

INSTALLING THE NEW LANDSCAPE

Start in the fall by preparing the planting bed. Place 6-8 layers of newspapers over the selected area of grass or weeds and weight them down with organic materials such as chopped leaves, seaweed, pine needles, compost, mulch or manure. In the spring, rototill to prepare the bed for planting.



Select plants from the list inside this brochure, or use lists from the Falmouth Conservation Commission, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and the FFL web site (www.geocities.com/ashumet2001). **Check local nurseries for low maintenance plants that appeal to you and fit your specific site conditions.**

Make sure you are satisfied with the layout before you plant. Put the taller-growing plants in back followed by the medium high plants. The low growing shrubs will be in the front and the various heights will create a layered look. Avoid over-planting by spacing each plant according to the width information on the tag. Interplant low maintenance perennials for more color.

Mulch the new planting with an organic material and keep the area watered for the first two seasons. The planting will then be able to grow on its own.

PLANTS TO AVOID

Some plants that grow well on Cape Cod have exceedingly bad habits. We call these 'exotic invasives,' or 'invasives' for short.

An invasive plant:

- grows, matures and spreads rapidly
- lacks natural pest or disease control
- grows in many habitats
- is difficult to remove or control

Invasives crowd out native plants and the animals with which they have evolved by starving them of sunlight, water, nutrients and space. Consequently, aggressively-spreading exotics forever alter the natural environment in ways we have yet to understand.

Properly identify and remove any invasives from your property by pulling, mowing or cutting. Check with the Master Gardeners (508-375-6690), the FFL website, or the web address below if you need help identifying or eradicating them. **Never plant any exotic invasives on your property.**

Some invasives common in Massachusetts include:

Autumn Olive	Japanese and Shrub Honeysuckle
Bishops or Gout Weed	Multiflora Rose
Black Locust	Norway Maple
Black Swallow-Wort	Oriental Bittersweet
Common Reed	Porcelain Berry
Garlic Mustard	Purple Loosestrife
Japanese Bamboo	Shining or Common Buckthorn
Japanese Barberry	Yellow Iris

Visit the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Group (www.newfs.org/conserve/invasive.htm) for an expanded list.

Brochure produced by members of the Falmouth Garden Club, the League of Women Voters of Falmouth and the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

For further information please visit www.geocities.com/ashumet2001 for more information.

Brochure design by Andrew Newman Design

**SEE INSIDE FOR LANDSCAPING TIPS
AND PLANT LIST**

BENEFITS OF ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPING

An ecological landscape:

BUILDS a healthier environment by curbing the need for excess nutrients that can seep into groundwater, eventually entering freshwater ponds or coastal waters.

REDUCES water use. Ecological landscapes generally require watering only in their first two seasons.

SAVES money spent on pesticides, fertilizers and lawn maintenance. Once established, an ecological landscape adapts to seasonal conditions and does not require regular maintenance to maintain its health and vigor.

ATTRACTS birds, beneficial insects and wildlife by creating a more diverse habitat.

DECREASES time spent working in the yard mowing and maintaining the lawn. Ecological landscapes may need a little weeding or pruning, or no care at all, depending on personal preference.

ELIMINATES pesticides use making the property safer for kids, pets and wildlife. Using plants that have adapted to the Cape Cod environment, ecological landscapes are better able to resist pest and disease infestations.



CREATING A FALMOUTH FRIENDLY LAWN

For areas where you still want some lawn, Falmouth Friendly Lawn care methods will keep grass healthy and prevent nitrogen leaching. If you are starting a new lawn, begin with the right pH level, soil depth and seed mixture (as below). You may need more fertilizer while the new lawn is growing in. For established lawns:

TEST your soil. The pH should be between 6.5-7.0. Follow the directions with the soil test results to adjust the soil pH.

CHECK to see that you have 6" of topsoil in the lawn area. If the soil amount is less, add 1/4 to 1/2" of loam or compost each spring and rake it in.

OVERSEED the new top-dressing with a seed mix of tall or fine fescues or a mixture of fescue and perennial ryegrass. These grasses will thrive with less nitrogen and are drought and shade tolerant.

MOW the lawn high, about 3" or at the mower's highest cutting height. Grass roots will be about as deep as the blade is high above ground; the deeper the root, the better the resistance to drought and disease. Prevent damage to the grass blades by keeping the mower blades sharp.

RECYCLE the clippings to return nutrients to your grass. Recycling provides the equivalent of one regular fertilizer application over the season.

FERTILIZE once in the fall as the grass is greening up if you need to fertilize at all. Use only a slow release fertilizer and be sure to use the right amount for your lawn size. If you fertilize twice a year, use only half the recommended amount each time. Always sweep up any fertilizer spill from walks, driveways and streets to prevent run-off.

WATER the lawn with 1" of water, once a week to encourage deep roots. Early morning is a good time to water. Use an empty tuna can to measure how much water the lawn gets each week.

WEED the lawn by hand or apply corn gluten, hot water, vinegar or a low toxicity spot-spray to weeds. Cover large patches of annual weeds with lime and compost. Over-seed next spring with fescues or fescues mixed with perennial ryegrass.

*Brochure design by Andrew Newman Design, newmandesign.com
Cover photograph by Daniel W. Webb*