

WHAT ARE OCEAN FRIENDLY GARDENS?

Ocean Friendly Gardens is Surfrider's sustainable landscaping and education program that provides beautiful, inexpensive and natural solutions to the problems caused by stormwater and urban runoff. Chapters use this program to make the connection between how we care for our yards and public spaces and the health of our local waterways and beaches.

The Problem

Polluted runoff is the #1 cause of beach closures and swim advisories!

Stormwater and urban runoff pollute beaches and coastal waterways with bacteria, road dust and oil, agricultural and landscaping chemicals, trash, and other debris and waste. Severe flooding during rain events can also cause sewage infrastructure failures, making recreational waters unsafe for human contact.

Inadequate wastewater treatment and traditional landscaping practices that depend on chemicals are also wreaking havoc on coastal and fresh water ecosystems by overloading waterways with nutrients, fueling toxic algae blooms and harming coral reef habitat.

Lawns are also big water wasters. Over 7 billion gallons of drinkable, freshwater is used for landscape irrigation every year in the US, and almost half is wasted and becomes runoff!



The Solution

Ocean Friendly Gardens (OFGs) apply **CPR** to revive healthy watersheds and protect clean water.

- **Conservation.** Reduce outdoor water demand & provide wildlife habitat
- **Permeability.** Build healthy, living soil to sponge up water and filter out pollutants
- **Retention.** Store rainwater in the landscape to rehydrate watersheds and local water supplies

Whether you live inland or at the beach, your yard is a mini-watershed to apply CPR to protect clean water. We all live upstream of the ocean!



OCEAN FRIENDLY GARDENS are a better alternative to traditional landscaping practices

By planting native, climate-appropriate plants, building healthy soils naturally, and carefully shaping landscapes to slow down and retain rainwater, OFGs transform landscapes and hardscapes to reduce urban runoff, filter out pollutants, conserve water and create wildlife habitat. Plus, Ocean Friendly Gardens absorb carbon from the air and store it in the soil to help reduce impacts of climate change.



A dry, thirsty turf lawn above was contoured to hold water and replaced by beautiful native plants.

Ocean Friendly Gardens support clean water in local waterways and beaches by:

- absorbing rainwater
- reducing runoff and flooding
- filtering runoff before it can pollute local waters

Ocean Friendly Gardens are good for your family's health and the health of local beaches and waterways. You can take steps to help protect clean water in your own yard too!

- Go organic. Stop using chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- Apply mulch and compost to build healthy living soil instead.
- Plant native and climate-appropriate plants.
- Shape your yard or garden to slow down and soak up rainwater.
- Reduce the size of your lawn. Swap out thirsty turf grass for mulch and native plants.
- Don't plant invasives!
- Reduce impervious surfaces. Break up pavement to allow rain to soak into the ground.
- Direct rain gutters and downspouts into your landscaping to slow down and sponge up rain.

Learn more about the Surfrider Foundation's Ocean Friendly Gardens program at

[GO.SURFRIDER.ORG/OFG](https://go.surfrider.org/ofg)