

# Forestry Landscaping

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## I. Introduction

The purpose of this write-up is to tell you in words — something about an art of visual forms, of the things we see, known as landscape or landscape design. Like all other forms of design it must change and grow with the times. Even the world changes for the better. Forestry Landscaping, therefore, may be defined as the employment of the knowledge of Forestry in the art of visual forms. It is like associating certain sounds with color.

There is none in the books to pin-point the date and place of the origin of landscaping. We have every reason to believe, however, that this art was as old as civilization itself. It undoubtedly unknowingly was started by feminine hands, because of the women's intuition for visual forms. Later the project called for the combined efforts of the male of the species. This was later followed by all the members of the family as an individual group, and then by what we have today the organized groups. It has to be admitted, though, that we have barely scratched the ground on this regard. It can not likewise be denied that the celebration of Arbor Day started by the late Governor Norton of Nebraska, which gained momentum in the Philippines, until we have today the Arbor Week, did contribute and is still contributing to the art of landscaping.

## II. Kinds of Forestry Landscaping

All are agreed that landscaping is an art. And since it is an art, the treatment of the different subjects must likewise be different. For example: the arrangement of the plants, and even the kinds or species of plants needed for the school grounds usually differ from

those needed for the cemetery. Those for public buildings differ also from those for the private offices. Even those for the street corners differ from those for the main highways. Each subject or kind of subjects calls for a different set of standard rules. As a practice, the private enterprises are not so much concerned about the landscaping of their grounds, especially when the future of the business is not bright. In the case of the government buildings, the landscaping work thereat must be in accordance with the whims and caprices of the boss. It will appear really stupid if you will plant a shade tree, like *Narra*, in a place where shade is not needed. It is also like wearing your garden clothes, when you are going to make a purely social call, or wearing your Sunday clothes, when you are going to the market. It is not however the intention of the writer to discuss the different procedures of landscaping, the treatment of the different subjects and the kinds of planting materials needed thereon. These have been treated already by various writers.

## III. Purpose of Forestry Landscaping

Let us take an specific case— the home lot. The first impulse of one starting house is to make the surrounding of the house beautiful. A rose is planted here, another flowering plant there. Different kinds of hedges are introduced. Flowering trees which also provide abundant shade are planted. Even fruit trees are not overlooked. All these steps point to the creation of wholesome surroundings.

The main concern though of any family is the health of that family. In the same manner that the government is concerned

about the health of its people. Wholesome surrounding is one contributing factor to the health of the people living within that surrounding. Once landscaping is started, that landscape must not only be maintained, but also improved in accordance with the progress of the times. In this way the parents chance to employ their otherwise would-be idle hours. This will in turn create, incite and develop their liking for outdoors.

The seemingly valueless little efforts contributed by the young children of the family to the landscaping of the property will likewise contribute to the increased value of that property. It goes without saying that improvements are assets added to the value of the property. Since landscape is an improvement, it therefore has value. The same property will again increase in value if it is located in a properly landscaped neighborhood. To understand the value of landscape better, try to go to the different subdivision offices in any city or suburb, and you will find that the unit cost of a landscaped subdivision is more than any that is not improved. The manager will invariably say that we have done this, and we have done that, for the sake of our customers.

#### IV. Problems to meet in Forestry Landscaping

In any undertaking, a plan, although defective, is better than no plan at all. This is granting that we have already the site. The preparation of the plan requires technical know-how. Some experts prepare to work on an area that has been cleared of vegetation, in view of the fact that they could introduce their own ideas without hindrance. There are numerous disadvantages to this procedure. The elimination of the vegetation eliminates likewise the guide as to what species or association of species are to be considered in the landscaping of the area.

Since it takes time to grow plants, especially trees, some specialists prepare to begin their landscaping or rather center their work around the desirable vegetation already

existing on the area. Some vegetation may therefore be eliminated if the same interfere with the working plan designed for the area. Some species are preserved, and may later on be totally eliminated their temporary use being to make the area not to appear totally barren. Others are used as nurse trees of whatever species are introduced therein.

Ordinary garden tools needed in this work are readily obtainable even in the local markets. Fertilizers are also obtainable locally.

