



# In Your Own Backyard

an educational coloring  
book on your lawn's  
environmental impact

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## The Purpose of this Book

Many of us care about the environment and the impact we have on it, but feel overwhelmed about the magnitude of this issue. This interactive, all ages book strives to bring awareness to one way we can change this impact for the better. The typical yard has a green covering of grass. This type of lawn brings with it more issues than many may realize, and there are many ways to improve this environment.

This coloring book gives information on why the monoculture of grass many of us cultivate is not the best use of our land, and offers alternatives to lawn care. As you beautify these pages with color, consider beautifying your lawn, and your relationship with the world.



## Alternatives to a Grass Lawn

### 1. Clover Lawn

Pros: a naturally fertilizing plant that provides nutrients to the soil and all the plants around it. it can be mixed in with existing grass lawns and supports pollinators.

Cons: may require reseeding every few years, and if it covers the entire lawn it is less durable to foot traffic.

### 2. Moss Lawn

Pros: grows well in shaded areas, aids in reducing erosion, and requires minimal water.

Cons: it is less durable to foot traffic and will dry out in direct sun.

### 3. Meadow of Native Plants

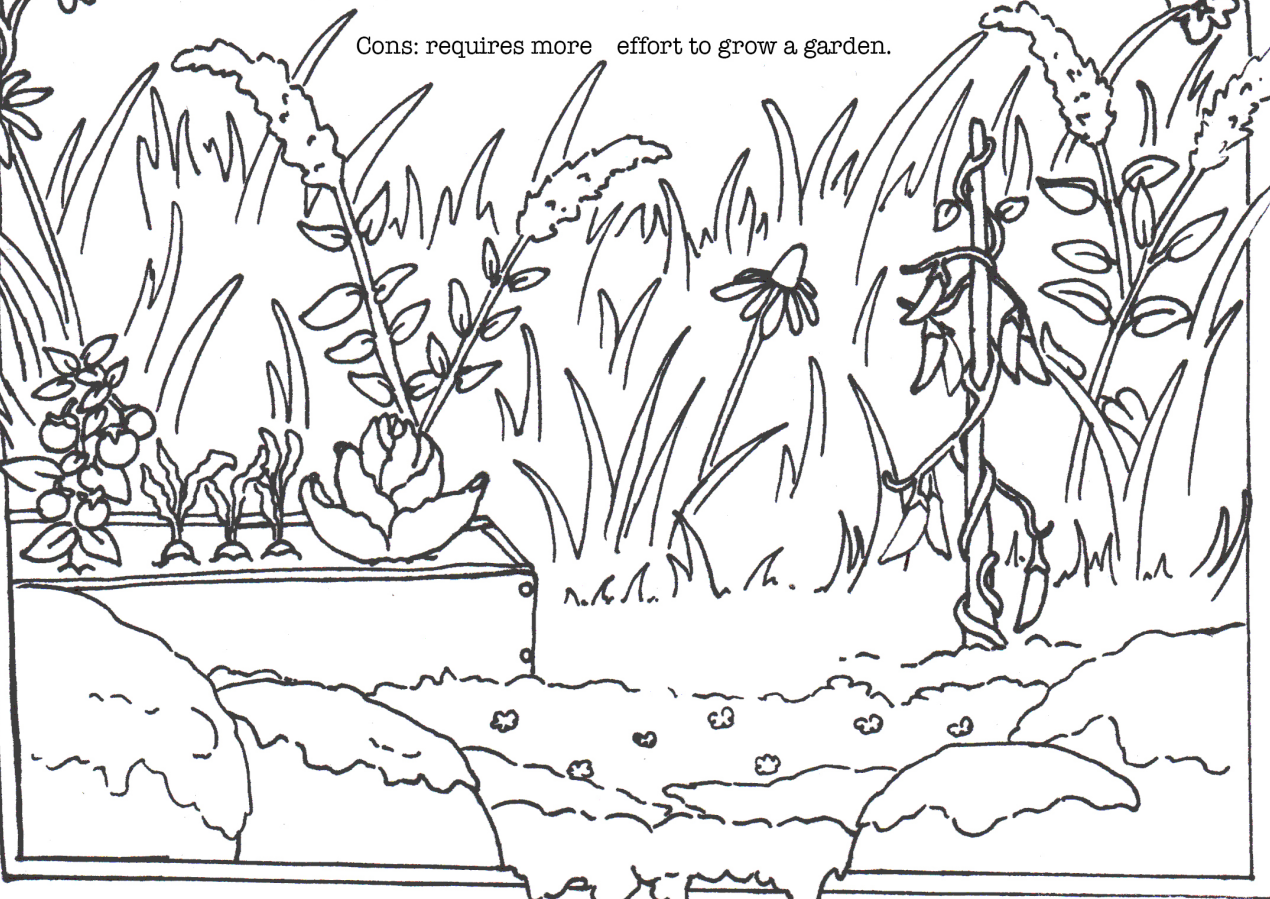
Pros: supports native wildlife and pollinators, sequesters carbon by removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the air and conserving it in its roots, and keeps native biodiversity alive.

