



**master**  
conservationist

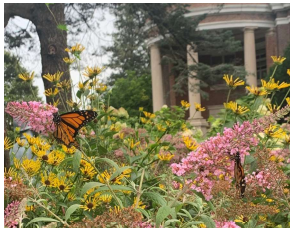
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Extension and Outreach

# Module 3

## Conservation in Urban Areas

# CONSERVATION PRACTICES IN THE PLACES WE LIVE

Conservation in Cities, Towns, & Suburban Areas



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## CONSERVATION IS GOOD GARDENING

### Mulching

Covering the soil helps water quality

Organic mulches help build good soils

Promotes healthy plant growth  
*Which means fewer inputs to look  
good!*



## CONSERVATION IS GOOD GARDENING

### Composting

Keep organic matter in place

Reduce waste

Builds good soils

*Which means healthy growth  
Which means fewer inputs*



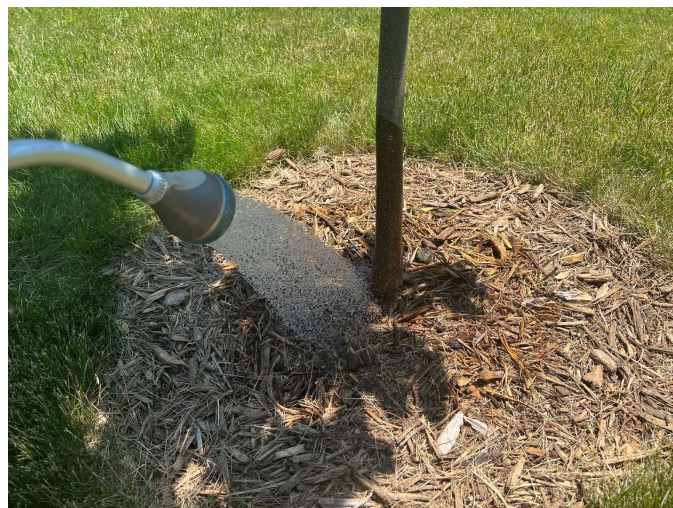
## CONSERVATION IS GOOD GARDENING

### Watering Responsibly

Gardens need irrigation  
*So do it responsibly*

Responsible watering includes:

*Reduce runoff  
Good equipment  
Deeply & infrequently  
Using a rain gauge*



## CONSERVATION IS GOOD GARDENING

### Integrated Pest Management

Accurately identify the problem

What's your damage threshold?

Right plant

Cultural practices

Physical barriers

Biological controls

Chemical controls



## CONSERVATION IS GOOD GARDENING

### Using Chemicals Wisely

Synthetic vs. Natural/Organic

Consider off-target damage potential

Is there another option?

Always follow label directions



## CONSERVATION IS GOOD GARDENING

### Right Plant, Right Place

Requires fewer inputs

Saves time and money

Better looking plants



## NATIVE PLANTS

### Supports Native Ecosystems

Creates balance

Supports those species that may need extra help



## NATIVE PLANTS

### Right Plant, Right Place

This concept still applies to natives



## NATIVE PLANTS

### Urban Areas are Not Native Areas

Natives behave differently in managed  
landscapes  
*Less root competition means taller  
& ganglier  
Some can get weedy*



## NATIVE PLANTS

### Diversity is Key

It creates beautiful gardens too!



## NATIVE PLANTS

### Invasive Plants

Exotic invasives:

*Displace natives*

*Compete (weaken) natives*

*Don't support all local organisms*

It's easy to introduce invasives

Be familiar with the plants in your garden

Not all exotics are invasive

Be cautious of "free" plants



## RESPONSIBLE WATER MANAGEMENT





## WATER MANAGEMENT

### The Goals

- Slow Water Movement
- Promote Infiltration
- Reduce Erosion



## WATER MANAGEMENT

### Many Tactics to Use

- Rain Gardens
- Rain Barrels
- Permeable Surfaces
- Green Roofs
- Mulch
- Responsible Watering





## LAWNS

### Lots of Input

Mowing, Mowing, Mowing (& *More Mowing*)

Water

Fertilizers

Herbicides



## LAWNS

### Supports Little Diversity

Remember, Diversity is Key!

“Desert” for pollinators

Monoculture

*More prone to pests & diseases*



## LAWNS

### Lawn Alternatives

Mow less

Pollinator lawns

Turf-like plants

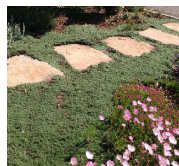
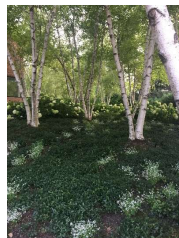
Groundcovers

Prairies & Meadows

Garden Spaces

Mulch, Gravel

Maybe Moss





## GO OUTSIDE!

### We Conserve What We Know

Get yourself outside

Get others outside

When people know the importance of  
nature, they are more likely to support  
and preserve it



## GO OUTSIDE!

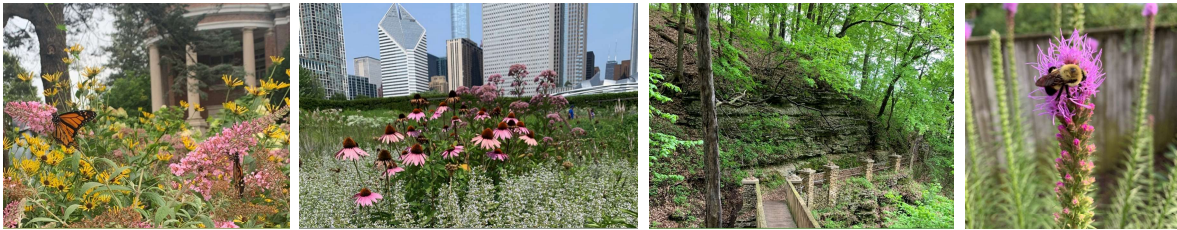
### Not Just Working, Enjoying

It's more than working to save the ecosystem

*Although that is great!*

It's enjoying nature too  
*gardening, picnicking, boating, hiking,  
photography, etc*

Participate in programs



# THANK YOU

Conservation Practices in the Places We Live

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