



## General information

**Thank you for choosing Newt Gardens. We take pride in our knowledge of the natural landscape and native plants, and are committed to creating garden spaces that provide joy for our customers and habitat to our local flora and fauna.**

At Newt Gardens, our main goal is to increase ecosystem diversity, create habitat and homes for birds, bees, and the other creatures we share our gardens with, increase soil nutrients, and establish a happy, healthy garden. Because of this, we utilize strategies and tools that get the job done without harming our environment.

Our gardening methodologies include the use of appropriate tools, careful and informed pruning, weed management, mulch, debris management, planting, and more. We take an ecological approach to build the most effective and mutually beneficial system tailored to each of our customers' needs in order to steward our gardens into lasting health and beauty.



*Globe mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua)*  
Photo by Keelan Franzen

# Our Gardening Methodologies

## ~Weed Management~

When managing weeds, we tailor our process to the specific garden or space we are working in. We do not use harmful chemicals like glyphosates, as these damage the soil, causing lasting harm for future plants and creatures through the destruction of beneficial bacteria, bugs, neighboring plants, and fungi. This destruction causes major harm to soil and makes it difficult to rehabilitate, which in turn makes a garden sickly and weak.

We also do not use weed cloth, and remove it when working in gardens. Weed cloth turns soil anaerobic by blocking the flow of oxygen into the soil, which kills creatures like worms and beneficial bacterias that require oxygen. Weed cloth also prevents nutrients from properly moving down the soil column, strangles perennial plant roots, and causes erosion by interrupting water flow, soil conditions, and roots. Weed Cloth is also highly ineffective in long term weed management due to the fact that most weeds are annually deposited seeds that can grow right on top, and others are considered weeds in the first place due to their aggressive nature and ability to grow through anything.

Instead of glyphosates and weed cloth, we use strategic planning to hand pull them before they go to seed, and manage them through weed wacking when appropriate, mulching to suppress them, and deliberate planting choices to outcompete them, as well as constant monitoring and attention to keep them from coming back.

## ~Mulch~

Mulch is an essential part of a healthy garden, as it helps to manage weeds, amend soil, prevent erosion, provide water retention and distribution, moderate soil temperature, provide shelter for beneficial creatures, like salamanders and bugs, it helps to reduce mud and dust alike.

We use mulch from our local tree service, Lewis Tree, because their mulch is a nice mix of our local biota, making it very beneficial to amending soil conditions and native plantings. We also utilize leaf debris from our garden as mulch when appropriate, as this can double as debris management. Unlike bagged mulch, which is often dyed with fungicide containing chemicals, our rich natural mulch promotes healthy mycology, provides ample soil amendment through its rich nutrients, and has an appealing natural look that is better suited for long term aesthetic goals, as it helps minimize visual business by disguising leaf litter better.

Healthy mycology in the soil benefits plants by creating a healthy underground ecosystem, which can help ward off disease. It also aids in speeding the breakdown of materials like leaf litter, rotting fruit, and animal waste. The soil amending properties

of this mulch are better suited for long term success as well, as it slowly releases nutrients along with organic compounds that can soften and rehabilitate nutrient deprived soils.

### **~Tools~**

At Newt Gardens, we use an array of classic gardening tools and electric power tools to work effectively and efficiently. We bring a quality electric blower and weed wacker, which are far quieter and less polluting than their gas powered counterparts. We also bring an electric mower, pole saw, and step ladders for gardens that require them. When special tasks require them, we can bring a sawzall, hedge trimmer, and larger ladders.

Our workers are trained to use our tools effectively, and to use a delicate touch to achieve well cared for happy gardens.

### **~Pruning~**

We make careful and informed decisions around pruning in order to get the best results around happy and healthy plants. This means that we choose the right tool for the application, and with consideration to the right time of year, and specific needs of the individual plant and space. We put careful consideration into the long term goals of a garden and individual plants when pruning, which helps us to allow plants to look their best with less long term maintenance.

We prefer to work with plants instead of against them, so we work with an understanding of how different plants respond to different types of pruning, and are able to make choices that help plants grow into the desired shape and direction, as well as in a way that is healthy and beautiful. We prune with artistry inspired by nature, and avoid lollipop and box shapes; we can unveil gorgeous branch structures, bonsai shrubs, and help manage growth so that all of your plants can get along with each other and you.

### **~Debris Management~**

When a garden is well balanced and happy, most materials should be manageable on sight, and this is our goal. When appropriate, we also greenwaste and haul materials.

As stated before, we use leaf litter both as mulch, and mulch to help disguise and break down leaf litter when appropriate. Doing so helps retain valuable nutrients that your garden is already producing. We value debris from native plants above other types of debris, as breaking them down on site can help to reinstate a natural cycle with specific nutrients and compounds that our local native flora and fauna are better able to utilize and recycle.

