



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
**LANDSCAPE
PROFESSIONALS**

MYTHS AND MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT LANDSCAPES

MYTH:
ALL LANDSCAPES ARE CREATED EQUAL.

FACTS:

Just because a yard has grass and some shrubs doesn't mean it's healthy and providing its full health and environmental benefits. Unmanaged lawns are ripe targets for infestations from ticks, mosquitoes, fleas and other pests that transmit disease. They can also harbor weeds that can cause debilitating allergies. Landscapes that are untended don't contribute their full potential to communities and the environment, meaning they can't fend off threats from invasive species or provide essential oxygen and capture carbon dioxide ... or fully protect our air ... or control soil erosion and water run-off. Healthy landscapes are those with well-managed lawns with hearty roots, complemented with strong native shrubs and flowers that contribute to the local ecosystem. Of course, these healthy lawns take work and know-how, and they require that the right products go into them to ensure the right benefits come out of them.

MYTH:
WEEDS, WHILE UNSIGHTLY, AREN'T ALL THAT BAD.

FACTS:

When weeds are allowed to grow with abandon, they compete with grass, flowers and trees for water, light and nutrients that live deep within the soil. Many weeds are voracious growers and if they grow strong and remain unchecked, they push out grass and other "good plants." The best way to control weeds is to ensure the growth of

thick, healthy grass to create lawns that are strong enough to fight back against weeds and to apply weed control products.

MYTH:
PESTICIDES SHOULD BE AVOIDED.

FACTS:

Pesticides can be beneficial for plant health.

Trees, shrubs, flowers and grass often rely on pesticide products for good health. The Environmental Protection Agency registers pesticides once they determine their use will be appropriate for human health and our environment. Pesticides can be an essential part of plant health yet should only be used when warranted and only according to the label instructions. The proper use of pesticides provides a science-approved solution to ward off pests and disease, and ensure the natural elements of a landscape produce their full environmental benefits.

MYTH:
LAWNS ARE OPTIONAL. WE CAN DO WITHOUT THEIR COSMETIC BEAUTY.

FACTS:

The real value of lawns is not the aesthetic value they offer. Healthy grass is an essential part of a healthy environment. Lawns clean the air by capturing dust, smoke particles and other pollutants to make our environment cleaner. Healthy lawns

also prevent soil erosion and protect bodies of water as they capture unhealthy runoff that might otherwise filter into bodies of water. And of course, they provide oxygen. Grasses absorb carbon dioxide and break it down into oxygen and carbon. In fact, a 50'x50' lawn produces enough oxygen for a family of four. While the environmental benefits are significant, grass also provides the foundation for living, working and playing outdoors. It's where childhood games are played, where pets roam and where adults can relax. While some homeowners in drought-prone regions occasionally consider removing their lawns, such drastic steps should not be made without a thorough understanding of the repercussions to the community and the environment.

MYTH:
GRASS NEEDS TO BE GREEN TO BE HEALTHY.

FACTS:

Lawns often go dormant, turning a brownish color, when grass blades are stressed. This is natural and generally not a cause for concern. Most often, this is just your lawn's way of protecting itself from things like excessive heat or elongated spells without water. It's okay to embrace the brown! When the stress factor is removed, such as when a drought-plagued lawn receives water, the natural green color of the grass should return. If, after the stressor is eliminated, the grass still does not green-up, its health should then be evaluated.

MYTH:
FERTILIZER IS USED ONLY TO MAKE GRASS GREEN.

FACTS:

While fertilizer does indeed help bring out a rich green color in grass, that aesthetic boost is not its greatest benefit. A well-fertilized lawn has a strong root system, enabling it to stand up to stressors like extreme temperature swings, drought and mowing. In addition,

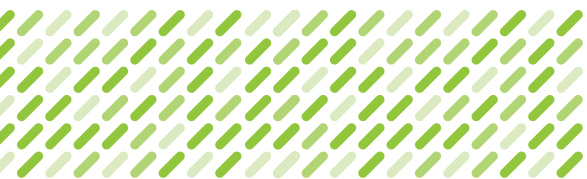
properly fertilized lawns actually yield fewer nutrient and soil particles into runoff water than when they are unfertilized. When a lawn is healthy, it enriches the community and the environment and, of course, provides a platform for incredible backyard memories.

MYTH:
PROFESSIONALS ARE IMPORTANT ONLY WHEN THERE'S A PROBLEM.

FACTS:

Landscape professionals can most certainly help when lawns, plants and trees are troubled; however, they also provide expertise that prevents problems in the first place. Just as preventative care is important for human health, it is for plant health as well. Professionals provide the knowledge and have the training to help prevent lawn and shrub pests that cause damage, ensure trees are healthy and safe, stop disease-carrying pests from taking up residence in lawns, fight against the threats posed by invasive plant and insect species, and generally ensure landscapes support and sustain local communities.

There's a lot that goes into a healthy landscape — a lot of hard work, a lot of stewardship and various products to support its good health. More important than what goes into the landscape is what comes out — outdoor spaces that provide the root of happiness for our families, our communities and our environment.



To learn more about how to ensure the good health of your landscape or to find a landscape professional in your area, visit LoveYourLandscape.org.