

NATUR im GARTEN

Welcome to the garden!



www.naturimgarten.at

Together for a healthy tomorrow



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Welcome to “Natur im Garten“!

Got any questions about the garden? For more than 19 years, the Lower Austrian campaign named “Natur im Garten“ stands for information and service in all matters of gardening. Having used the idea of the natural garden, which offers variety and joy of life without poison, artificial fertilizers or peat, the initiative has set a trend. “Natur im Garten“ is meanwhile well-known far beyond the borders of our province. The ecological garden culture of our province is growing along with the initiative and is already creating identity. Consequently, “Natur im Garten“ is offering today a fruitful home for the family of garden friends, as well as for the culture, economy and tourism of the Federal Province of Lower Austria.

Join us, too — we warmly welcome you to our blossoming and thriving world of gardens!



Johanna Miki-Leitner
Governor of Lower Austria



Martin Eichinger
Minister of the State
Government of
Lower Austria





“Natur im Garten“ ... what`s that?

The Lower Austrian campaign “Natur im Garten“ was launched in 1999. The purpose of the initiative is to foster the ecological design and care of gardens and green areas, as well as to create a colourful variety – without poison, artificial fertilizers or peat. “Natur im Garten“ offers service, advice and support for everyone who cares about nature-oriented gardening.

Wherever you see the label “Natur im Garten“, you will find a garden serving as a nature-oriented recreation space for humans, as well as a habitat and home for many plant and animal species. Thanks to the careful handling of nature, the lively variety cared for in an environmentally friendly way can be truly felt. This is the place where marigold blossoms next to salad, where birds build their nests in whitethorn, where dragonflies hover above the water and lizards hide under the heap of stones. There is enough space for all of them, filling the garden with life and diversity.

Needless to say, a natural garden offers enough space to sit, to dream and relax, also allowing children to rollick about and play. Vegetable gardens, fruit trees and berry shrubs delight the palate with fresh and healthy fruits and vegetables of the season.

*“Natur im Garten“ –
a healthy variety for a living greenery!*





This is what makes up a natural garden ...

Take the criteria of “Natur im Garten“ as a guideline, which stretches through the variety of a natural garden. These criteria show how simple and important it is to give nature a place in our gardens.

In a natural garden, the basic care criteria combine with lively natural garden elements and some important aspects of cultivation, also including the kitchen garden. You will find the details on this topic on the following pages.

Three main criteria

provide the basis for the natural garden:

- the non-use of chemical-synthetic pesticides (“poison“)*
- the non-use of chemical-synthetic fertilizers (“artificial fertilizers“)
- the non-use of peat

Various natural garden elements help design your garden in multiple ways, offer a habitat for a diversified world of animal and plant species and create space for a balanced cycle of nature. The latter, in combination with near-natural garden cultivation, develops into a system being in harmony with itself.

In the Federal Province of Lower Austria — and, starting from here, also in several other regions in Europe — there is the possibility to obtain a sticker as an award for natural gardens. This Lower Austria Garden Sticker (“Natur im Garten“ Plakette) is issued to gardens that are designed and cultivated in accordance with the criteria of the campaign. You can register for the issue of the sticker by contacting the “Natur im Garten“ Telephone +43 (0)2742/74 333.

* Pesticides that comply with the EU-organic regulations or the „Natur im Garten“ criteria are allowed.





The main criteria

The non-use of chemical-synthetic pesticides*

Preventive plant protection keeps your plant healthy! The selection of sturdy plants (mainly indigenous plant species typical for the location, resilient crop and ornamental plant varieties), sustainable and gentle soil management and the promotion of beneficial organisms make near-natural garden care possible. As a result, the use of chemical pesticides is no longer necessary.

Using chemical substances not only harms pests but also useful creatures and other organisms. Furthermore, the production of these substances is harmful to the environment, which is why only environmentally friendly substances may be used in the natural garden.

* Pesticides that comply with the EU-organic regulations or the „Natur im Garten“ criteria are allowed.





