



# Overlook Garden Tour 2013

*Welcome to the Second Annual Overlook Garden Tour!* Sustainable Overlook, a committee of the Overlook Neighborhood Association, is delighted to present the tour in conjunction with our Pesticide Free Neighborhood project. The eight gardens featured on the tour vary widely in style, size and function, but they are all maintained without the use of toxic chemicals.

These gardens represent just a fraction of the pesticide-free gardens in Overlook. They are bee-friendly, child-friendly, pet-friendly and health-wise. They provide habitat, sustenance, sanctuary and so much more as you will see.

Please enjoy the gardens today and take advantage of the experienced and passionate gardeners you will meet by learning something new about natural gardening.

## Sustainable Overlook

*We're a group of volunteers working to build community and make our neighborhood more sustainable. We're also a Transition Initiative which means we're using positive, local approaches to foster resilience in the face of climate change, energy descent, economic instability and natural disaster.*

### Get Involved

Do you have an idea for a sustainability project? Want to

share your garden on the tour next year? There are lots of ways to get involved with Sustainable Overlook. Monthly meetings are open to all and there are opportunities coming up to volunteer at events, spread the word about the Pesticide Free Overlook Project and more. Email [sustainable@OverlookNeighborhood.org](mailto:sustainable@OverlookNeighborhood.org)

### Upcoming Events

- Sept. 5 Canvassing Orientation for Pesticide Free Overlook and Pot Luck
- Sept. 19 Preserving the Harvest Class
- Fall Seed and Plant Exchange
- More at [www.sustainableoverlook.org](http://www.sustainableoverlook.org)

**Thank you  
to the neighbors who have  
generously opened their  
gardens today.**





**Sustainable Overlook**

# Garden Tour 2013

Be inspired by eight unique, pesticide-free gardens!

**Saturday, August 24**



For details and a tour guide book visit [www.sustainableoverlook.org](http://www.sustainableoverlook.org)

Comments or suggestions? E-mail [sustainable@overlookneighborhood.org](mailto:sustainable@overlookneighborhood.org)

Sustainable Overlook is a volunteer group committed to building resilience and community in our neighborhood.





“My best tool for pest control is my own eyes! I’m constantly checking plants for signs of pests, especially aphids and caterpillars.”

— *Ann Forsthoefer*

## Tour Stop 1

**Ann and Neal Forsthoefer**

**5929 N. Curtis Ave.**

The theme of our garden is food production. I do most the the gardening and my husband helps with watering and seeding. Our garden has chickens, lots of vegetable beds, roses and perennial flowers and we used our parking strips to grow food by building raised beds along both sides of our corner lot. But the thing people get most excited about in our yard is our aquaponics set up. We grow veggies year-round in a system that also provides several kinds of fish.

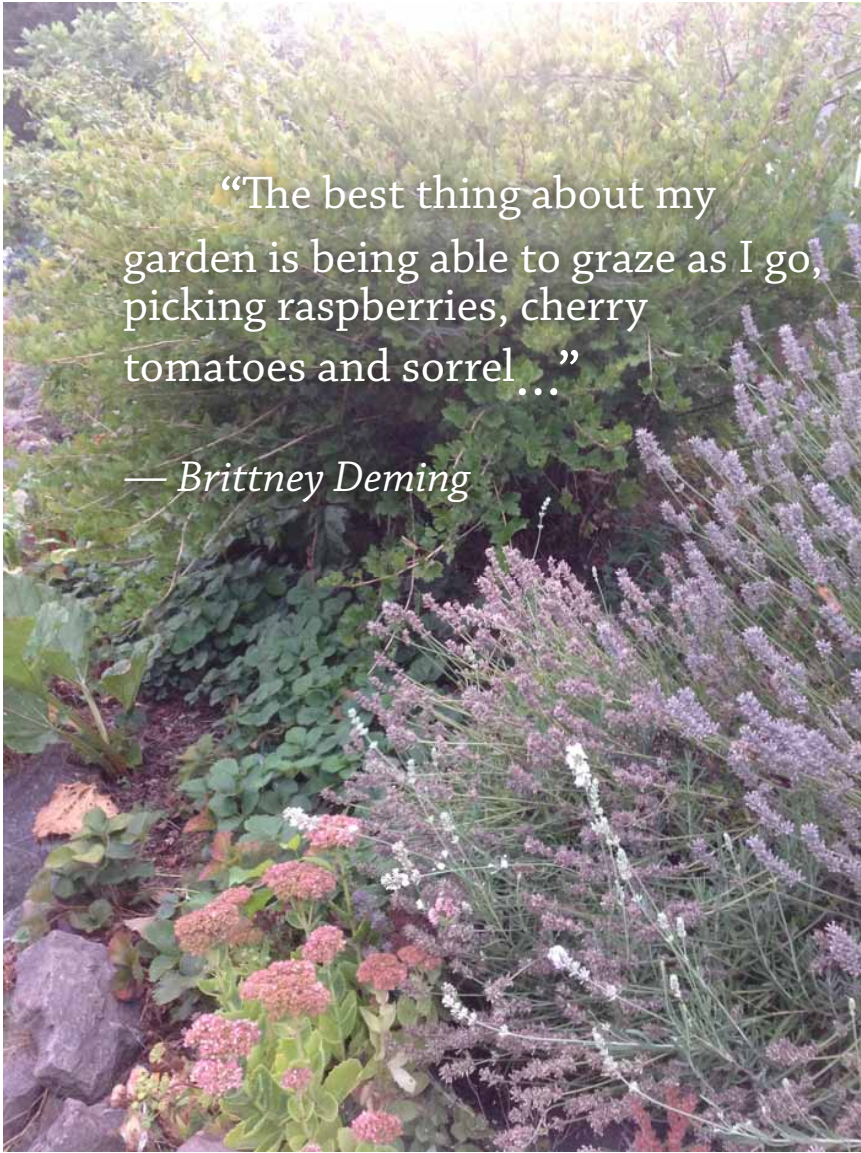
We’ve always grown our food organically. My best tool for pest control is my own eyes! I’m constantly checking plants for signs of pests, especially aphids and caterpillars.

