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Roots, Tendrils, Sprouts and Shoots: A Case Study of Parkallen's Community Garden, a permaculture project

Marlene Wurfel

MacEwan University

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ABSTRACT

The first growing season of Edmonton's Parkallen Community Garden began in

Spring 2012. We transformed an unused strip of lawn bordering our hockey rink into a loamy, thriving “edible food forest” of corn, beans, squash, kale, tomatoes, carrots, potatoes, apple trees, and mammoth sunflowers. It is unlike most community gardens in that individual plots are not tended by individual gardeners; rather, the PCG is tended communally, by the community. The garden is open and accessible to the community, always, and all are welcome there, from the toddler whose only contribution is to chomp on a snowpea and water a dandelion, to the senior who wants to plant a tree in his community that he knows will outlive him. Hundreds of Parkallen residents have planted something, admired something, or munched on something there. In its first year Parkallen’s garden won The City of Edmonton’s top community gardening award from Communities in Bloom. This article is a case study of the Parkallen Community Garden. Through the lenses and observations of the author, it details how Parkallen’s permaculture design came, literally, to fruition and how permaculture has been interpreted and how it informs our garden and our gardening community.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Marlene Wurfel, MacEwan University

Term Instructor, Department of Communication Studies



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