



## ***Ecological Garden Design Prototypes for the California Home Landscape***

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The focus of this project has been to develop ideas that can help Californians make their gardens more ecologically responsible. Our interest is to help home gardeners better reflect their own environmental values in their gardens. A related goal is to create gardens that are more connected to the natural and cultural landscape that is California. The result of this work will be a book for home gardeners tentatively entitled "Nature Recreated: Making the California Ecological Garden".

Over the past two years, there has been an explosion of interest in this topic including several new books and major articles published in popular magazines. For example, Time Magazine presented a major article in May 1993 on ecological gardening and recently a major new book on the topic was published entitled Noah's Garden: Restoring Ecology of Our Own Back Yards, by Sara Stein (Houghton Mifflin, 1993). We are pleased to see this interest and think our book focused on ecological gardens for California is even more timely and relevant.

The first year of Slosson funding was used to assist with data collection and discussions with experts to expand our vision of ecological gardens. This included literature review, interviews with garden experts around the state, and field visits to document examples of ecological gardens.

The second phase of our research was to conduct "Ecological Garden Design" workshops in different bioregions of the state. Three workshops were held including one in Davis in April 1993 for the central valley and adjacent foothills, a second at the Strybing Arboretum in San Francisco in May 1993 for the central and north coastal region, and a third in Irvine in June 1993 for the region of coastal southern California. These conferences, each attended by some 30 garden experts, naturalists and home gardeners, produced 12 ecological garden design examples of differing scale and character, responsive to different regions of the state. We have also

established a working network of experts who are informing us on technical aspects of the book.

Funding is being requested for a third and final year to support preparation of professional quality illustrations and color separations for the book. The book proposal is currently under review by the University of California Press who have expressed strong interest in this project.

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