The non-use of chemical-synthetic fertilizers

Composting, preparation of herbal manure, mulching and green manuring provide the basis for the supply of nutrients, as well as for the preservation and development of a healthy soil in the natural garden. Chemical-synthetic fertilizers, in contrast, are water-soluble and can seep into the groundwater, thereby contaminating our drinking water. Furthermore, the production of these fertilizers is harmful to the environment. Should your garden plants require any additional nutrients, use organic fertilizers, preferably compost.

The non-use of peat

Peat mining destroys the moorlands, which have meanwhile become rare in Central Europe. On top of that, products containing peat are transported over very long distances, which is why, in the natural garden, peat is neither used in the garden area nor in case of potted plants. If you use packaged potting soils, please make sure that the soil mixtures offered contain no peat.





Natural garden elements

There is enough space for a colourful diversity in every garden! The garden is a living being – it constantly changes and develops. The natural garden elements enrich the garden, appearing in the most different qualities and forms.

Wild shrub hedge

A diversified wild shrub hedge not only delights humans over the whole year with its floral diversity, its fruits and bright colours in autumn. It is also an important habitat for insects, birds and mammals, providing them with shelter and food. Local woods are particularly precious: the more diversified the species composition, the better it is. Typical regional shrubs are particularly well adapted to the location.

Flower meadow and meadow elements

Year by year, meadows delight us thanks to their colourful and rich variety of flowers, as well as the ever-increasing number of insects visiting. Many meadow plants are irreplaceable for the insects that are useful for the house garden. This is why already smaller meadow spaces are considered an important natural garden element for fostering useful creatures. Whether small meadow islands





or large wild flower meadows, the natural gardener mows these areas twice or three times a year, thereby making the seeding of flowers and herbs possible.

Allowing the uncontrolled growth of plants

Many “weeds” turn out, at a closer look, to be medicinal herbs or, at least, attractive wild herbs. Plants that come to the garden by themselves and blossom enrich variety, cover and protect the soil, attracting many useful creatures. In a lawn, herbs can only be found occasionally, such as dandelions or daisies, for example. The natural lawn is made up of a mixture of grasses and the most different kinds of herbs, such as yarrow, common bugle, ground ivy, plantain or prunella laciniata. Hedges or shrub beds trimmed with rarely mown wild flowers allow plants to self-seed. Also the flower bed or the joints of slabs offer space for slow-growing plants which nevertheless cover the soil, such as sheperd’s purse, sweet violet, speedwell or field pansies.



Wild corner

Areas in the garden that are mostly untended serve as important refuge areas for animals. Stones, dead wood, residues of shrub cuttings and leaves can be stored, creating many small niches for a great number of living creatures inhabiting the garden.

The most distinctive feature of such an area is the fact that it is practically left unattended (except for clearing up in spring), along with the quiet location. In many cases, it is the “sprawlers” among the plants that spread, such as stinging nettle, ghostplant, burr or ashweed, which are irreplaceable for insects.

Special locations

These areas can accommodate animal and plant species which would otherwise have more difficulties in finding a habitat in a garden. This natural garden element comprises dry-stone walls, moist biotopes, dry biotopes or swimming ponds.

Low-growing plants lap around the joints and cracks of dry-stone walls, in which many useful creatures find accommodation. A pond, whether big or small, enriches the garden through the element of water, thereby offering a place to live also for animals and plants requiring a moist environment.



*The natural garden is characterised
by a healthy balance.*





Deciduous trees

Deciduous trees provide shade in the hot summer, while letting the light shine through in the dark winter months. Indigenous tree species are of particular value for the animal world and many animals are dependent on them for food, accommodation and nesting. In small gardens, even climbing plants can substitute trees as a habitat.

Flowers and flowering shrubs

Perennial shrubs or annual flowers can enrich the garden throughout the whole year. The single flowers (where the stamens are not transformed into petals) are a rich nectar source, with their seeds serving as winter food for the animal world. By leaving withered plants in the garden over the winter, spots can be created for the hibernation of useful creatures. The greater the variety of species populating the garden is, the more animals are attracted.