My advice for someone just starting pesticide-free gardening is that you are going to lose some plants as you learn – do not worry! The reward is knowing you, your family, and the environment will be healthier for your decision.

### **Ann Recommends:**

Rodale Organic Gardening Books





“The best thing about my garden is being able to graze as I go, picking raspberries, cherry tomatoes and sorrel...”

— *Brittney Deming*



## Tour Stop 2

**Brittney Deming and Aren Hinely**

**5704 N. Omaha Ave.**

I started my garden in 2004. Aren, my partner and I ripped out ivy, put in a two-tier rock wall and started planting an edible landscape.

The best thing about my garden is being able to graze as I go, picking raspberries, cherry tomatoes and sorrel among so many other things.

I have never used toxic herbicides or insecticides in my garden. To control pests, I use dormant oil sprays in the winter on my fruit trees and sometimes resort to using a mild insecticidal soap like Dr. Bronner's. To be

chemical-free, you may have to lower your standards a bit but it is so worth it. Everything is interdependent. For example, when you have a huge breakout of aphids you will start to see more lady bugs and even wasps taking care of the pests if you have a natural environment.

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) has a great website with fact sheets on how to deal with all kinds of pest problems naturally.

### **Brittney and Aren's Favorite Resource:**

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP)

[www.pesticide.org](http://www.pesticide.org)





“Eco-lawn is a delightful alternative to turf grass: it feeds itself, provides habitat and is just as useful for people.”

— *Mulysa Melco*

## Tour Stop 3

**Mulysa Melco and Michael Godfrey**

**5523 N. Detroit Ave.**

Our garden is where we grow food, eat meals, relax together, do projects, and spend time with friends. This is the fifth year of landscaping and the first year with a joyful toddler running around in it. I’ve had to relax a little in order to let him find out about nature the way I did – eating veggies straight from the plants, picking flowers and scooping dirt. I’m grateful for this place and I would not pollute it with pesticides. Our food, families, neighbors, soil, and water are too precious.

The coolest thing about our garden is the delicious treats we harvest all year round like alpine strawberries, honey berries, rhubarb, and asparagus. I also love how much I learn. It’s my place to do experiments that inform

my work as a sustainable landscape designer. For instance, I’m transitioning from a tidy annual vegetable garden with blocks of colorful veggies to a more interwoven pattern of perennial and annual edibles that keeps the ground covered better throughout the year and is lower maintenance.

Weeds are a bigger problem than insects in my garden so I’m trying to follow my own good advice: mulch, grow dense ground cover plants, and pull weeds before they set seed. I’m also trying out the idea that you can choose your weeds by letting tasty greens like arugula and miner’s lettuce run wild.

**Mulysa Recommends:**  
**Gaia’s Garden by Toby Hemenway**  
**Bountiful Gardens Seed Company**  
**Radical Homemaking by Shannon Hayes**





## Tour Stop 4

**Alison Bingham and Chris Olchawa**

**5544 N. Detroit Ave.**

My goal was an edible, medicinal, native, fragrant garden without any pesticide use. In 2011 I heard about the Backyard Habitat Certification program and since then I have found a new passion in growing as many native edibles as possible and creating a native ecosystem.

