the Great Room are composite lumber formed by laminating smaller



skylights and windows. The system keeps everything shut if it's rainy or too windy and open with heat and clear skies.

The Great room also has a Rumsford fireplace designed to heat the room more efficiently by allowing greater and more generous spread of the heat from the fire.

Interiors include ceilings made of bamboo flooring (which you can also see on the undersides of the cantilevered overhangs outside) - a renewable resource, and palmwood flooring - from salvaged palm trees in the tropics that are otherwise left to rot on the beaches.

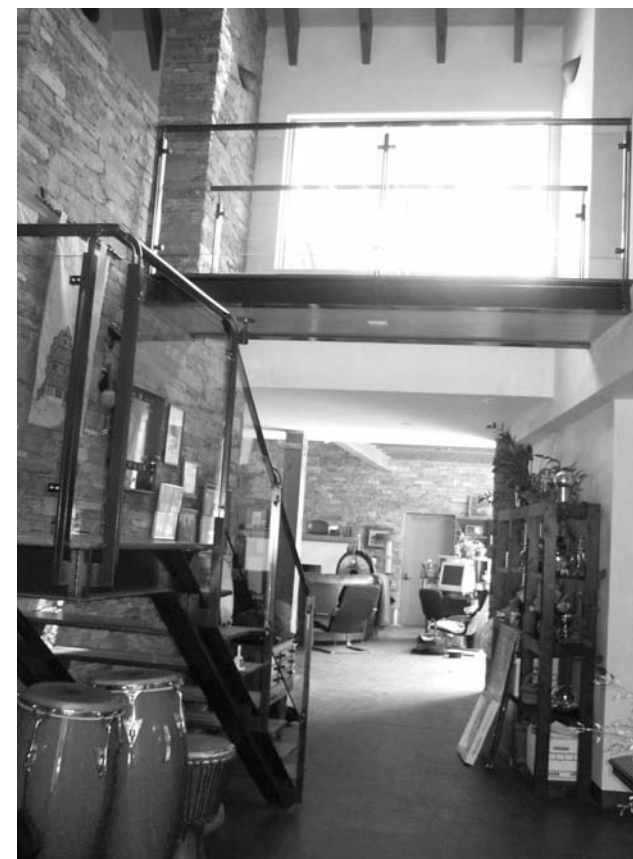
We've used no paints, just some VOC-free stain and weather sealant here and there. The walls are the color of the stucco.

The kitchen island and stove vent are clad in copper sheeting, like some portions of the exterior - mainly for beauty's sake.

Inside, a water-heated "Warm Floors" system has been installed under the main floor, which is slate in the entryway, kitchen and Great room and recycled rubber in my art studio, multipurpose room and the recording studio, and also the second floor under palmwood flooring for further and more efficient heating during cold weather.

Solar power and water heating. The house has been designed to accommodate photovoltaic panels for solar electricity. Although installation is not finished on the solar electricity, the solar water heating system is online and working marvelously! We have 40 solar panels and 3 others specifically for water heating. The two water storage tanks in the basement hold 90 gallons each.

The recording studio in the rear (that you'll pass as you head up the "creek" to the fire pit in the back garden) is half-buried underground to further enable energy efficiency, cooling, and sound-



proofing. The fire pit includes another recycled component - the bricks from the old house that was torn down on this lot to build the new one. The bricks came from the old fireplace and driveway.

We even have a special "cat room," just a little hideaway where they can be comfortable and have their food and water. Normally they just go in and out of there at will through their cat door, but it can be locked when we need to keep them isolated from the rest of the house and the yard when we have tours coming through or when workmen or guests are allergic.

We've also kept such other allergy-causers at bay through the basic design and construction of the house. No carpeting and few drapes mean there's less opportunity for dust mites to collect, and the passive heating/cooling system with the skylights and windows keep the threat of mold build-up virtually nonexistent.

