

## Monadnock Localvore Project 2009: Backyard Gardening Class

### Permaculture

Permaculture is an innovative framework for creating sustainable ways of living; a practical method for developing ecologically harmonious, efficient and productive systems that can be used by anyone, anywhere. **Permaculture Magazine**

### Forest Gardening

“We can consciously apply the principles of ecology to the design of home scale gardens that mimic forest ecosystem structure and function, but grow food, fuel, fiber, fodder, fertilizer, ‘farmaceuticals,’ and fun...Edible forest gardening is the art and science of putting plants together in woodland-like patterns that forge mutually beneficial relationships, creating a garden ecosystem that is more than the sum of its parts. You can grow fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, other useful plants, and animals in a way that mimics natural ecosystems.” **Edible Forest Gardens - Dave Jacke with Eric Toensmeier**, <http://www.edibleforestgardens.com>

### Polycultures



Unlike a monoculture, you create a polyculture by planting more than one plant species or variety in an area. I planted just one patch, instead of an entire garden, to make the project more manageable in terms of time commitment and cost.

#### Apple Polyculture:

- Yarrow to attract beneficial insects, act as ground cover, and use medicinally.
- Sorrel, also to attract beneficial insects and act as ground cover, with the added benefits of being a biodynamic accumulator and just plain yummy.
- Anise Hyssop, once again, to attract the good insects and make a delicious tea.
- Strawberries for ground cover and food.

The quick version of my process: I laid out each plant, planted them appropriately, added sheet mulch (newspaper and cardboard), compost, and wood chips, and watered. Within a half hour, with no tilling, I had my polyculture patch.

Planting this way not only reduces the time commitment; it also increases the likelihood that the tree will survive. Thanks to the ground cover, it will cut down on the erosion my backyard tends to suffer from, while someday providing us with apples, salad greens, and medicinals.

More about permaculture:

<http://permacultureprinciples.com/>