This year my boyfriend Chris and I set up a natural filtration system for the pond to filter out the mess the new ducks create. I am in love with the ducks. Watching them swim around the pond is one of my favorite things to do.

I believe that the person that I bought the house from did not use chemicals, so the property has been

pesticide-free for many years. Using pesticides was never an option for me. The way I think of it, the whole point of gardening is knowing that I am not poisoning myself or other living creatures.

My most important pesticide-free strategy is to not worry about the bugs. I have an ongoing relationship with the spiders and birds in the neighborhood and they take care of it for me.

I would tell a gardener who is just going pesticide-free to be okay with having some bugs. Plant species that attract bugs near the food that you are growing, that way the bugs are drawn away from the plants you want to eat.

### **Alison and Chris' Favorite Resources:**

The Maritime Northwest Garden Guide

The Master Gardener's Handbook

Native plant lists at [www.emcwcd.org](http://www.emcwcd.org)





## Tour Stop 5

**Alice Busch**

**2224 N. Willamette Blvd.**

Whenever Alice Busch meets a new gardener, she tells them about the Food Not Lawns philosophy and her personal gardening methods based on laziness and tolerance. She is a permaculturist which she says means "letting mother nature do the heavy lifting."

After 22 years in the fire service and now a disaster manager, Alice sees gardening as a way to build local resilience and forge community. The four front yard gardens she planted and tends help to feed seven families on the block and this shared abundance and beauty is her favorite part of gardening.

When asked about maintaining the gardens organically, she said "I'm too cheap to use pesticides. Plus

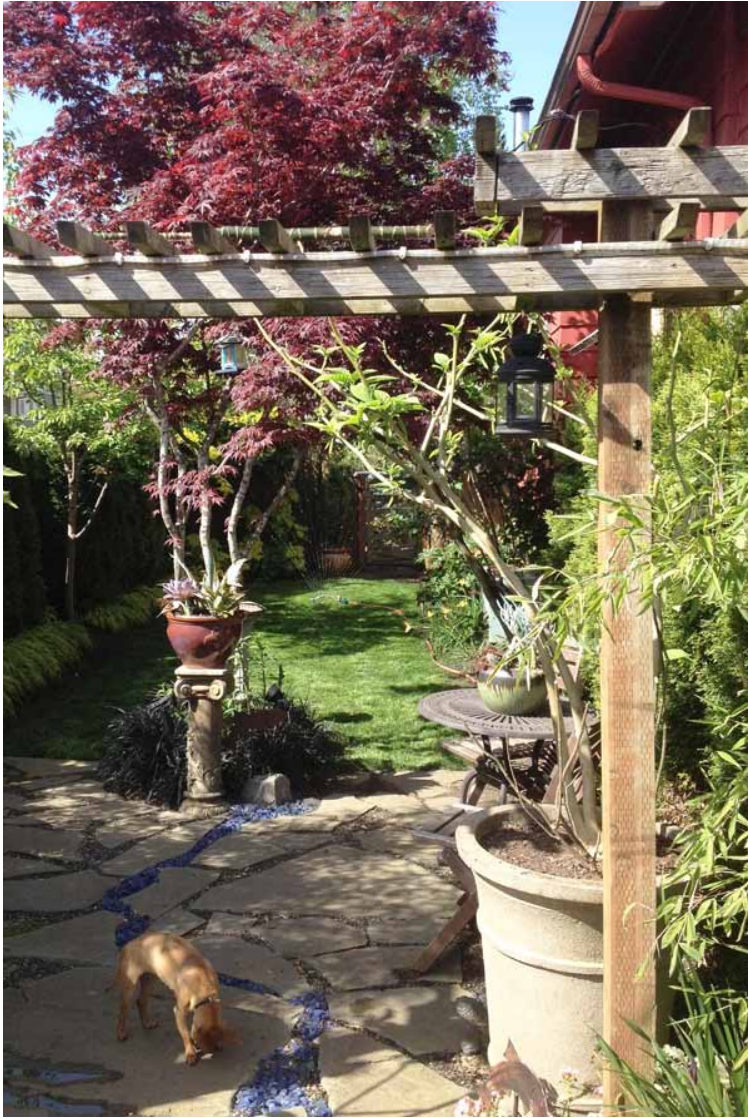
they are poison, and who wants to eat poison? Gardening should be fun, easy, and *safe*."

