

**Cindy and Dave Fairbrook** have been gardening this hilltop oasis for seventeen years. In those seventeen years, they have taken classes, attended workshops, and been inspired by other dedicated gardeners. Unique design elements such as an English rock wall, clipped hedges, and a formal knot garden offer stylish tribute to British ancestors. Gravel, fine fir, compost, and wood chip mulches around the closely spaced plants keep the hand weeding and watering to a minimum. Vegetables are grown using the French potager style, creating kitchen garden beds as beautiful and interesting as the rest of the garden. Guinea hens are as lovely as they are entertaining in addition to being an integral component of this organic garden. The hens eat bugs and weed seeds and don't disturb the plantings! They also stand guard for other garden predators such as raccoon and deer.

**What are your watering strategies?** Water is conserved as much as possible in this garden and most areas are watered only as needed according to water gauges. In the potager area (herb and vegetable garden) a drip irrigation line waters more regularly. "Water hogs" such as calla lilies, hydrangeas, and roses are watered by hand as infrequently as possible!

**How do you control pests?** Slugs get picked off by hand and slug susceptible plants are surrounded with sluggo, a non-toxic slug bait. Aphids are simply sprayed off of plants with water and most other plant pests such as deer, are kept out of the garden with a ten foot fence. In general, these plants are healthy and located in the right place to flourish so pests aren't attracted to them.

**How do you fertilize?** Slow-release, organic fertilizer is applied twice a year to keep the lawn green and healthy. Compost, organic fertilizers, and mulch are added to the soil when new plants are planted. Established beds are mulched with organic compost and wood chips, gravel, or fir needles every year. Annuals receive an annual dose of liquid fish fertilizer when planted and occasional additions throughout the growing season plus soil amendments such as compost and worm castings to keep them blooming all summer.

**What approach do you use for controlling diseases?** Roses and the lemon tree are the most disease-prone plants in the garden. Compost tea and good ventilation through good pruning are keys to preventing disease. Leaves are hand cleaned as needed to prevent fungus from spreading. The key to disease prevention is to plant disease resistant varieties such as heirlooms, carpet roses, and natives.

**How do you handle weeds?** Everything here is hand weeded 12 months a year to keep it in check. There are a few favorite weeding tools such as a winged weeder and weed torch that occasionally come out of the garage but in general, the few weeds that make it in through the mulch and the close conditions are hand weeded out.

**How many hours a week do you spend in the garden?** These are dedicated gardeners and it shows! It only takes 50-60 hours a week to keep up this gorgeous garden.

**Do you attract wildlife to your garden?** Birds are lucky to have their choice of bird feeders placed strategically around the garden. Butterflies are welcomed with lots and lots of flowers such as Cornus, Malus, Spirea, Asters, Coreopsis, Daisies, Lavenders and more!

**What are your biggest gardening challenges?** Similar to just about every other gardener that we talk to, these two share that weeding is the biggest chore in this garden. A close second is keeping records of all of the new plants, adding them to a data base, and making plant tags.

**What makes gardening fun or satisfying for you?** The answer to this question is pretty long as you can guess from gardeners who spend so much time in their garden! Gardening is relaxing, therapeutic, good exercise and of course, the results make it all worth it!