Power systems indoors and out have all been programmed by Bruce to govern the lighting. Lights come on at dusk and slowly dim automatically at midnight (about a two-minute dimming for exterior lighting so as to be almost unnoticeable. Bruce didn't want anything distracting motorists at that hour - "LOOK, Myrtle! Look at those outdoor lights over there!" CRASH!)

Indoors, the lights dim a few minutes after the last person has left the room - to save on electricity. Further savings come from being able to program the intensity of the illumination. If 70 percent illumination works as well for the eye as 100 percent, that can be programmed into the system, saving energy AND the life of the light bulbs/wiring.

Another design contribution of Bruce's is the "Charging Cabinet", a centrally located wall cabinet in which all electronic equipment like cameras, portable vacuum cleaner, walkie talkies, pagers, rechargeable batteries and chargers, all go together here in one place instead of on counters and tables all over so that you always know where to find your electronic gadget. whatever it is, 'cause they're all in one place behind this door.

The house is 6,000 square feet, including the basement. But before you jump to conclusions please consider that the house is inhabited by 4 people, two teenagers and two adults who live and work at home, and a steady stream of visitors and coworkers. In that square footage we have packed three bedrooms, the kitchen, dining and living room which constitute the Great room, a working recording studio, a working art studio & kiln, a multi-purpose room that can function as a fourth bedroom/guestroom, a garage, the cat room, and six bathrooms. OK! I can hear the gasp at six bathrooms, so let me explain. For the first time in their lives, our kids each have their own bathrooms. We have the "little musicians' room" off the studio so that anyone working in the studio won't have far to travel if the need arises. There's an actual "powder room," which we've never had before, that's STRICTLY for guests (much easier to keep clean and available if it isn't attached to somebody else's bedroom and part of "their space"). And the multi-purpose room needed its own bathroom with shower for times when it serves the privacy needs of an overnight guest.

Just think of all the global warming emissions we don't produce every day with



both adults working at home!

Energy-saving light bulbs are used whenever possible, and the kitchen and laundry room feature multiple energy-saving, water-saving amenities, including high-efficiency washing machine, dishwashers, and garbage disposals. All the bathrooms and showers feature low-flow toilets and showerheads, and the faucets are equipped with flow restrictors.

The only room in the house that's fully air-conditioned is the recording studio and that's mainly to protect the electronic equipment. The master bedroom has a small air conditioning system of its own - we're old, y'know, but it's only necessary during very hot days. Besides, we tend to keep the master bedroom closed for

privacy (with the kids and their friends running around all the time), unlike the other bedrooms upstairs that are open most of the time, and are cooled more easily by the air flow generated by the passive heating/cooling system throughout the house. The rest of the house is designed to stay cool in the summer with both passive and active systems.

OUTSIDE: To conserve water our irrigation is programmable so we can adjust the amount, frequency and duration of watering. It can be programmed to adapt to dry spells and wet winters and the needs of specific areas of the garden. It's all drip irrigation, so there's no evaporation or run-off, and the tubing as well as the soil is covered with mulch to hold more moisture in naturally and

prevent the growth of weeds.

As part of our rebuilding, we had to completely revamp the way the backyard handled water. The problem was, it didn't handle it, it just collected it, all the runoff from the hill behind and all the direct rainfall. It became a swamp during the rainy season and flooded the house. It was a mess. Our architect and contractor designed and built a drainage system that allows some water to be absorbed for irrigation and percolation, but drains the excess off the property. Without their good work, none of this backyard landscape could have been created.

The backyard has become a habitat for a remarkable array of butterflies, including Monarchs, Swallowtails, and even the endangered El Segundo Blue (which seems to enjoy feeding on the mallow plants near the pond). The little stream and waterfall attract at least two major species of wildly colorful dragonflies that inhabit the pond area during the late summer/fall – one an electric blue, and another a brilliant orange/red.

Susanne Jett of Jettscapes is the genius behind all the landscape design and plantings. As you can see, we have a very small lawn area. Most of the back and front yards are landscaped with heavily mulched native and other drought-tolerant plants and trees, except for the fruit trees, of course.