For someone as busy as Alice, finding ways to make gardening easy is crucial. That's where permaculture comes in. "Think of your garden as an ecosystem. Systems manage themselves and it means that some things will suffer and others will thrive. There is no need to spend a lot of money to experiment with what plants will grow well. There are seed exchanges and plant swaps that bring together people with excess bounty with those who are just starting out. Those of us with established gardens like nothing more than to cultivate more yards with the plants we love."

### **Alice Recommends:**

- A gardening tool belt with Hori-Hori
- A tool sharpener to keep your own tools in shape
- A solar-powered ipod radio
- Lots of gardening books and friends to learn from





Front Yard – Before



Front Yard – After

## Tour Stop 6

### CashMann Garden

**1572 N. Prescott St.**

If a home should be a castle, a yard can be a sanctuary! That is what Steven Mann and Gary Cash hoped for when transforming a drab yard into a welcoming Eden for friends, children, hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and pets. Steve Mann, who passed away in August of 2012 from cancer at age 42, believed "You have to paint with shades of green in the Northwest. The flowers are beautiful, but most of the year we are left with brilliant greens in foliage ... that's what I'm designing with." The garden contains more than a dozen different trees including conifers, palms, birch and dogwood, in shades of green, gold, yellow and red. The icing on the cake is the abundance of flowers such as crocus, daffodil,

tulip, hydrangea, lily, gardenia, rose, honeysuckle, hibiscus, and jasmine... there is fragrance everywhere!

There are three small water features, a raised garden bed that converts to a greenhouse for the winter, compost bins, bird feeders, and a hot tub. Many of the materials used are reclaimed such as bricks, lumber, and found objects.

Steve Mann worked in the landscape profession for several decades but it didn't mean the couple wasn't on a budget ... they had to have a flexible plan, vision, patience, and a willingness to let the garden decide where it wants to go. And it's important to take time to sit back and enjoy it all after weeding, fertilizing, watering, propagating, pruning, mowing ... it is SO worth it! Please stop by, say hello, and enjoy the gift of a wonderful man to his partner Gary who is slowly learning to become a Master Gardener out of love and gratitude.





## Tour Stop 7

**Jane Finch-Howell**

**4010 N. Longview Ave.**

My husband and I started this garden seven years ago. You might say the theme of our garden is “Yours, Mine and Ours,” since we each have our separate territories and we cooperate on the general areas.

We had been pesticide-free at our last house so it was natural for us to continue. But we didn’t plant any food in the soil for several years, after finding all the pesticides the former owners left in the garden room.

My most important pesticide-free strategies are to grow each plant in its optimum conditions (correct amount of sun, drainage, moisture, etc.) so they are healthy and not as

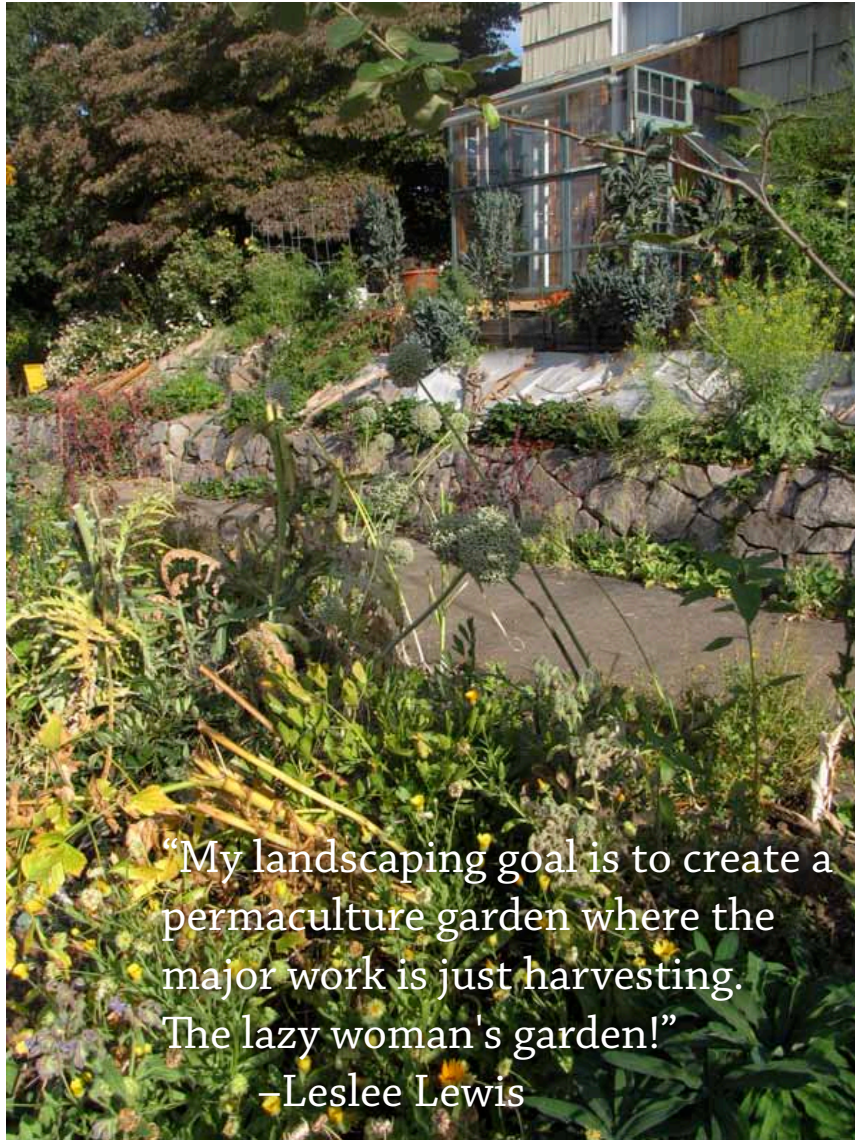
vulnerable to pests. If a plant continually suffers from pests, I consider removing it and planting something that wants the conditions in that spot. I tolerate weeds and clover in the lawn (the bees love it!) I pick off or water-spray off aphids on the roses.

