

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour
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Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Bayside gardens will be open from 10:00 – 5:00 Saturday, May 3, 2025
Inland gardens (incl. Lamorinda) will be open 10:00 – 5:00, Sunday, May 4, 2025

Overview of Tour Expectations

It is our goal to have a well-organized tour that will be enjoyed by both the host gardener and garden guests. This list of expectations was developed to clarify the host gardener's responsibilities for participating in the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, and what the tour coordinator will provide and do.

The Host Gardener will:

- Ensure that the garden is in “showcase condition” and that your natural gardening techniques are exemplary. Based upon the information provided in the host garden applications, gardens are expected to be maintained with natural gardening techniques.
- Be at home for during the event and available to answer questions about your garden.
- Solicit volunteers to be your Greeters or Garden Assistants. Hosts are asked to inquire whether friends, neighbors, or colleagues would be willing to help at their garden. Note: Greeters don't need to know anything about native plants (though Garden Assistants do). Hosts are asked to find their own Greeters.
- Schedule a pre-tour garden orientation with your volunteers. This orientation will allow your volunteers to be a more valuable resource during the tour; volunteers can pick up their t-shirts from you at this time.
- Agree that a description of your garden can be posted on the website, and that visitors can photograph your garden on the day of the tour.
- Identify hazards such as loose path stones, hoses, garden tools, etc and resolve potential problems in advance of the tour. Store hazardous items in an area that is off-limits to tour guests or plan the tour to avoid these areas. Identify any natural or other hazards such as yellow jacket nests, or fragile structures, etc. Prepare and post signage for guest “off limits” or caution areas if needed.
- Confine pets for both pet and guest safety. Dogs cannot be loose on the day of the Tour.
- Secure valuable property.
- Identify parking issues.
- Provide a basket or similar item in which garden tickets will be placed, and a vase or jar for donations.
- Provide a Greeting table on which to place the ticket basket, and hand-outs, and chairs for the greeter(s).
- If the Greeting table is small, provide a larger table for the hand-outs you will receive in your host bag.
- On the tour day place the tour garden sign in the front yard so that it is easily visible to those driving by. (Please don't put it out ahead of time; they fade in the sunlight, and can be stolen.) Place next to it the large Keystone Species introduction sign.
- Wear your host Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour t- shirt on the day of the tour.
- Label your native plants. Labels need to be numerous, and have a font large enough to easily be read. Labeling your plants means your guest won't have to wait in line to ask you “What is that plant?”; labeling plants will make the day easier for you, the host, and more interesting, as you will be able to talk about other aspects of your garden besides plant identification.
- Provide an electronic copy of your native plant list to the tour coordinator for inclusion on the website.

- Optional: provide visitors with additional information specific to your garden. Examples of the types of information tour participants will find useful include: before and after photos of your garden; placing photos of plants in bloom next to the plants that flowered earlier in the spring; a laminated plan of the garden that visitors can carry around to identify specific plants; or a written description of how the garden was created. The more of this information you prepare in advance, the more visitors will get out of visiting your garden. This preparation will also make the day go more smoothly for you.
- If you have green home features to share, such as solar panels, heat pumps, induction ranges, reflective roofs, gray water systems, rain water retention, or others, please note this below.
- If you should have a vegetarian recipe to share, please send it to the coordinator for placement on your garden tour page.

The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour coordinator will provide the following for each host garden:

- T-shirts for hosts and volunteers to wear on the day of the tour.
- A garden tour sign for the front garden, and a “Your Donations Support the Tour” sign for the registration table.
- Keystone species cards – new! These cards were developed to educate visitors about the importance of “keystone species” plants—the plants that have the most value to wildlife. These cards were expensive to print, and they will fade if left out in the sun. Please only put them out on the morning of the Tour, and bring them in that night. They need to be returned to the coordinator for use at next year’s tour. The files can be downloaded if you would like to make your own keystone species cards.
- Handouts for visitors. Please return these when you bring back your materials.
- Volunteers to help staff the garden. (As it will be difficult to find as many volunteers as we would like to help staff the host gardens, we will ask for your help in finding volunteers for your garden. Please let us know if you have family, friends, or neighbors that would be willing to assist on the day of the tour.)

And now, a few brief t-shirt questions:

I (or we) will need:

One t-shirt only.

Small Medium Large X-tra large

Need a second shirt for spouse/partner. Here is her/his size.

Small Medium Large X-tra large

I/we already have Host t-shirts, and won’t need another one this year.

Lawn conversion rebate, green home features and recipe:

We received a rebate from our water district. Amount? _____

We have a vegetarian recipe to share. I will e-mail it.

We have green home features to share. These are:

Heat pump for heating and cooling

Electric vehicle

Heat pump for heating water

Solar panels

Induction range

Smart panel, or similar load shifting system

Whole house fan

Other green home features, such as a cool roof, bird-safe windows screens, "Dark Skies at Night" light covers, or similar.

If volunteers can be found to safeguard your house and inform visitors about your electrification efforts, might you be willing to have Tour visitors come into your home to see your green home features?

Yes

No

I would would not like to give a 15 minute talk(s) on the day of the tour. The title is:

(Please initial) I agree to return the tour materials (sign, evaluations, left-over hand-outs, donations) to the tour coordinator within two weeks of the event. One or two Garden Soirees will be planned during that time in order to make the return an easy and pleasant experience. (You are welcome to ask your volunteers if they can return your tour materials back, but if they can't, you are responsible for ensuring that the materials are returned promptly.)

Questions about the tour can be directed to Kathy Kramer at (510) 236-9558 between 9 am and 7 pm, or emailed to Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net.

Host Gardener (print name)

Host Gardener (signature)

Date

Address/city/zip

Phone number _____