

Wisdom From Benjamin Vogt

In every lecture I give someone invariably asks what we can do to get more people on board, to help them see the benefit of natural landscapes and also embrace them.

My answer? We need more examples. 95% of the landscapes we drive by daily are monocultures, or daylilies and lots of wood mulch. Folks see these spaces as "professional" and the ideal they figure should be around their home, as well.

And who can blame them if they don't ever see an alternative, or learn why that alternative is healthier for their families and community?

But not only do we need more bold examples -- and more people willing to deal with the inevitable notices from weed control -- we also need landscapes that look pretty in the traditional garden sense. Tiers, layers, structure, texture, bloom succession, cues to care, et cetera. We can't just put a bunch of native plants out front and expect our good feelings about them to carry the day. We need design. We need to know the plants. We need to learn about plant communities, climate resilience, and plant succession.

And that's why I've poured my heart into creating online classes and articles and videos and social media posts to help you to turn the tide. Because we can. We must.

I believe this is the year of the unawn. Of good struggle that builds bridges between people, and between people and the other living beings (birds, spiders, wasps, butterflies).

- Benjamin Vogt, landscape designer, teacher and author of *A New Garden Ethic*