We have an orange tree, lime tree, avocado tree, Santa Rosa plum, lemon, two blueberry bushes and 3 varieties of espaliered apple trees in our backyard. I'm planning a grape arbor, too. The rear of the garden includes three raised beds for planting organic herbs and vegetables. The containers are made of recycled plastic.

They, combined with the surrounding gravel for enhanced drainage, have completely deterred snails and slugs! I haven't seen ONE since installation! Pesticides are not needed.

The shady area at the south of the house and patio is the "Hobbit Garden" complete with special surprises both natural and human-made waiting to be discovered by strollers. I'm an artist and I made the cement and art glass pavers you'll find throughout both the front and back gardens.

Around the pond: I've been a life-long rock collector and have studied the pond area with many special rock specimens. We'll provide a list for the rock hounds among your members.

We're looking forward to welcoming the Eco-Home Network members to our home on Saturday, June 23rd.

Mary Lyon

Directions:

Via public transit: Metro bus # 2 to Bundy Drive. Walk north about 1/2 of a mile to 524 on the right hand side of the Drive.

By car: From the valley, 405 freeway south to Sunset Blvd. From Culver City etc., 405 north to Sunset. Off at Sunset (at the tall, cylinder-shaped Angeleno hotel) and head west on Sunset. Counting the light at the Luxe Bel-Air Summit (at Church Lane and Sunset) there are five traffic signals. The fifth is Bundy. North (turn right) on Bundy to 524. Or simply follow the signs toward Mt. St. Mary's College, which is at the top of our street.

FROM THE FOUNDER

My apologies for the delay in getting this issue of Ecolution Bulletin to you.

Plans for our next Eco-Home Network Member Open House Forum have changed due to unavoidable delays in the complex eco-renovation of Ryan Flegal's "Green Lofts." It is, for now, postponed for the indefinite future. We'll be on it, though, as soon as it's ready, you can be sure!

The good news is, as you can see from our cover story, we have a fabulous June Open House planned. Mary Lyon's green house in Brentwood is a beautiful example of loving and imaginative eco-conscious design and building both inside and out! Don't miss it!

CHANGES

As most of you know, my retirement from the Executive Directorship of Eco-Home Network is imminent. At this time the Board of Directors is exploring possible mergers with a couple of other nonprofit organizations with the goal of continuing some of our main programs while transferring administration, management and funding to the other organization. We will keep you informed.

GOING GREEN IS GOING STRONG

In our last newsletter we reported that Going Green our video tour of Eco-Home is being distributed by Green Planet Films, www.greenplanetfilms.com. Now we have the next exciting news about this wonderful video. PBS stations covering over 43% of the entire U.S. television market are broadcasting Going Green across the country. Our office has received a dozen calls from viewers from Vermont to Florida, Minnesota to Texas, among others,

requesting more information about how they can "go green." The Discussion Guide that accompanies the film may be downloaded free at www.goinggreenproductions.com

ECO-HOME SHOWING OF "AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH"

Don't miss the opportunity to see "An Inconvenient Truth" at Eco-Home on Saturday, July 14th at 8:30PM. Judy Rachel, Eco-Home member as well as a member of Al Gore's trained and authorized team of presenters will guide post-show discussion of this culture-changing documentary! For reservations, call me at: (323) 662-5207 or e-mail [<ecohome@paccbell.net>](mailto:ecohome@paccbell.net)

GREEN CITIES GROW

The memory is still very clear of how wildly idealistic the concepts and strategies put forth at the LA Eco-Cities Conference we put on in 1991 and in our book Sustainable Cities seemed to most people at the time. And yet now only 16 years later, we see on the website below the adoption of these same concepts and strategies not only in Pasadena, but internationally via the U.N.!!!

http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/permitcenter/GreenCity/Home_Green.asp

In these times, when one can get so discouraged about the state of the world, this lifts our spirits! And we have helped to grow this new approach to inhabiting the Earth. It definitely encourages us to keep on keeping on, does it not?

JSR

CONFERENCES

June 19 - 20, 2007

**Environment & Energy Conference
(EECO 2007)**

Toronto, ON, Canada

EECO Environment and Energy Conference is focused on environment and energy issues in the Great Lakes Economic Region of Canada and the United States.

Contact: Information

GLOBE Foundation, Delphi Group

800-274-6097

Web site: www.eeco2007.com

July 21 - 23, 2007

**2007 ABSN Summer Conference
Symposium**

Haines, AK

The Alaska Building Science Network summer symposium will include workshops, presentations, and activities for building professionals to learn and share ideas and experiences.

Contact: Anna Hilbruner

Alaska Building Science Network

907-562-9927

Web site: www.absn.com

September 12 - 14

Greening The Heartland 2007

Madison, WI

The conference will highlight sustainability innovations, programs and activities in the Midwest states.

Contact: Connie Lindholm

Wisconsin Green Building Alliance &
Energy Center of Wisconsin

414-224-9422

Web site:

www.greeningtheheartland.org

September 20 - 22, 2007

West Coast Green

San Francisco, CA

This large residentially-focused green building conference for the Western United States features over 250 exhibitors and 100 presentations. The conference runs for three days for professionals and one day for homeowners.

Contact: West Coast Green

800-724-4880

Web site: www.westcoastgreen.com

October 6 - 7

Green Festival DC

Washington, DC

The festival features more than 200 visionary speakers and 400 green businesses, how-to workshops, green films, yoga and movement classes, green careers sessions, organic beer and wine, delicious organic cuisine and live music.

Contact: Alix Davidson

Co-op America & Global Exchange

202-872-5332

Web site: www.greenfestivals.org

PERMACULTURE

June 11 - 14, 2007

**Advanced Training with Geoff
Lawton**

Regenerative Design Institute,
Commonweal Garden, Bolinas, CA

This special 4-day training will include:

- Professional Consultancy

- Earth Works in Detail

- Working on and Establishing
International Permaculture Aid
Projects

- Establishing Active Local
Permaculture Groups

Prerequisite: Permaculture Design
Certificate or current enrollment in a
Permaculture Design Certificate
Course.

Course Fee: \$500

Fees include campsites and organic meals!

For additional course details and registration go to:

www.regenerativedesign.org

RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITY ON PERMACULTURE FARM

We have an opening for one person or small family on a budding permaculture farm on 40 amazing acres near the Ventana Wilderness along the coast of Central California.

For more information, please email us at info@ventanapermaculture.org

SPECIAL EVENT!

Showing of
"An Inconvenient Truth" DVD
at Eco-Home!

July 14th, 8:30PM
4344 Russell Avenue
LA CA 90027

Post-show discussion facilitated by
Judy Rachel, Trained "Climate
Change" Discussion Leader
FREE - but donations
gratefully accepted!
Serving the Tastiest and most
Healthy Popcorn you ever enjoyed!
Reservations: (323) 662-5207
ecohome@pachbell.net

LANDSCAPING WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS

California native, or indigenous, plants have adapted to our local soil types, climate patterns and wildlife over thousands of years. So, why landscape with natives? Southern California, with its mild winter weather, beautiful beaches and snow-topped mountains as well as its great cultural diversity, has been a draw to millions of people. Unfortunately, the popularity of this unique place has put a great amount of stress on its natural resources including water, open space and native flora and fauna. By landscaping with natives, you can do your part to help re-naturalize the urban landscape.

The benefits of landscaping with natives are numerous. Unlike traditional landscaping which requires regular mowing, trimming and pruning, locally adapted plants do not need this intensive treatment, greatly reducing the need for pollution-generating yard equipment (2). Local birds, insects and other wildlife depend upon native vegetation for survival. A native garden within the urban landscape can provide a welcome haven to local wildlife (5). Natives are adapted to the prevailing soil conditions and the presence of native insects and so require little if any fertilizer or pesticide application (5). Indigenous plants generate much less yard waste because they are slower growing and need only occasional light, corrective pruning (5). Natives are adapted to southern California's dry Mediterranean climate and once established, require very little if any water * beyond seasonal rainfall (5). Indigenous plants can be used for hillside erosion control. Non-natives just cannot compete with the superiority of natives in anchoring the soil with their deep root

systems. Additionally, natives tend to conform to the shapes of the hillsides much more naturally than their non-native counterparts (1). Native plants are beautiful! They come in a wide variety of colors, textures and sizes you can use to create an esthetically pleasing garden.