Cons: requires higher maintenance to establish and limits yard usage.

### 4. Garden Beds and Trees and Shrubs

Pros: can achieve a beautifully landscaped yard, can grow food for your household, can support pollinators and make beneficial shade for your home.

Cons: requires more effort to grow a garden.



Clover is one example of a ground covering plant. Other examples include creeping charlie and herbs like thyme and oregano. They make a green lush covering on your lawn and require no mowing, but provide more ecological benefits than grass.

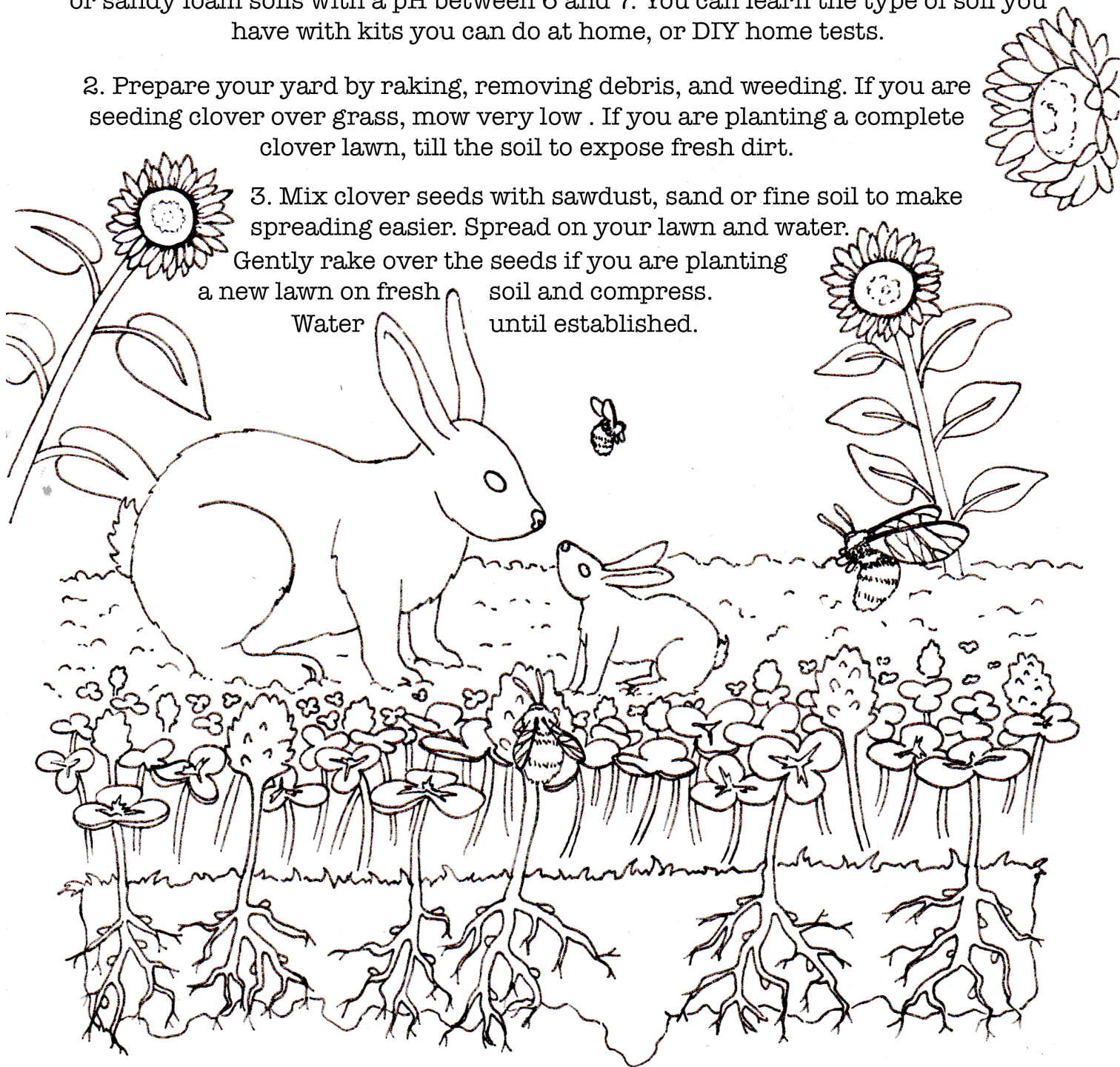
1. Find out if your soil will support clover. Clover does best when planted in clay or sandy loam soils with a pH between 6 and 7. You can learn the type of soil you have with kits you can do at home, or DIY home tests.

