



Biodiversity meets music

Restoring biodiversity in urban gardens - cultivating native plants



Urban gardens have become increasingly important as refuges for biodiversity in cities. However, many of these gardens are dominated by lawns or replaced with “sterile” gravel areas, leading to a loss of habitat for diverse plant and animal species. This has resulted in a decline in biodiversity and ecosystem health, with detrimental consequences for both humans and nature.

One of the main causes of species loss in urban gardens is the preference for non-native plant species and the reliance on artificial materials such as gravel or concrete, which do not support a diverse range of wildlife. Non-native plants often lack the ecological adaptations and relationships with local wildlife that native plants have developed over thousands of years, and which can lead to a reduction in habitat quality and biodiversity.

The consequences of the loss of habitat for diverse native plant species and the associated decline in biodiversity are significant. Living soils play a crucial role as habitats for a wide range of animal and plant species. Soils teeming with life, including bacteria, fungi, insects, and other invertebrates, provide essential ecosystem services, such as nutrient cycling, water filtration, and pest regulation.

Moreover, native plants and their associated fauna, including pollinators like bees, butterflies, and other insects, have evolved together and rely on each other for food, shelter, and reproduction.

What can we do?

To promote biodiversity in urban gardens, it is important to implement nature-friendly and ecologically valuable practices. One key recommendation is the use of native plants in garden design, as they are adapted to local conditions and provide food and habitat for local wildlife. Native plants also have cultural and historical significance and can help restore a sense of place and identity in urban landscapes.

In addition, creating diverse habitats within gardens, such as meadows, hedges, or ponds, can provide suitable habitats for a variety of plant and animal species. These habitats can imitate natural ecosystems and provide food, shelter, and nesting sites for birds, insects, and other wildlife. Avoiding the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and adopting organic or regenerative gardening practices, can also support healthy soil ecosystems and promote biodiversity.

Furthermore, incorporating native bioindicators, or indicator species, into garden design can provide valuable information about the ecological condition of the area and help guide management decisions. Indicator species are plants that are particularly sensitive to specific environmental conditions and can indicate the health or degradation of an ecosystem. By using these in garden design, we can create gardens that are in harmony with the local environment and support biodiversity.

In conclusion, promoting nature-friendly and ecologically valuable practices in urban gardens is essential for restoring biodiversity and creating healthy, vibrant ecosystems in cities. Using native plants, creating diverse habitats, avoiding the use of chemicals, and incorporating indicator species can all contribute to the conservation of wildlife and the promotion of a more sustainable and biodiverse urban landscape. By taking action to restore biodiversity in urban gardens, we can create spaces that benefit both humans and nature, providing valuable habitat for diverse plant and animal species, and contributing to the well-being of our urban communities.