The Edgemon Garden

Our yard is a new one – it is barely two years old. It is evolving toward our goal of an area that supports the neighboring wildlife, is eco-friendly – with minimal pesticide and water usage - and still reflects the style of our home in a way that is enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing to us.

We completed the construction of our home in September 2008, so it’s just made it through its second Texas summer. The lot was vacant and cleared of many of its trees when we came on the scene. In many respects we had a clean slate to work with. However, since there is a considerable amount of underground water in this area, we had water issues to address - which was part of the property’s appeal.

Our original design goals were to make the existing pond beautiful and healthy, to enhance the water area in the back of the lot, to create a water feature, to blend the landscape with the house and to provide a hospitable home to the birds, butterflies, bees and other wildlife native to this area. Our hope was that we would have a positive impact on our environment.

The creek which runs from the southwest corner of our lot under two bridges and into the front pond on the northeast corner is our favorite part of the yard. The creek and the views of the two ponds makes you feel as if you are outside from almost every room in the house.

The landscaping plan was handled by Design Maintenance Construction, owned and managed by David McCarty. They do the majority of the maintenance as well as all of the hard manual labor. While my husband and I were interested and involved in the overall appearance and planning of the yard, David and his employees get the credit not only for the plantings, but also for educating us about plants that are native to this area and that do well in the different environments we wanted to create.

We were interested in native plants that don’t require large quantities of water or care, as well as favorites we wanted to include without stressing the garden too much. I’ve always loved azaleas, so we put a few here and there, rather than masses that would require large amounts of peat moss and specialized care. We have a Satsuma Orange tree that was given to us as a gift almost 20 years ago and traveled with us from house to house. There are other plants that have special meaning to us or that we just love – “Durante”, Bottlebrush, Japanese maples, camelias, hydrangeas, gardenias, pineapple guava, ginger, spiral rush, and peonies; some of which can be challenges in our area.

As time has gone by we have become more interested in plants that are desirable to birds, bees and butterflies. As plants have died and seasons ended we’ve replanted more and more of those particular plants. This past spring we began keeping bees and we’ve enjoyed watching which plants they prefer - sometimes not the ones we expected.

The love of gardening has been passed down to me from my parents and my grandparents. I have many fond childhood memories of my grandmother as well as my parents in their gardens. My 84 year old father still spends part of every day in his yard. I signed up to take the Master Gardener’s class with the hope that I would learn how to better care for our yard in a prudent, “good practices” way. It is a wonderful program which has provided resources which I will use for my lifetime. We are currently in the process of becoming certified as a butterfly and wildlife habitat. We practice water wise gardening with most of our yard and primarily use organic gardening practices. We are home to a variety of butterflies, birds, turtles, fish, toads and lizards at the present time, as well as our bees.

I hope you enjoy visiting our garden as much as we enjoy being in it.