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Style Publishing Group

P.O. Box 1676

Frisco, Texas 75034

Phone: 972.335.1181

Toll Free: 877.781.7067

Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com

Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306



wise plantings using texas smartscape[™]

by robert wier

WELCOME TO THE FRISCO AREA. Many new Frisco residents ask, "Can you grow anything in this stuff you call soil?" Believe it or not this blackland clay soil is one of the reasons Frisco literally grew as an agricultural community. As the Frisco area continues to grow and the surrounding farmland undergoes development, so will our demand for precious water. The Texas SmartScape[™] concept is a wise choice for attractive landscapes with fewer needs, especially water.

Basically, the SmartScape[™] concept uses native and well-adapted plants to create landscapes and green spaces that require less water, fertilizer, pesticides and even less maintenance. These plants can handle extremes, from our summer heat to hordes of grasshoppers, because they've adapted over time to our local conditions.

Native Texas Nursery, a grower of native plants in central Texas, has a trademarked slogan "The natives are friendly once you get to know them."[™] How true!

Frisco is one of the cities that supports and promotes this concept. You've probably driven by many landscapes within the city using these plants and ideas. Some examples include the shopping development in and around the mall, Preston Road's center median,



various housing developments, some of the local schools and many others.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO CONSIDER AS YOU UNDERGO THE PROCESS:

- Planning saves money and time. Take time to think through your ideas. Remember the old carpenter's phrase ... "measure twice, cut once".
- Group plants together by similar moisture requirements. Some native varieties will drown if grown adjacent to other varieties that are watered frequently.
- Water well at first to establish any new planting, and then adjust watering as needed. A common misconception with native plants is that they don't need much water. Which is true, however initially the plants need to be watered frequently to help them become established, then they can withstand less watering.
- Be patient. Many perennials don't look their best until they have become established for about a year.
- Be prepared to accept wildlife visiting your landscape. Planting native plants attracts birds (especially hummingbirds), butterflies, bees and other wildlife.



For more information on the Texas SmartScape[™] concept and pictures of these and other plants, visit www.txsmartscape.com.

More and more people are using native plantings and practicing the SmartScape[™] concept with colorful, yet less burdensome landscapes. Whether you are new to the area, or a longtime resident, I invite you, as the wise reader that you are, to explore using Texas SmartScape[™].

Robert Wier is a local resident and co-owner of Shades of Green Nursery.

A short list of reliable plants that might wet your appetite and get you started exploring the SmartScape[™] concept and its possibilities includes:

Calylophus
Coneflower
Crossvine
Four Nerve Daisy
Frogfruit
Mexican Plum
Pink Skullcap
Red Yucca
Salvia greggia
Turk's Cap
Vitex