2. Prepare your yard by raking, removing debris, and weeding. If you are seeding clover over grass, mow very low. If you are planting a complete clover lawn, till the soil to expose fresh dirt.

3. Mix clover seeds with sawdust, sand or fine soil to make spreading easier. Spread on your lawn and water.

Gently rake over the seeds if you are planting a new lawn on fresh soil and compress.

Water until established.



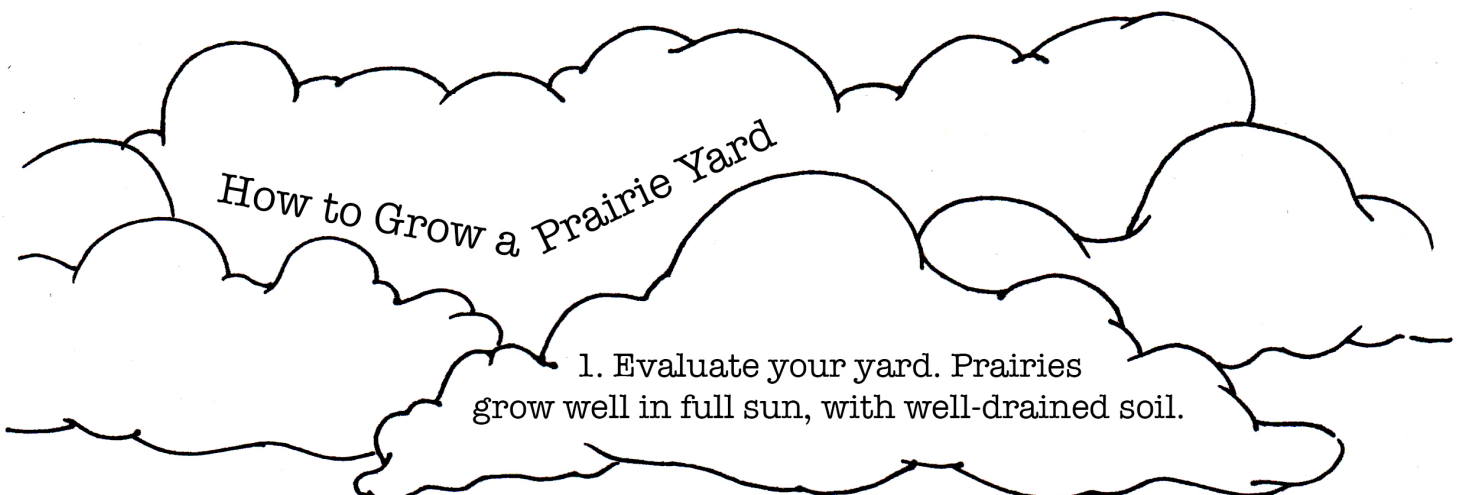
## How to Grow a Clover Lawn



## HOW to GROW

## a MOSS LAWN

1. Rake, weed, and possibly till your lawn, exposing the soil's surface.
2. Research the best type of moss for your space. This will come down to the amount of rainfall you get, the level of shade, foot traffic, and the Ph of your soil with the DIY kits or tests.
3. Buy or transplant your moss. Moss can be taken from one area to another pretty easily. For best results, identify the species or match the conditions of where it originally came from. You can also buy moss online or at some gardening stores.
4. Water the soil and lightly press the moss into the soil. For the next few months, routinely water the moss until it is established in your yard.