Cultivation and kitchen garden

Compost heap

Everything that is taken from the garden, such as shrub cuttings, mowing material, weeds or residues from the vegetable garden, will return to the garden in the form of a precious organic fertilizer. The compost heap closes the circulation of nutrients and helps build up a healthy and lively soil.

Accommodation for useful creatures

Useful creatures (such as insects, birds, toads, shrew mice or moles, for example) take charge of the organic protection of plants in the garden. Consequently, it is recommended to provide accommodation for them in a targeted way, which can be natural structures and materials, such as hedge cuttings, heaps of deadwood, leaf, brushwood or stone, or even a rotten tree. They can, however, also be custom-made: blocks of wood with drill holes, reed stems or other hollow plant stems tied together provide a home for insects or nesting boxes for birds.

Hedge cutting or stone heaps deposited only temporarily for further use provide no accommodation for useful creatures due to their short dwell time on the spot.





Rainwater utilisation

There is no need for frequently watering the right plants in the right place: indigenous plantings in the appropriate location have better starting conditions right away. For irrigation purposes, rainwater is completely sufficient. Rainwater can also be collected for thirsty plants, which not only saves drinking water but is also particularly beneficial for the plants due to its balmy consistency and lack of calcium.

Environmentally friendly material selection

In a natural garden, regional stones and untreated, weatherproof wood (larch, oak or locust tree) are used for fences, paths, terrace coatings, pergolas etc. Pollutant-free recycling materials (bricks, concrete, natural stones) are used, for example, for backfilling natural stone walls. In order not to block the many creeping creatures (such as hedgehogs) way into their own garden, there should be no end-to-end fence foundation or walls. Flooring materials are water-permeable, such as through water-bound covers and stones laid in sand.





Mulching

The ground cover with organic materials, such as leaves, lawn cuttings or hay has a positive effect on the soil: it protects against strong weather influence, delivers organic material and therefore has a fertilizing effect. Mulching keeps humidity inside the soil and suppresses the emergence of weeds. Whether in vegetable or shrub beds or under bushes, there are lots of spots that “want to be mulched”. In case of bark mulch, it is important that products be selected that contain no pesticide residues; in a natural garden, other mulching materials should be preferred against bark mulch.

Vegetable beds and herbs

The vegetable and herb garden contributes to your own health, since nothing can be fresher and richer in vitamin than the harvest from your own garden. Self-supply also contributes to climate protection, given that the shortest possible transport route is the one from your own garden to the cooking pot. With some tomato shrubs located in front of the house wall, or herbs in the gravel bed, or the big vegetable garden: there are lots of options for cultivation!



Fruit garden and berry shrubs

The early blossoming fruit trees and berry shrubs provide a precious field for insects and, consequently, also attract a large number of useful creatures. The luscious fruits and berries, however, also entice to get yourself a healthy snack. Every garden offers enough space for a fruit tree. Whether espalier fruit, spindle bush or high-stem trees, the appropriate tree type can be found for every garden size.



Mixed cultivation/crop rotation/ green manure

Plant health and a living soil can be supported by way of mixed cultivation, crop rotation and green manure in a targeted manner. The meaning of mixed culture is the combination of certain plants to their mutual benefit. Onions and carrots, for example, keep vegetable flies away from each other on a mutual basis. Plants with single flowers in the mixed culture attract useful creatures, such as the lacewing, which is a hunter for aphids.

Crop rotation is the time sequence of different cultivated plant species at the same location, which keeps plants healthy. To match the nutrient needs, plants requiring many nutrients, plants requiring a medium quantity of nutrients and plants requiring only a small number of nutrients are cultivated on a rotating basis.

Green manure is the best soil regime: special green manure plants provide a new boost to soil life and loosen the soil.





Offering a broad range of services

The services offered by “Natur im Garten“ for private gardens and public green areas are highly diversified: providing advice on the “Natur im Garten“ Telephone and in the various regions, in the show “Natur im Garten“ hosted by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF); brochures, show gardens, partner companies, the magazine “Natur im Garten“ and books; a comprehensive education and further training offer within the framework of the “Natur im Garten“ competence center.