The first step in creating your native garden is to identify which of the seven California plant communities you live in: oak woodland, valley grassland, chaparral, desert, coastal sage scrub, mixed evergreen, or redwood forest (6). Choosing plants that are best suited to your area ensures a healthy and vigorous garden. The Theodore Payne Foundation (www.theodorepayne.org), the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden (www.rsabg.org) and the California Native Plant Society (www.cnps.org) are excellent resources for guidance in choosing appropriate plants. It is important to note that it is illegal to collect plants from public land without a permit (6). Both the Theodore Payne Foundation and the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden as well as many nurseries sell native plants and seeds.

The best time of year to plant natives is in the Fall at the start of the rainy season to give the young plants the most time to become established before the long, hot and dry summer arrives. To sow native seeds, mix the seeds with fine, dry soil and scatter over a moist, weed-free area. It is not necessary to roto-till or add soil amendments; nature does not do it so natives do not require it (4)!

For those planning to install an automated watering system for your native garden, more efficient landscape

irrigation equipment is on the horizon. In late 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 1881 creating the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006 which requires the Energy Commission, in conjunction with the Department of Water Resources, to adopt performance standards and labeling requirements for landscape irrigation equipment to help reduce wasteful over-consumption of water and energy.

When planting trees and shrubs, be sure to choose a spot where the plant has enough growing room to establish a deep root system and a healthy symmetrical leaf and stem system. The hole should be as deep as the root ball is tall and twice as wide and should be filled with only native soil as fertilizers can be harmful to the plant. The crown of the plant should remain uncovered to prevent rotting (3).

Once you have set your plants, a blanket of mulch 2-4 inches thick should be applied, again taking care not to cover the crown. Common mulches include: pine needles, dried leaves, shredded bark, gravel and decomposed granite. Mulching lightens the maintenance needs of your garden by reducing water loss and suppressing weed growth (4). However, to keep a healthy and beautiful native garden, some maintenance is required. A small amount of pruning is often necessary to keep an attractive shape. Pruning is best done after flowering; seek assistance when first learning to prune natives as improper pruning can lead to problems such as sucker production. Many trees and shrubs can be dead-headed during blooming to promote a longer flowering period. In general, pruning into unnatural shapes like topiaries is not readily accepted by California natives (3).

To learn more about gardening with indigenous plants, visit the websites of the Theodore Payne Foundation and the

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden for a complete listing of workshops.

Michelle Stabio

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Theodore Payne Foundation for Wildflowers and Native Plants, Inc. www.theodorepayne.org

Thomsen, K.D. Smart Gardening Information Sheet: Water-Wise Gardening. County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works Environmental Programs Division, 2003.

Why Use Native Plants? California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA, 2005.

7. See also: <http://calphotos.berkeley.edu>
<http://www.timetotrack.com/jay/>

http://wildlingmuseum.org/html/past_exhibits/exbt.spring_06.html



E-RECYCLING IN A BOX

This is a GREAT service that recycles all that electronic stuff you don't know what to do with:

- * All forms of electronic media and their cases: diskettes, zip disks, CDs, CD-Rs, CD-RWs, DVDs et al, video tape, audio tape, game cartridges, DAT, DLT, Beta or Digibeta, and virtually all other type of computer tapes.
- * Hard drives, Zip and Jazz drives, jump drives, etc.
- * All forms of printer cartridges including both inkjet and toner.
- * All types of cell phones, pagers, PDAs and their chargers, cables, and headset accessories
- * All types of rechargeable batteries (not regular alkaline ones) and their chargers
- * All of the small computer accessories such as MP3 players, iPods, digital cameras, hand-held scanners, handheld games and other connected devices
- * All of the cords, cables, boards, chips, etc. attached to or removed from a computer.
- * Laptop computers

For \$30 they send you a box; you fill it up with all this stuff; they e mail you a mailing label and send it back for no additional charge!!

www.greendisk.com/gdbsite/products.aspx

David Rosenstein, President
www.intexsolutions.com

Thanks, David. This is helpful information, but it also points up the recalcitrance of the U.S. with regard to making manufacturers responsible for reducing their waste by designing for recycling and/or taking back their products, free of charge (!) for recycling!