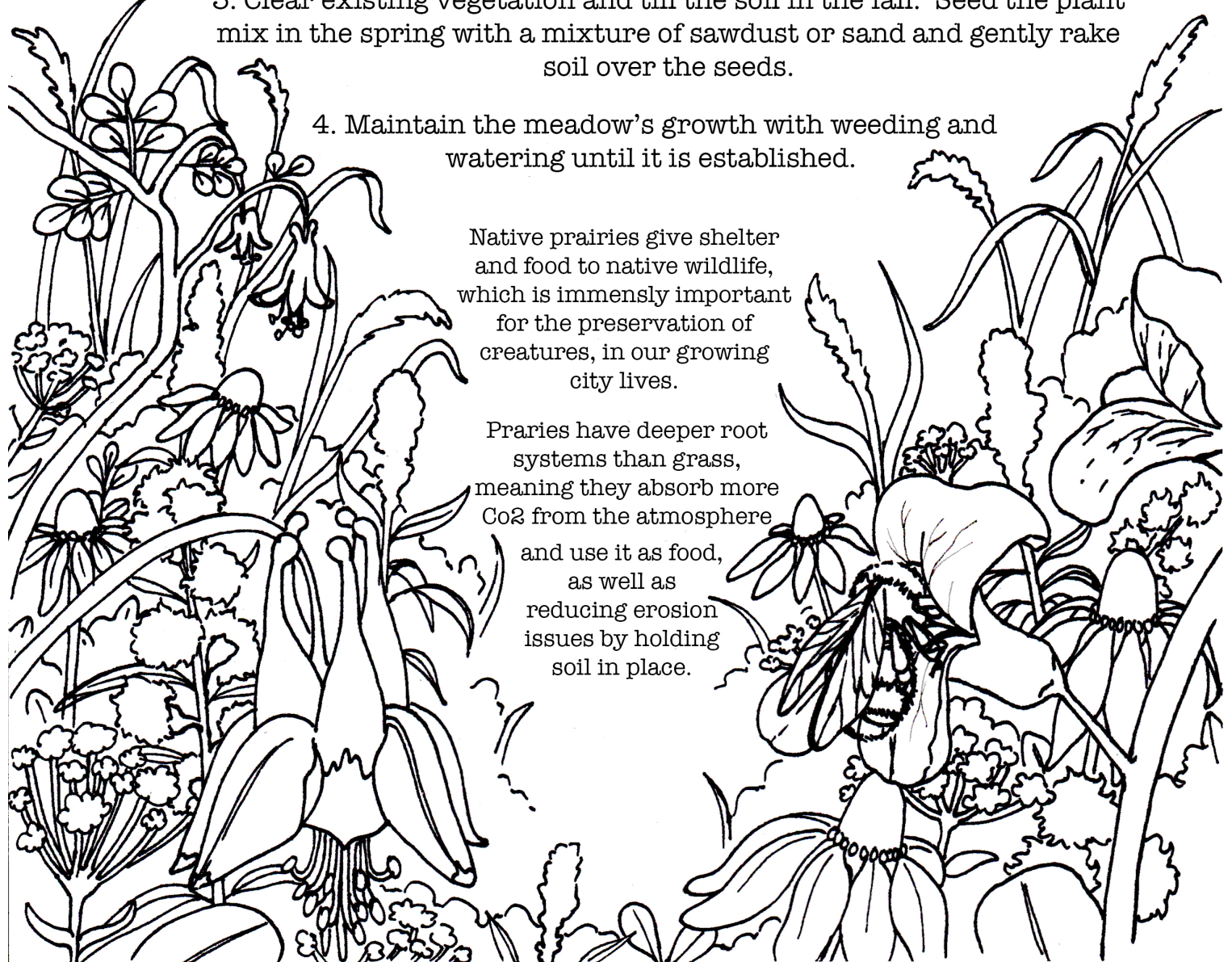
## How to Grow a Prairie Yard

1. Evaluate your yard. Prairies grow well in full sun, with well-drained soil.

2. Select your plants based off height, bloom period, and color, or buy a premade mixture of prairies seeds. There should be a mix of 60% grasses and 40% wildflowers.