Festivities and events of the campaign guarantee fun and excitement in the ecological garden province of Lower Austria.





At “Natur im Garten“, much importance is attached to consultation services – be it via the “Natur im Garten“ Telephone or via the information centres of your region.

“Natur im Garten“ Telephone

+43 (0)2742/74 333

The contact point for all questions concerning the garden: We will always give you the right answers! You can use this hotline also to register for consultations or seminars, or to order publications of “Natur im Garten“!

Opening hours:

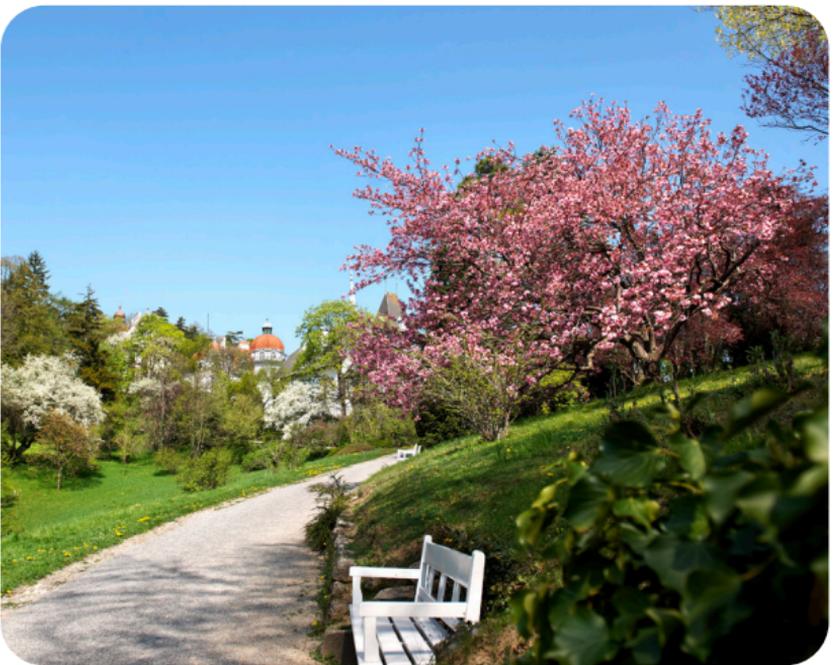
Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri from 8 a.m. till 3 p.m.,
and Wed from 9 a.m. til 5 p.m.





“Natur im Garten“ in your region

The “Natur im Garten“ experts (“Nature in the Garden“ Consultants) are there for you as contact persons in your region and offer presentations and workshops on the topics of natural gardens.



Experience “Natur im Garten“ in the show gardens and partner companies

The show gardens of “Natur im Garten“ designed and cultivated in a near-natural way let everyone directly experience the impressive garden variety, the latter reaching from private house and family gardens to historic gardens and lush kitchen gardens to the GARTEN TULLN, the first ecological garden show featuring 60 pattern gardens.

Also the partner companies of the campaign present themselves in all their fullness: you can find garden and landscaping businesses as well as garden centres, florists and tree nurseries, as well as planning offices and businesses specialised in gardening. They offer consulting, service as well as a selected range of products for the natural garden.

Awards of “Natur im Garten“

The “Natur im Garten“ Plakette featuring the logo of the campaign “Natur im Garten“ is an award for private gardens that fulfil the criteria of the campaign; it is awarded to natural gardeners in the course of a visit. Also municipalities, show gardens and partner companies can get such awards.

“Natur im Garten“ competence center

What does it mean? Ecological gardening means learning – experiencing – understanding! The comprehensive training and further training offer at the GARTEN TULLN as well as in all regions of Lower Austria offers the right tool to learn natural gardening in a simple way and to implement your own ideas in the garden.

“NATUR IM GARTEN“ COMPETENCE CENTER

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„NATUR IM GARTEN“

EXPERIENCE WORLD

Annually from APRIL-OCTOBER

www.DIEGARTENTULLN.at