Hope Gardens

Jardines de Esperanza

North Richmond
The Watershed Project crew installing a Hope Garden
Hope Gardens
What are they?

A Hope Garden is a planted space that creates community. For North Richmond residents, this means beautifying the strip in front of their homes between the sidewalk and the street. These often neglected strips are frequently overgrown with weeds and strewn with garbage that blows in from the street.

By planting Hope Gardens in North Richmond, The Watershed Project aimed to foster relationships between community residents, involving them in the beautification of their neighborhoods, mitigating littering and dumping of garbage and educating community members on the landscape use of plant species that are water-wise and which create habitat for wildlife.

Since the planting strips abut street parking, design factors such as the incorporation of open spaces in the landscape allowing residents to exit a vehicle without damaging plantings, were taken into consideration. Natural stone pavers were utilized both to blend with the planted landscape and to provide a hardscape surface to step upon.

"I’m going to talk to my neighbor and see if he’s interested in putting in a garden too!"

–Earl Crockett, III
Hope Garden Recipient
Transformations

The transformation of the planting strips was incredible and both the residents who were recipients of the gardens as well as the residents who worked on the installation of the gardens were proud and delighted at the change. Jerome Morris, a faithful participant in the garden installations, remarked that the garden we had installed the week prior looked very nice when he rode past it on his bike. “It really makes a difference”, he said.
Species Selections

Plants selected for the Hope Gardens were required to be drought tolerant or “water-wise”. In addition, wherever native California species could be utilized, they were incorporated in the design. Native plants are both adapted to rigors of the climate and provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. Residents were involved in the selection of plants for their gardens and provided guidance on the garden aesthetic that they hoped to have – we did our utmost to deliver on the resident’s wishes.
Yarrow
*Achillea millefolium* 'Sonoma Coast'

With soft, feathery, light green leaves and spreading underground stems, 'Sonoma Coast' Yarrow is a fantastic, low-care native groundcover. It blooms with bright white flowers in late spring/early summer. A drought resistant/drought tolerant plant. Yarrow attracts butterflies and other beneficial insects.
Kangaroo Paw
*Anigozanthos* 'Bush Tango'

'Bush Tango' is a mid-sized Kangaroo Paw that has foliage up to 2 feet tall with lightly branched 3 foot flower stems bearing masses of iridescent orange flowers throughout spring and summer and sporadically throughout the rest of the year. 'Bush Tango' is a great focal point garden plant and makes a nice, long-lasting cut flower. Kangaroo Paws are very drought tolerant.
Manzanita
*Arctostaphylos* ‘Emerald Carpet’

*Arctostaphylos* 'Emerald Carpet' is a low-growing manzanita shrub with small, glossy, deep green leaves and attractive cinnamon red stems with exfoliating bark. Small white flowers bell-shaped flowers appear in mid-winter through spring and are followed by red fruit. ‘Emerald Carpet’ is good as a groundcover between a lawn and more drought tolerant plants or as a non-walkable lawn substitute.
Expressway Sedge  
*Carex praegracilis*

A short, rich-green sedge growing to 6-8 inches tall and spreading by rhizomes to form a carpet that tolerates moderate foot traffic. A good plant as a solid ground cover, between and around stepping stones or mixed with other perennials and grasses to create a natural meadow look. This sedge has moderate water requirements compared to lawn grasses.
Bluff Lettuce
*Dudleya farinosa*

*Dudleya farinosa* is a succulent plant native to the coastline of northern California where it is commonly found on bluffs and coastal hillsides. The leaves are generally very pale green but they often have edges or tips of bright colors, particularly bright reds. The plant erects a tall stem which is pale green with pink or red tinting, which bears a branching flower cluster with many pale to bright yellow flowers. Easy to grow in coastal environments in either full sun or part shade. *Dudleya farinosa* is an important hummingbird plant within its natural range along the coast.
Douglas Iris

*Iris douglasiana*

Douglas iris is a common and attractive wildflower of the coastal regions of Northern and Central California and southern Oregon. This is a knee high perennial with rhizomes that spread slowly into a 2 to 4 ft wide clump. The flowers arise on a 1 to 2 ft high stem, are three inches wide and range in color from deep purple to white. It is drought tolerant near the coast but may require occasional summer water inland. This iris does great with the runoff of buildings, street runoff and rain gutters.
Common Rush

*Juncus patens*

Common rush is a grass-like plant native to the western United States. Within California it is found primarily along the coast and coastal mountains, in marshes and other wet areas. It is a perennial herb forming narrow, erect bunches of stems arising from a central clump. This plant is tough and easy to grow. It is happy in areas that are damp year-round, but also looks good and healthy in dry soils with only minimal irrigation in summer.
Paddle Plant
*Kalanchoe luciae*

Paddle plant is named for the shape of the thick, 4-6 inch long by 2-5 inch wide, rounded leaves arranged in a basal rosette. The leaves are covered with a gray bloom and the leaf margin takes on a reddish hue during cooler winter months if grown in bright light, otherwise remaining uniformly green. In late winter into early spring a single long stem arises bearing clusters of pale yellow tubular flowers. May be planted in full sun to light shade. Drought tolerant and hardy to around 27° F.
Sticky Monkeyflower
*Mimulus aurantiacus*

The sticky monkeyflower is a flowering perennial plant that grows in a subshrub form, native to southwestern North America from southwestern Oregon south through most of California and into Baja, Mexico. It grows up to 1.2 meters tall with deep green sticky leaves 3 - 7 centimeters long and up to a centimeter broad and flowering stems that grow vertically. The orange flowers are tubular at the base and about 2 centimeters long with five broad lobes. They are pollinated by bees and hummingbirds.
Salvia ‘Bee’s Bliss’

‘Bee's Bliss’ is a creeping sage that grows very fast and stays under 8 inches tall. Great for fast slope coverage or ground cover. This Salvia is fragrant and has a profusion of purple flowers in the late spring. ‘Bee's Bliss’ needs little to no water once established in most of California and attracts bees, butterflies and birds.
Salvia ‘Pozo Blue’

Salvia ‘Pozo Blue’ is a very drought tolerant three foot high perennial with very fragrant foliage. It flowers for about 6 weeks in the late spring to early summer with violet-blue flowers. Salvia 'Pozo Blue' survives and looks good on very little rainfall. This sage really attracts butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. In addition, quail love to eat the seeds.
Resources:

https://calscape.org/

https://www.smgrowers.com/

https://www.laspilitas.com/

http://www.anniesannuals.com/