3. Clear existing vegetation and till the soil in the fall. Seed the plant mix in the spring with a mixture of sawdust or sand and gently rake soil over the seeds.

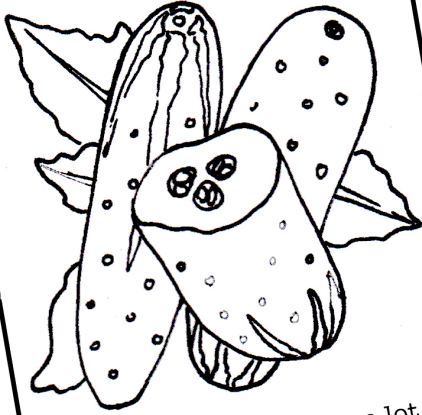
4. Maintain the meadow's growth with weeding and watering until it is established.



Native prairies give shelter and food to native wildlife, which is immensely important for the preservation of creatures, in our growing city lives.

Prairies have deeper root systems than grass, meaning they absorb more Co<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and use it as food, as well as reducing erosion issues by holding soil in place.

# Gardening



While gardening takes a lot of time and maintainance, it provides many benefits

Biodiversity is extremely valueable, and having a variety of plants help wildlife and the environ

# Trees & Shrubs



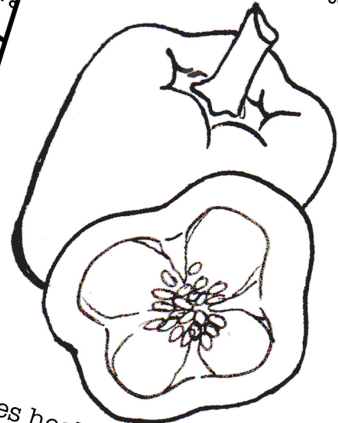
Landscaping with large plants and trees provide more resources than gra

Home grown produce reduces CO2 emissions by lowering the amount of transportation in vehicles from farm to stores

Diversity of plants and care for the garden improves soil health



Trees provide shade in your yard and home which cools your space and lowers your A/C bill

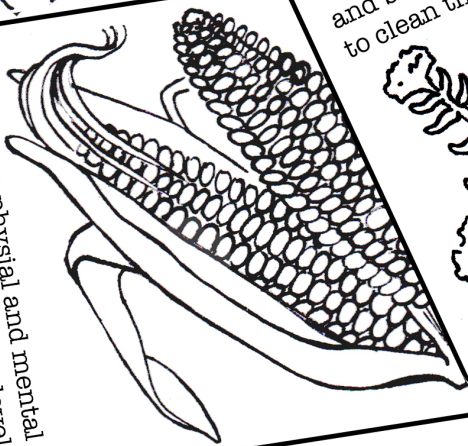


Makes healthier, fresher food your your household



Larger plants use CO2 to grow, and store the carbon in their trunk and branches which helps to clean the atmosphere

Improves physical and mental health by lowering stress levels and building positive habitats through exercise, and sunlight



many shrubs offer support to necessary pollinators



## Thank You!

We only have one planet and we must care for it. We live on it and we are a part of it. It may seem daunting, I know, but there are little ways we can each help starting in our own backyards.

The issues with grass lawns are the over use of water, fertilizer, and pesticides. All of which have negative impacts on the environment. There are droughts across the country and humanitarian issues with water access. Overuse of fertilizer runs off with rain and pollutes water systems and kills off aquatic life. Pesticides pose a threat to native plants and pollinators.

Even if you don't tear up your back yard and turn it into a lush garden, you can help by reducing your use of water and not using fertilizers and pesticides.

Preserve our world, do what you can to leave it better than before, starting in your own backyard.