One of the greatest problems of landscaping is the financial side of it, hence the site must therefore be kept to within the practical size. Large estates require the so-called manicured treatment. It takes hours of hard labor to trim, water or otherwise treat expansive landscape. Planting materials to be used must be handy and require the minimum of care. It is sheer folly to plant a beautiful tree or shrub if the same will easily succumb to drought and insect and pest diseases. The use, therefore, of handy and native species is desirable. Besides they are not hard and expensive to get as compared with the exotic species.

Technical advice is not always available. Even if it is available, it is still suggested that the actual work be done or supervised by the owner. The creator is more satisfied and retains greater interest in the object of his creation. This statement of fact is true, anywhere, any time.

#### V. Reasons for Recommending Forest Trees

The use of forest trees for the beautification of the home-lot is not without plausible reason. As a rule, forest trees are more beautiful either because of their leaves, flowers, arrangement of the branches or because of their very symmetrical form. Some forest trees, like the Mabolo, Santol, etc. have edible fruits. The main objection to the fruit tree is that when it is in fruits the small boys try to fall the fruits with their sling shots. Sometimes they climb the tree and break the

branches to get the fruits. Such tree is like a woman with a once beautiful face disfigured by accident.

Again fruit trees easily succumb to strong winds, besides being susceptible to attack of insect pests and diseases. We should not lose sight of the fact also that fruit trees generally do not favorably react to poor soil condition in the same way the forest trees do.

## VI. Done By the Government

The Bureau of Forestry, through its forest nurseries scattered throughout the Islands, furnishes planting materials free of charge to government entities desiring to do landscaping work. The expenses for labor and materials incurred in connection with the balling of the plants have to be shouldered by the entities concerned. A nominal fee for the cost of the seedlings is charged to private parties. All parties concerned could avail themselves of the technical know-how of the Bureau of Forestry personnel. Without this knowledge one is likely to drive a square peg in a round hole—like planting a beautiful flowering tree, because of its attractive flowers alone, without considering other factors, such as whether that tree will grow in accordance with the dream of the planter or not etc.

The President Assistance to Community Development commonly known as PACD with Headquarters at Malacañang is another government entity doing something to make our backward urban community a better and more wholesome place to live in. Even the beautification of the grounds of our schools is being attended to. Likewise in the landscaping of our barrio, feeder roads, a contributing artery to the bulk of our commerce and industry, are not left untouched.

Speaking of roads, we now have in the Bureau of Public Highways, an Office under the Landscape Superintendent, charged with the beautification of our national roads, as one of its functions. Formerly this Landscape Office has been dependent upon the Bureau of Forestry for planting materials. Now it has a nursery of its own at College, Laguna.

The following are among the species recommended for planting:

1. For shade and beauty (because of their green leaf canopy and strong root system):  
African tulip (*Spathodea campanulata*)  
Anonang (*Cordia dichotoma*)  
Banaba (*Lagerstroemia speciosa*)  
Bitao (*Calophyllum inophyllum*)  
Camagon (*Diospyros discolor*)  
Narra (*Pterocarpus indicus*)  
Sampaloc (*Tamarindus indica*)  
Talisai (*Terminalia catappa*)  
Teak (*Tectona grandis*)  
Etc.

2. For lawns (Trees show best when appearing individually)

*Araucaria augustifolia*

" *excelsa*

Golden Shower (*Cassia fistula*)

Mountain Ago (*Casuarina rumphiana*)

Pink Shower (*Cassia javanica*)

Etc.

3. For wood and edible fruits:

Caimito (*Chrysophyllum cainito*)

Camachile (*Pithecolobium dulce*)

Chico (*Achras sapota*)

Ipil-ipil (*Leucaena glauca*)

Mango (*Mangifera indica*)

Etc.

4. For aesthetic effects:

Balibikan (*Drypetes bordenii*)

Bottle Brush (*Callistemon lanceolata*)

Palosanto (*Triplaris cumingiana*)

Queen of Flowering Plants (*Amherstia nobilis*)

Saraca (*Saraca declinata*)

Etc.

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