

A COUPLE OF LANDSCAPING IDEAS

by Wesley Starr

As a "circuit riding" respiratory therapist, I travel to many cities and towns throughout central Florida to patients' homes. During trips and lunch breaks, I enjoy observing native plants, and sometimes I notice different landscaping techniques that homeowners use. Here are two that readers may find usable:

In Cocoa, a man living in a mobile home park recycled cement blocks to set off his native plants. He used the full block, or broke some blocks into single squares, and planted opuntia in each square. The cactus planted in the squares grows more upright than in the wild, giving a different appearance.

The cactus-filled blocks were used as a border, replacing part of the lawn. Any handy gardener could arrange the blocks to be formal, or artistic. They could be stacked, or placed at different levels in the ground for another effect. And other native flora could be substituted for the cactus.

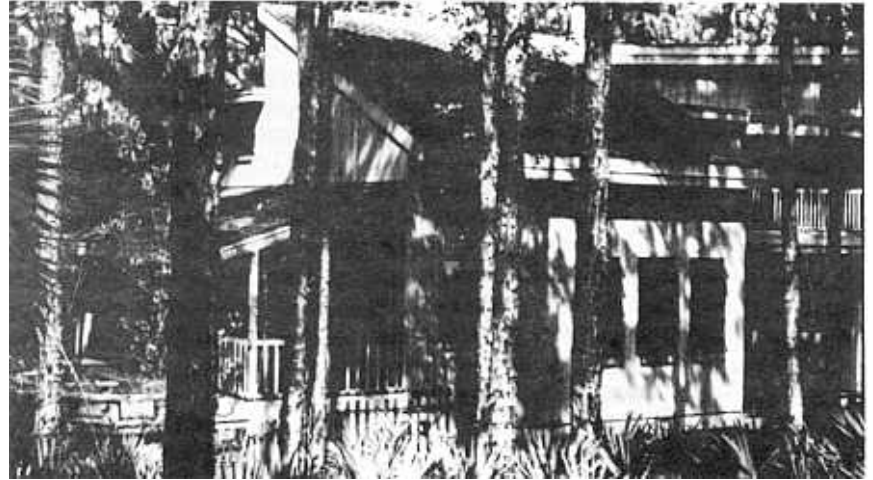
The second project was in DeLand, where a man and wife worked on the

front yard for about a month to change their entire front lawn to a lily-and-mulch combination. First, they tilled all the grass under, then lay down a layer of mulch, then planted the lilies. The completed job had a formal appearance which some gardeners prefer over a "wild" front yard. Maintenance consists

of a little weeding in the spring.

Unfortunately, this yard was planted in exotic, but cold-hardy, lilies. Coontie, *Ilex vomitoria*, or other native plants could have been used instead.

Maybe these ideas will spark someone's imagination for what to do with a problem lawn.



TROPICAL PARADISE FOR SALE

Listen to great horned and screech owls by night, woodpeckers and songbirds by day. This 3/3 two-story home was architecturally designed for tropical living and is surrounded by 1½ acres of majestic pines and palmettos. The interior features vaulted ceilings, loft, brick fireplace, Mexican tile and oak floors, large screened porch and two decks. Located in northeastern Boynton Beach, Florida, on a privately-owned, dead-end road, it is close to everything yet totally private. Five minutes to Santaluces H.S. Asking \$245,000. Call owner 407/737-1283.

Land Clearing Ordinance Defeated. The house in the ad above was designed to fit into native pinewoods with minimal disturbance. Prior to construction in 1982, the vegetation was surveyed to plot the locations of over 360 trees, plus palmetto and gallberry borders, in order to best locate the house in relation to its environment. The mosaic of slash pine, saw palmetto, and gallberry was painstakingly protected during construction, and only seven trees were removed. The slash pine canopy creates a self-mulching yard of pine needles with not one blade of grass to mow.

In 1985, the property was used as a test case to challenge the Palm Beach County lot clearing ordinance. The Davises, both of whom are career environmentalists, were notified that they had to clear all "uncultivated vegetation" and all native trees less than three inches in diameter from their 3 1/2 acre lot in Boynton Beach. They appealed to the county commission and to the Environmental Control Hearing Board, with assistance from the local Audubon Society, Florida Native Plant Society, and twelve neighbors. As a result of the hearing, not only was their native habitat saved, but the land clearing ordinance was rewritten to exclude native vegetation from lot clearing requirements. This was a step in the process that led to adoption of other Palm Beach County ordinances protecting native plants.

Planning a Gift to FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Including the Florida Native Plant Society in your will can make it possible for you to make a lasting contribution to the protection of Florida's natural communities and plants.

The annual operating needs of the Society are currently being financed through memberships, contributions, and income generated through conferences and sales of books and items. In addition, members play a vital role in the operation of FNPS, donating many hours of valuable work.

Our task has been and will be to attract and develop a variety of income and funding sources in order to sustain FNPS as an independent not-for-profit society.

Gifts can take the form of cash, portions of estates, insurance, securities, real estate, and personal property.

All grants, bequests, and contributions to the Florida Native Plant Society are tax deductible. FNPS qualifies as a tax exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.