JSR

"In contrast, the European Union's (E.U.'s) Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) directive mandates that manufacturers create collection centers at their own expense or pay to join a cooperative center. These centers receive e-waste for disassembly, recycling and responsible disposal. Manufacturers are liable to ensure that the waste goes to a proper treatment center. Some member nations have been faster and more successful in implementing the directives than others, but as they fall into place, they are starting to have some affect internationally. E-waste campaigns in the U.S. are looking to the WEEE model in an attempt to change U.S. policy from the current fee-based model, standard in the U.S., of consumers paying to recycle their electronics. The flaw of the fee-based model is that it doesn't give producers an incentive to change their practices with greener design and responsible recycling.

There has been some positive spillover of the E.U.'s strict regulations for American consumers; for instance, Dell developed its comprehensive take-back program in part to comply with WEEE. If you buy a Dell, you can send it back to them for free recycling!

Apple takes back iPods and computer hardware for recycling free of charge, provided that you are purchasing new equipment, and sometimes provides a discount for doing so. HP provides recycling for all of its products, but at the consumer's expense, ranging from \$13-\$34 per item.

These companies may soon have no choice but to follow Dell. While there is no U.S. federal legislation that specifically addresses e-waste disposal, progress is being made at state levels. In March of

2006, Washington state passed the most advanced producer responsibility law in the United States: The Electronic Waste Recycling bill. This bill establishes a program similar to those in place in the E.U. and Japan, and has a shared responsibility model where manufacturers pay their share of the program determined by the percentage of their products brought to the sites. There are similar laws in Maine and Maryland, and over 20 states are currently looking at producer-responsibility legislation.

What you can do:

-Think about product end of life when buying electronics. Ask retailers about their recycling or takeback programs. If they don't have one, let them know you'll be buying from someone who does. Check out this comparison of the major computer companies' takeback programs in the U.S. www.computertakeback.com/docUploads/Using_takeback_programsv7a.pdf.

-Buy long term. Even if buying a cheaper model is tempting, you'll probably save in the long run by buying the best, most energy efficient model you can afford. Also check the EPA's Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT), which rates models according to 51 environmental criteria, giving them bronze or silver ratings (none have made gold so far). While the ratings are based on self-assessment rather than conducted by an independent third party, the criteria include take-back programs and the use of a minimum of 65 percent reusable or recyclable components. Restrictions on cadmium, mercury, lead, hexavalent chromium and some brominated flame retardants are also included. See www.epeat.net.

Also, think about the environmental costs to getting a new cell phone every year

when your old one works just fine.

-If you can't find a suitable take-back program, donate your old computer promptly before it becomes obsolete. The National Cristina Foundation (www.cristina.org), Computers for Schools (www.pcsforschools.org) and some Goodwill locations accept computers.

-If you must throw away electronics, recycle them at a responsible electronics recycler approved by the Computer Takeback Campaign. See www.computertakeback.com/the_solution/s/recyclers_map.cfm. Also try this list from the Basel Action Network www.ban.org/pledge/Locations.html. For cell phone donation and recycling, visit www.collectivegood.com.

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JEMILAH MAGNUSSON

Jemilah Magnusson is a freelance writer in Portland, Oregon."

