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I Fought the Lawn
and the Lawn Won
I’M NOT!!

- 50,000 square miles of Lawn in U.S. California is about 150,000 square miles. 600 additional sq miles added each year.
- 300,000 acres of CA lawn.
- 1 gas mower, 1 hour VOX output = 350 miles driven by car.
- Lawn Fertilizers release NO2, 300x more harmful than CO2.
- 1 typical lawn drinks 45,000 gallons per year.
- California Lawns use 1.5 Million Acre Ft per year = to home usage of 3 million homes.
- There’s a good chance you are over-irrigating.
Where to begin??

- Green Side Up?
  - I’m just starting to think about this whole “New Front Yard” Brown is the new green thing.

- Talk Latin to me?
  - I’m on the bus and just need a ride to the destination.

- Ready to dig in?
  - What lawn? I had my bark delivered Monday
I AM!

- Preferred methods of lawn removal
- Timing to make your transition easier
- Why you should be doing this
- Plants that can be used instead
- Common issues you might encounter
- How you can keep your lawn Smart
- What to do when the lawn is gawn
WHY???

- Water Conservation-Holy Moly! Are we still in this drought thing?
- Time Conservation
- Money Conservation
- Environmental Conservation/Concerns
- Habitat Improvement
OK!! Let’s slow down!!

- Breathe
- Why are you here?
- What do you want out of tonight’s talk?
- What do you want your yard to look like?
- You do NOT, have to do this in one weekend. It’s ok to take your time
- There is NO, one correct way to approach renovating your landscape. There are some easier ways and I am here to help.
I ❤️ My Lawn

- Sad love affair for decades
- Lawns dominate majority of Landscape
- HOA require minimum sq ft
- Symbols of Comfort and Status
Grass Removal Methods

- Solarization
- Sheet Composting
- Physical Removal
- Herbicides
Solarization

- Clear Plastic - This is technically What Solarization is
- Black Plastic - Light Exclusion
- Benefits - Easy, Inexpensive, Minimal Environmental impact
- Down Side - Kills insects, soil organisms, Left with Dead grass, Unsightly
Sheet Composting

- Scalp the lawn, Mow to low
- Cover with cardboard, overlap, water
- Layer of Compost
- Add 4 inches of mulch/bark

Benefits - Organic addition, Minimal labor, no disposal/removal of turf. E-friendly,

Down Side - Cardboard accrual, long time, impractical on slopes
Physical Removal

- Rent or Borrow Sod-Cutter
- Roll up strips
- Remove or turn over to create mounds
- Cover with newspaper, 4” compost, 3” bark mulch

Benefits - Quick, creates good soil, prevents grass re-growth

Down side - Won’t work for bermuda, organic removal
Herbicides

- I totally just lied to you. I’m not going to recommend, suggest or advise you to use this method. But it’s there.
- Where this method will come into play…Post Treatment, Bermuda Grass, Stubborn weeds
- Watch the weather for wind.
Bermudagrass

- So, it’s a problem. My sympathies are extended.
- Grass selective herbicides: Sethoxydim, Fluazifop. Early spring. Consistent
- Non-Selective: Glyphosate. Late summer, plant is storing food in its roots. 7 days after treatment, dig to dry.
Word Break
Carex pansa, 10 min a week, 24 times a year, 4 Hours of water, Once a year mow
Carex pansa- close up & free range
I WANT TO PLANT NOW!

- 1-Roto-till
- 2-Three inches of compost
- 3-Roto-till again
- 4-Newspaper/Cardboard layer
- 5-Three inches of bark, finer=better
- 5a-2 bark methods. Bark then Plant or Plant then bark
I want to plant in the fall

- I recommend this timing.
- Whole summer with no water really knocks the lawn out.
- I would use the sheet-mulch method.
- Discussion about keeping the bark wet
I want to keep the lawn, but manage it better

- Early morning watering
- Adjust spray heads to avoid run-off
- Simple shapes avoid swirvy curvy
- Avoid windy watering
- Water deeper with less frequency
- Got slopes? Shorter bursts or pick another plant

- Organic fertilizers
- Mow higher in summer
- Mow less, shag look
- Your lawn truly only need 3” of water per week.
- Know your sprinkler output. Soup can
- Push Mower
Options Once the Lawn is Gone

- Replace lawn with native grasses using sedges or bunch grasses
- Replace lawn with 1/2 grasses 1/2 native meadow
- Replace lawn with native meadow. This includes wildflowers, grasses and native shrubs.
- Replace lawn with new landscape using native plants and grasses
Dymondia margaretae.
Silver carpet
Lippia nodiflora
Kurapia
What I’m doing
Alternative method discussion

- Rocks vs Grass
- Cactus
- Astroturf/artificial turf
- Australia, South Africa, Med,
What I’m doing
Cubic Yard Formula

- You want 4” of bark and 3” of compost?
- You know how big your planting area is.
- Length(65’) x Width (40’) x Depth (#of inches)/324

65 x 40 x 4” = 10,400/324 =
32 Cubic Yards of Bark

65 x 40 x 3” = 7800/324 =
24 Cubic Yards of Compost

There are calculators online if math scares you.
Mulch & Compost Calculations

- 25’x41.5’
- Rounding down to 25’x40’
  - Easier math and there are existing plants that will remain.
- Compost: \((25 \times 40 \times 3)/324 = 9.25\) cubic Yards
- Mulch/Bark: \((25 \times 40 \times 4)/324 = 12.35\) cubic yards of bark
SO MANY CHOICES

- See handout for Grass
- See handout for Perennial List
- See All-Star List
Wrapping it up?

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Concerns?
- Queries?
UC Davis Arboretum Nursery
Plant Sales

- May 16th – Last one of the season!!

- http://campusmap.ucdavis.edu/?b=204
THANK YOU

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