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*Special
Garden Lover's
Issue*

*Serene city showplace
Desert botanical oasis
Down on The Farm*





Under a backyard citrus tree, the homeowner finds a special place for this whimsical birdhouse, one of several in her collection.

The Happy Garden

Springtime flora enlivens an ordinary back yard

TEXT BY NANCY ERDMANN-CHRISTENSEN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIM CORNELISON

After years spent enjoying the lush vegetation at her second home in Prescott, Helen Kornrumph decided it was time to update the grounds at her Scottsdale residence, where grass ruled the turf.

"She wanted a 'happier' landscape that required less maintenance," says landscape designer Troy Bankord of T.M. Bankord Inc. "Helen already had a great backdrop with neighboring trees and established citrus. When she decided to get rid of the grass in her back yard, I suggested replacing it with a beautiful flower garden and a water feature."

According to Bankord, it took about two months to eliminate the grass with the aid of herbicides. "It was right at the end of the growing season, so it took longer than normal," he notes. Taking advantage of this down time, Bankord began work on the rest of the landscape.

After the border of Helen's house was planted with asparagus fern, large-leaf purple ruellia, miniature roses and orange jubilee, several additions were made to the small front yard. "I wanted to create a tropical-desert environment at the entrance to her house," says the landscaper. Here

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See Resource Guide for details.



Top: Water washes over the sides of this cantera stone fountain from Casa del Encanto and into a flourishing flower garden.

Above: Nasturtium, an edible flower with a refreshing fragrance and distinctive bloom, is a garden favorite.

Left: Landscape designer Troy Bankord calls this the "wow" area. Foxglove, delphiniums, poppies, heavenly bamboo and paperwhites are among cheerful plantings that make up this dramatic display.

bougainvillea, dahlia, robelini palms, tropical bird of paradise and sweeps of purple lantana nestle among yucca, desert milkweed, octopus agave and pencil cactus.

Then Bankord began working his magic in back. "My idea was to keep the perimeter of the garden lush and green so the focal point would be the flower garden in the center of the yard," he remarks.

Bushels of composted soil were brought in to form the space for a cutting garden, later planted with wildflowers, perennials, annuals, herbs, bulbs and ferns. Bankord laid a brick path to meander through the flower bed. As a finishing touch he added a stone fountain from Guadalajara, Mexico.

"It was hard finding brick to match exactly what Helen had around her patio, so I decided to leave all the sprinkler heads from the lawn area in place," says Bankord. "The water spray helped calcify the brick and give it an aged look. Now you can't tell the difference between the old and the new."

For Kornrumph, the garden is a throwback to her Prescott landscape, but on a more subtle level. "I just love flowers," she says with a smile. "Up there the season is so short. Here I can enjoy my garden all year long." 🌿

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