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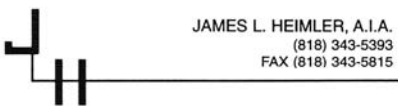
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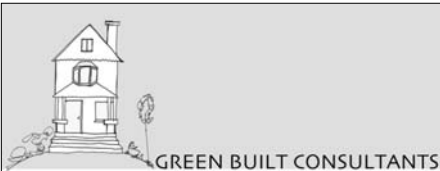
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SOLAR TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Boeing-Spectrolab has achieved a new world record in terrestrial concentrator solar cell efficiency. Using concentrated sunlight, Spectrolab demonstrated the ability of a photovoltaic cell to convert 40.7 percent of the sun's energy into electricity. The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in Golden, Colo., verified the milestone.

This represents a huge improvement in efficiency as the highest efficiency achieved until now has been 28% in the solar cells used to power some satellites. Most solar cells in use today are between 12% and 15% efficient. Some of us remember back to 1954 when 4% efficiency seemed miraculous!

"This solar cell performance is the highest efficiency level any photovoltaic device has ever achieved," said Dr. David

Lillington, president of Spectrolab. "The terrestrial cell we have developed uses the same technology base as our space-based cells.

High efficiency multijunction cells have a significant advantage over conventional silicon cells in concentrator systems because fewer solar cells are required to achieve the same power output. This technology will continue to dramatically reduce the cost of generating electricity from solar energy as well as the cost of materials used in high-power space satellites and terrestrial applications.

Currently, Spectrolab's terrestrial concentrator cells are generating power in a 33-kilowatt full-scale concentrator system in the Australian desert.

Boeing-Spectrolab

(<http://www.spectrolab.com>)

REFORESTRY FOR ALL

Recycled Products Cooperative (RPC) started an exciting new program January 1st, 2007. For every on-line order they receive they will plant a tree! In addition, for their bulk paper purchasers the RPC is now planting 1 tree for every 30 cases of 30% PCW paper and 1 tree for every 10 cases of 100% PCW paper that they sell. Each tree removes approximately 50 pounds of CO2 from the atmosphere every year for the life of the tree (average life of trees planted is 40 years or more!). Now you get double the benefit for buying recycled. Not only are you getting great quality products that help save natural resources, but you also help combat

global warming and offset your shipping impact by getting a tree planted for your order!

To kick this program off the Recycled Products Cooperative is planting **1,000 trees** to get the ball rolling. So, start shopping for your environmentally friendly products at **RPC On-line Store** and get a tree planted today. To find out more about their partner in this program visit **Trees for the Future** at <http://www.treesftf.org>.

Editor's Note: Visit this website and watch the video! I'll make your day! JSR

This is the eighth year of drought in southern California and it's the driest one yet: only two (2) inches of rainfall so far during our so-called rainy season! It's good news that the state is taking steps to improve our water use practices with AB 1881, the Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006. and it's good news that some new technology is coming on line to fine tune automated systems. Will it be enough?

Are each of us doing what we can to reduce our water consumption? What about that lawn? Can it be reduced? Can you plant more drought tolerant plants and trees, trees, trees? Trees are critical allies in our battle against global warming and drought. Check the MWD site <www.mwdh2o.com> and click on Bewaterwise for an exhaustive list of water conserving practices and plants and also note the resources at the end of Michelle Stabio's article on "Landscaping with Native California Plants", on pgs 11-12 of this issue.

Another thing we can do is install rainwater catchment systems in our home landscapes. And that includes me. All these years I've been stopped by the cost. But this year I've determined to at least take step one toward rainwater collection. So, I'm looking into new rain gutters that can replace the old broken ones here now. I'll let you know in the next "Ecolution Bulletin" which ones were chosen, and hopefully, how the installation went. By that time I hope to have a design plan for a whole system, although I may have to implement it incrementally due to budgetary constraints.

Check out Brad Lancaster's book in our Book Store on the next page, "Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands." Despite Southern California's extensive water storage facilities, which may keep us wet for this year, water officials admit that if we have another drought year in 2007/2008, we'll be facing very serious shortages.

Let's be part of the solution!

