

Temperate Climate Food Forest Guilds

Guilds are at the very core of forest gardening. In his book, Creating Forest Gardens, Martin Crawford recommends that in an ideal guild you'll have plants of various types performing the following functions:

- Nitrogen-fixing plants to supply nitrogen.
- Mineral-accumulator plants to help supply other nutrients.
- Beneficial-insect plants to minimise pest problems.
- Bee plants, both for wild and honey bees.
- Plants with differing root systems, to exploit the soil space and soil layers efficiently.
- Aromatic plants to confuse pests and increase system health.
- Ground-cover plants to densely cover the soil surface.

With that in mind, here are 5 examples that I sourced from various places. These include **Apple, Walnut, Peach, Medlar and Oak** guilds.

Apple Guild - courtesy of Toby Hemingway, Gaia's Garden

- Apple (the central element)
- Garlic/garlic chives/wild leek (grass surprising bulbs)
- Dill/fennel/ bee balm (insectary plants)
- Yarrow/ hickory/ plantain (nutrient accumulators)
- Comfrey/ artichoke (mulch plants)

Walnut Guild - courtesy of Tim Murphy, Regenesi Group

- Walnut (the central element)
- Hackberries (grass suppressing shrub that tolerates walnut's juglone toxins)
- Currants (fruit bearing shrub)
- Wolfberry (Goji Berry) (fruit bearing shrub)
- Tomato, pepper or the nightshade (annual vegetable)
- Russian olive (N - fixer)

Bonus plants to buffer juglone's effect on other plants

- Elderberry
- Mulberry
- Black locusts

Peach-tree guild - Courtesy of Jerome Osentowski, Central Rocky Mountain Permaculture Institute

- Peach (the central element)
- Siberian pea shrub (N-fixing shrub)
- Sunflowers (insectary plant)
- Cabbage (annual vegetable)
- Clover (N - fixing ground cover)
- Comfrey (nutrient accumulator)
- Horseradish (nutrient accumulator)
- Calendula (insectary plant)

Medlar Guild - courtesy of Paul Alfrey, Balkep

Medlar (fruit bearing tree)

Aronia (fruit bearing shrub)

Comfrey (mineral accumulator and mulch source)

Tree Onion (perennial vegetable and pest repellent)

White Clover (nitrogen Fixing ground cover)

Oak Guild - courtesy of Bryce Ruddock, Midwest Permaculture

Oak (the central element)

Paw paw (shade tolerant fruit tree)

Hazel (nut bearing shrub)

gooseberries or currants (fruit bearing shrubs)

Comfrey (nutrient accumulator)

Horseradish (nutrient accumulator)

Borage (bee attractant)

Strawberries (groundcover)

Notes:
