

The Ecklund Garden

Wild for Plants (& Wildcats, Too) Terry and Ann Ecklund — Overland Park

About the gardener

The Ecklund's have lived in their home since July 2000. Having the home built, they had the standard garden beds in front of the house and on the side to conceal the air conditioners. The remainder of the yard was only grass, without trees. They have since added several thousand square feet of garden space and several trees. As the trees matured, the Ecklund's added shade gardens and expanded their variety of plants.

Terry is inspired by plant variety. He was a casual gardener until his retirement six years ago. He has learned much through the Extension Master Gardener program, research, exploring other gardens, and part-time seasonal work at a local garden center. He has become enthralled with a growing list of plants. For example, with viburnum, he found there is so much variety in size, leaf texture, flowers, and color... the choices are many. Now, he has over a dozen specimens and is looking for space to add more.

Terry enjoys the year-round color in his garden, be it flowers or foliage. The original plantings and most of his bed expansions were previously focused on summer interest. He is now working to expand selections for more interest throughout the year: spring flowers, fall colors, and plants that have winter interest.

Terry is interested in plants that attract pollinators and birds. He has several beds that have become pollinator gardens. They are designed and built to contain primarily (not exclusively) pollinator-friendly plants.

Terry's tips

- ✓ Plant what you will like. It's your garden. Make yourself happy. Get advice from other people. But at the end of the day, you live with the garden!
- ✓ Start with a plan, but don't be tied to it.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to change! Terry moves shrubs and perennials around frequently. The first home for a new plant doesn't need to be a permanent home!



Special things to notice about this garden

- Notice Terry's many **collections of plants**. **Iris** (a special favorite), **lilies**, **hydrangeas**, **viburnum**, **hostas** and **sedum** to name a few. Terry loves the variety within these plant types and how they contrast and complement each other.
- You will notice several **pollinator friendly** garden beds. Terry has developed several garden areas into quasi pollinator gardens, focusing on plants that attract pollinators.
- There is a sweeping **plant berm** on the property. This is a steep berm that runs the length of the home on the north side of the property. It contains evergreen trees and other plants that provide landscape interest.

Terry's favorite plants

- **Bearded Iris**. Terry loves the variety of colors! Iris brings back special memories from childhood and is a welcome sight in spring.
- **Hydrangea**. Terry has become a big fan of all hydrangeas. They are his favorite shrub. Oak Leaf 'Snow Queen' is his favorite variety.
- **Viburnum**. A popular flowering and sometimes fragrant shrub that offers great variety, textures and colors in the garden.
- **Coneflower**. The first plant he personally added in his garden 20+ years ago. A pollinator plant with attractive, long-lasting flowers.
- **Peonies**. Terry loves the colors and fragrance, also evoking memories from childhood.