New Water Conservation Technology:

There are several new types of irrigation controllers that base the irrigation schedule on evapotranspiration data. Some of the controllers use historical data only. Others use a combination of historical data and real-time data feeds from on-site temperature sensors, sunlight intensity indicators or from complete weather stations. These "ET" controllers represent a new frontier in scheduling irrigation by enabling the irrigator to apply the amount of water actually required by the landscape plants. The advantages of using an ET controller include: reduced run-off, less damage to pavement, fences and buildings; increased health of plants from fewer diseases and insect pests and better air circulation in the soil, fewer "soggy" or dry areas, lower water bills, and reduced energy costs.

They are in stores now.

JSR

A HOUSE OF STRAW: A Natural Building Odyssey, by Carolyn Roberts, Chelsea Green, 2002, \$20.94

A PRIMER ON SUSTAINABLE BUILDING, by Barnett and Browning, Rocky Mtn. Institute, 1999, \$19.82

ACHIEVING ECO-NOMIC SECURITY ON SPACESHIP EARTH, by Jim Bell, 1994, \$17.54

BUILDER'S GREYWATER GUIDE: The Guide to Professional Installation of Greywater Systems, by Art Ludwig, 1995, \$18.60

BRANCHED DRAIN GREYWATER SYSTEMS, by Art Ludwig, 2003, \$18.60

EARTH USER'S GUIDE TO PERMACULTURE, by Rosemary Morrow, 1999, \$16.02

ECO-RENOVATION: The Ecological Home Improvement Guide, Edward Hartland, 1994, \$19.00

GAIA: A NEW LOOK AT LIFE ON EARTH, James Lovelock, 2000, \$18.06

GAIA'S GARDEN, A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture, by Toby Hemenway, 2001, \$27.53

GAVIOTAS: A Village to Reinvent the World, by Alan Weisman, 1995, \$25.60, hardcover

HEALTHFUL HOUSES, How to Design and Build Your Own, by Clint Good, \$13.14

HEALTHY HOUSE BUILDING FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM: A Design and Construction Guide, by John Bower, 2001, \$24.38

HOW TO GROW MORE VEGETABLES than you ever thought possible on less land than you can imagine, by John Jeavons, 1991, \$16.57

NATURAL PEST CONTROL: Alternatives to Chemicals for the Home & Garden, Revised Edition, by Andrew Lopez, 1994, \$20.44

PERELANDRA GARDEN WORKBOOK, 2nd Edition, by M. Wright, 1993, \$22.44

RAINWATER HARVESTING for Drylands, by Brad Lancaster, 2006, \$24.95

REGENERATIVE DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, by John Tillman Lyle, 1994, \$37.10

SUSTAINABLE CITIES: Concepts and Strategies for Eco-City Development, Edited by Walter, Arkin & Crenshaw, 1991, \$22.99

THE ECOLOGY OF COMMERCE, A Declaration of Sustainability, by Paul Hawken, 1993, \$17.00

THE FUEL SAVERS, Solar Ideas for Your Home, Edited by Bruce N. Anderson, \$6.32

THE HAND-SCULPTED HOUSE: A Practical & Philosophical Guide to Building a Cob Cottage, by Ianto Evans, Michael Smith & Linda Smiley, Chelsea Green, 2002, \$38.02

THE NEW STRAWBALE HOME by Catherine Wanek, Gibbs Smith Pub., 2003, \$42.95

THE NEXT AMERICAN METROPOLIS, Ecology, Community, and the American Dream, by Peter Calthorpe, 1993, \$25.81

THE PASSIVE SOLAR HOUSE BOOK, Using Solar Design to Heat and Cool Your House, by James Kachadorian, 1997, \$27.52

THE RESTORATION ECONOMY: The Greatest New Growth Frontier, by Storm Cunningham, 2002, \$33.11

THE SMART KITCHEN: How to Design a Comfortable, Safe, Energy Efficient & Environment-Friendly Work Space, by David Goldbeck, 1994, \$17.

TREEHOUSES: The House that Jack Built, by David Pearson, 2001, \$19.82

Prices quoted include the 10% members' discount plus tax, shipping and handling. To order send a check to the Eco-Home™ Network in the amount indicated above.