



Why a Garden Retreat?
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Everyone needs a sanctuary garden, a place of respite from the cacophony of an overly busied life. Why a garden? It is there the symphony of sound, the compatibility of color, shapes and structures and the presence of all creatures great and small calm the frenzied busyness of life's demands.

The sanctuary garden is a place to refocus thoughts, emotions, and attitudes; a place to see what has been done then redirecting toward what needs to be done; a place to relieve stressful demands whether self-induced or prescribed by others.

A garden is a work of art expressed through individuality. A garden sanctuary promotes changes of perceptions to possibilities. A garden helps to create a sense of adventure constantly evolving. A small dedicated garden area filled with plants purposefully chosen promotes a sense of rewarded productivity. A garden demands nothing in return for the beauty it displays. Yet, its peaceful presence encourages exploration into how plants grow, into how to choose "right plant, right place", and into how to care properly for selected plants.

Plants are beautiful in the nursery but the small label on the plant indicates if the plant is right and if the location in the garden is right. Know your garden. What zone(s) is the garden? This is the hottest and the coldest temperature. Does the plant need lots of water? Will it be placed near plants that require less water? Can the right place supply the correct sunlight exposure during the day? Does the plant like sandy soil or can it survive in heavy wet clay? How big will this plant get? Keeping an aggressive growing plant pruned because of limited space will increase garden work. Most noteworthy is: how does it spread? Do the roots produce plants freely or does it freely seed? Enjoying the garden is best when work in the garden does not revolve around a few aggressively spreading plants. If in doubt consult a garden book at the nursery and read about it or check out the website <http://www.native-again-landscape.com/ucdavis-sun.html> and <http://ucanr.org/sites/casmlandscape/files/130677.pdf>. Other interesting facts emerge when learning about plants. Is it toxic to bees, birds, children and pets. The plant list also indicates if the plant is messy, meaning time consumed cleaning up under it regularly.

By planting the right plant in the right place, more time can be spent enjoying the garden from your favorite spot. As John Muir says, "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." A garden sanctuary can be large or small. One designated area can be chosen in a large garden. A single container plant on a deck can suffice. A small indoor room with houseplants can be a sanctuary, too. It is not the size that matters but your specific needs. It is important this area is always welcoming. Its standing invitation to come aside and rest awhile repays the cost of gardening. The goal is a place that balances toil with retreat. Both work respite into your life.

There is no public education Master Gardener class this Saturday, July 5, 2014 -- enjoy your Fourth of July holiday weekend! UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County are available to answer home gardening questions at local Farmers Markets and at their office Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon, by calling [\(530\) 621-5512](tel:5306215512). Walk-ins are welcome at our office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. For more information about our public education classes and activities, go to our Master Gardener website at [http://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC Master Gardeners/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/). Sign up to receive our online notices and e-newsletter at <http://ucanr.edu/mgenews/>. You can also find us on Facebook.