For debris that are too excessive or unsightly, we like to designate hidden spaces in the garden as carbon sinks, to compost and break down materials that can provide benefit to the garden and reduce hauling and greenwaste dependence.

When materials are not suited for compost, or a garden is not equipped to break down the type of debris, we use green waste cans and haul debris away when necessary. This is often the case with invasive tree debris such as acacia and bamboo, which do not break down in our ecosystem's conditions. Other common instances include redwood duff, and woody debris from pruning.

When weeding, most soft weeds can be easily broken down on site with compost and mulch, but if the weeds are seed ridden or able to reroot, we greenwaste them to ensure they do not return.

### **~Planting~**

We believe in using native or pollinator-friendly plants. California Natives perform the best, require less maintenance, require less water, are more affordable, create natural habitats, and are much more sustainable than non-native plants. We have a curated list of our suggested flora [here](#).

We put a lot of consideration into planting choices to ensure that they visually and spatially work, and to make sure they are the right choice for the lighting and soil conditions of the space we work in.

### **~Labour and Scheduling~**

We have two main types of work we offer; project work, and maintenance visits. Project work involves any labor that is not regularly scheduled. This includes one-off visits to get a garden back into shape, garden installations, and special labor such as a large pruning that doesn't fit into a maintenance visit.

For project work, we can discuss the scope of work and provide a quote. For projects of large scale, a contract will be written and signed ahead of work.

For maintenance visits, we can come once a week, once every two weeks, or once a month. Anything less frequent is scheduled as project work. We typically work in teams of two, for two hours. We can work more as needed. We can discuss and help you select the best frequency and duration of visits for you and your gardens' needs. Maintenance visits start at a minimum of \$180 per visit, and increase by \$60 per worker per hour passed one and a half hours.

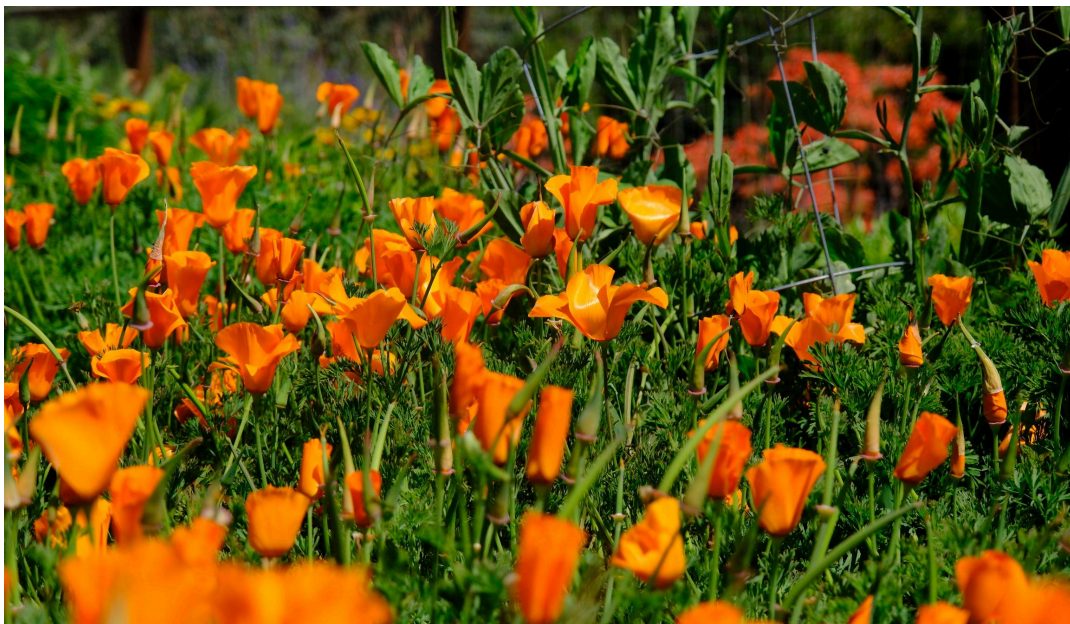
## ~Payments~

We write detailed receipts for all of our jobs that we deliver after visits, or via email. We take pride in keeping all costs accounted for so that you know each item you're paying for. Project payments are accepted online via our portal, or via mail/in person via check or cash. For maintenance, we ask all customers to keep a card on file that will be charged within 24 business hours of your visit. For project billing we ask that an initial payment is made on the first project day, and a final payment is made on the last project day.

## The Next Step

After reading this, hopefully you have an idea of our work moving forward. We work efficiently and carefully, and uphold high standards. We are a passionate, enthusiastic, and experienced team, and are excited to help your vision come to life. If you want to move forward, the next step would be working into our schedule. We are generally booked for 2-4 weeks out, but can be accommodating to special circumstances.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out  
Thank you,  
~The Newt Gardens team



*California Poppy (Eschscholzia Californica)*  
Photo by Keelan Franzen