When I talk with a gardener who is just going pesticide-free I say ‘just do it.’ First, dispose of unused pesticides as hazardous waste through Metro. Then, if you have a plant (or area) that seems to need constant intervention, something is wrong with the situation and needs reconsidering. Also, you don’t need to have a golf course-perfect lawn. How many bees do you see on one of those?

### Jane’s Favorite Resources

Metro Natural Gardening  
Multnomah County Master Gardeners  
My garden blog friends





“My landscaping goal is to create a permaculture garden where the major work is just harvesting. The lazy woman's garden!”  
—Leslee Lewis



## Tour Stop 8

**Leslee Lewis**

**3908 N. Concord Ave.**

Once my kids were grown, I could finally turn my attention to the outside of the house. My process is a “phased implementation.” This is the fourth year and the garden includes honey bees, chickens, and a food forest. I catch rain water for irrigation and watering the greenhouse which is made from recycled materials.

It never seemed smart to me, long-term, to use pesticides. And once I found out that Roundup doesn't break down readily, I gave that last chemical up. That was over five years ago. Now my most important strategy for a healthy garden is to feed the soil by adding organic matter.

I tell new gardeners to start small and don't stress out. It's okay to fail. Everything is changeable, and plants just grow really well in Oregon! And there are so many great resources here. The permaculture community in Portland and Living City (a gardening CSA) have taught me a lot. And most of all, I learned from friends who are long-time gardeners. They are the most generous beings on the planet!

*Leslee's garden overlooks the intersection of several streets that have undergone 'Intersection Repair'. In 2012 a mural designed by Leslee was painted on the street as part of the Village Building Convergence. This year, neighbors gathered to build planter boxes to direct traffic flow in hopes of improving the safety of the corner.*

### **Leslee Recommends:**

The Transition Handbook by  
Rob Hopkins

Permaculture Meet-up



## Notes





**GARDEN TOUR INFO**

- Start the Tour at the garden of your choice.
- Gardens North of Going St. (Stops 1-5) are open from 10 am - noon.
- Gardens South of Going St. (Stops 6-8) are open from noon - 2 pm.
- Please register at your first tour stop. You only need to sign in once.
- Please use caution on the tour and enter gardens at your own risk.
- No pets in the gardens please.

**Natural Gardening Tips**

- Drop off old pesticides at Metro's Household hazardous waste site. It's free with the coupon you get when you take the pledge.
- Choose pesticide-free (untreated) lumber for landscaping projects.
- Start from the ground up by feeding your soil with compost and mulch.



- If you need to fertilize, opt for organic products.
- Plant natives and provide habitat for pest-eating birds and beneficial insects.
- Make your lawn an eco-lawn and replace unused turf with pollinator-friendly plantings.
- Choose low-water use plants, then water deeply but infrequently to encourage deep roots.
- Protect and enrich your soil by using cover crops.
- Help wildlife with bird, bat and bee houses and provide water for birds and bees.



- 'Use tools not toxics'. Pull weeds and squish pest insects instead of spraying.
- Appreciate diversity. A few weeds in your lawn or a few nibbles on the leaves of your veggies are a sign of a healthy garden ecosystem.
- Make some gardener friends! Our neighborhood is lucky to have experienced gardeners on each block who are happy to share knowledge, seeds and plants.

**Metro**

503-234-3000

[www.oregonmetro.gov/garden](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/garden)