

Bay Friendly Yards: The Three Essential Elements

Long Island was instrumental in popularizing the suburban lawn — a landscape of lush green grass and ornamental bushes sourced from around the world. Maintaining these artificial landscapes requires constant watering, fertilizing, and pesticide application to keep non-native species thriving in an environment where they don't naturally belong.

However, this pursuit of a perfect lawn has come at a significant cost. Runoff from chemically treated lawns has contributed to the degradation of local waters, pushing the Great South Bay toward ecological collapse. Meanwhile, populations of pollinators, birds, fish, amphibians, and other vital wildlife have plummeted. It's time to shift from outdated lawn practices of the 1950s to a sustainable future that protects our environment, our bays, and our communities.

What is a Bay Friendly Yard?

A Bay Friendly Yard is a landscape — whether a full lawn or just sections of your property — composed of native trees, shrubs, and grasses that help filter nitrogen, manage stormwater, and create habitats essential for local wildlife.

These yards support pollinators such as bees and butterflies while also providing food and shelter for birds and other species.

Bay Friendly Yards are not only ecologically beneficial but also visually appealing, offering a rich, colorful aesthetic that can be designed to be either meadow-like or more structured. Best of all, because native plants are adapted to the local environment, they require minimal watering, no pesticides, and little maintenance. Their deep, interwoven root systems improve soil health and water retention, reducing harmful runoff and helping to restore the bay.

How to Create a Bay Friendly Yard

A Bay Friendly Yard incorporates three essential elements:

1. Habitat Restoration

Every yard, no matter how small, can contribute to restoring local ecosystems. Whether opting for a natural, wild look or a more manicured approach, habitat restoration includes:

- **Replacing Invasive Species:** Identify and remove non-native plants that disrupt local biodiversity.
- **Planting Native Species:** Select plants suited to your soil type—drier soils inland and wetter soils closer to the coast.

- **Reducing Lawn Area:** Convert portions of your lawn into native plant gardens to improve habitat quality and water retention.

2. Stormwater Management

Stormwater runoff carries harmful chemicals and nutrients into the bay, contributing to water quality decline. A Bay Friendly Yard helps to retain stormwater and prevent pollution through:

- **Rain Gardens:** Strategically placed depressions filled with native plants that absorb and filter runoff.
- **Rain Barrels:** Collecting rainwater for irrigation reduces demand on municipal water supplies.
- **Permeable Pavers:** These allow water to soak into the ground rather than running off into storm drains.
- **Drought-Tolerant Landscaping:** Native plants require little to no additional irrigation, minimizing water waste.

3. Local Stewardship

Stewardship goes beyond basic yard maintenance—it's about making mindful choices that support a healthier environment.

Key practices include:

- **Eliminating Chemical Use:** Avoid fertilizers and pesticides that contribute to water pollution.

- **Mulching Leaves:** Instead of bagging leaves, mulch them into your lawn to enrich the soil naturally.

- **Mowing Less Often:** Mow every two weeks using a mulching blade to promote healthier grass and reduce emissions.

- **Removing Invasives Regularly:** Stay vigilant in identifying and removing invasive plants that threaten local ecosystems.

To Learn More About Bay Friendly Yards

Visit www.savethegreatsouthbay.org for additional tips and resources.

If you already have a Bay Friendly Yard, apply for certification on our website and display your sign with pride!



#1 Rated Window In The Country For Maximum Energy Efficiency!



- Casements
- Double Hung • Sliding Windows

- Bows & Bays
- Patio Doors • Garden Windows

Since 1969
TRI-STATE
WINDOW FACTORY CORP.

*The Tri-State Window Formula: We Build Them!
We Install Them! We Guarantee Them!*

TRI-STATE SIDING
ROOFING • DOORS
WINDOW FACTORY CORP.

Compare The Quality Of Our Windows

Energy Star Label Rated Double Hung Window U Factor .16,
Casement U Factor Rated .16. The Lower The U Factor,
The More Energy Efficient The Window.



0%
Interest
Financing[†]
Available



24 Designer Colors
and 9 Styles To Choose From!

1-800-645-4568 Ext. 3

Factory Showroom
360 Marcus Blvd, Deer Park
631-667-8600 Ext. 3
Lic. # 21236H

Nassau Factory Outlet
3657 Merrick Rd, Seaford
516-826-9800 Ext. 3
Lic. # H18B6140000

Free In-Home Estimates

Showroom Hours: Mon-Sat 10:30-4, Sun 11-4
Additional Hours By Appointment Only.

**Westchester, Rockland,
Connecticut, New Jersey**
1-800-645-4568 Ext. 3



www.tristatewindowfactory.com



*Applies to installed list prices. †Subject to credit approval. Not to be combined with any other sales offer or prior sales. Westchester Lic.# WC-11684-H01 • Connecticut Lic.# 605419 • NJ Lic.#13VH02504300 • Rockland Lic. #H-09742-07-23-00 • NYC LIC. #2035845-DCA 10011221CR