

The Garden of Medicine

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Framework: CEAP(ER)

The Story

When I began my permaculture journey I wanted to have a relationship with the plants around me. I wanted to know their properties, their behavior, their medicinal and culinary qualities. I wanted to look out and see not just plants and trees, but food and medicine, and know them. Through Rosemary Gladstar's herbalism course, *The Science and Art of Herbalism*, I found those things. Well, I learned much about those things but have more to learn.



My property is small, but there is plenty of space for several gardens filled with medicinal plants to feed and heal (in more ways than just physical) my family, guests, wildlife, and the soil.

C

Collecting Data

Goals and vision

To be able to grow as many of the herbs that my family eats, uses for medicine, and are in my teas as possible. A secondary goal is to grow herbs for wildlife and to enrich the soil. As I grow herbs for my family and to sell, I would like to be able to forage my gardens.



Base Map

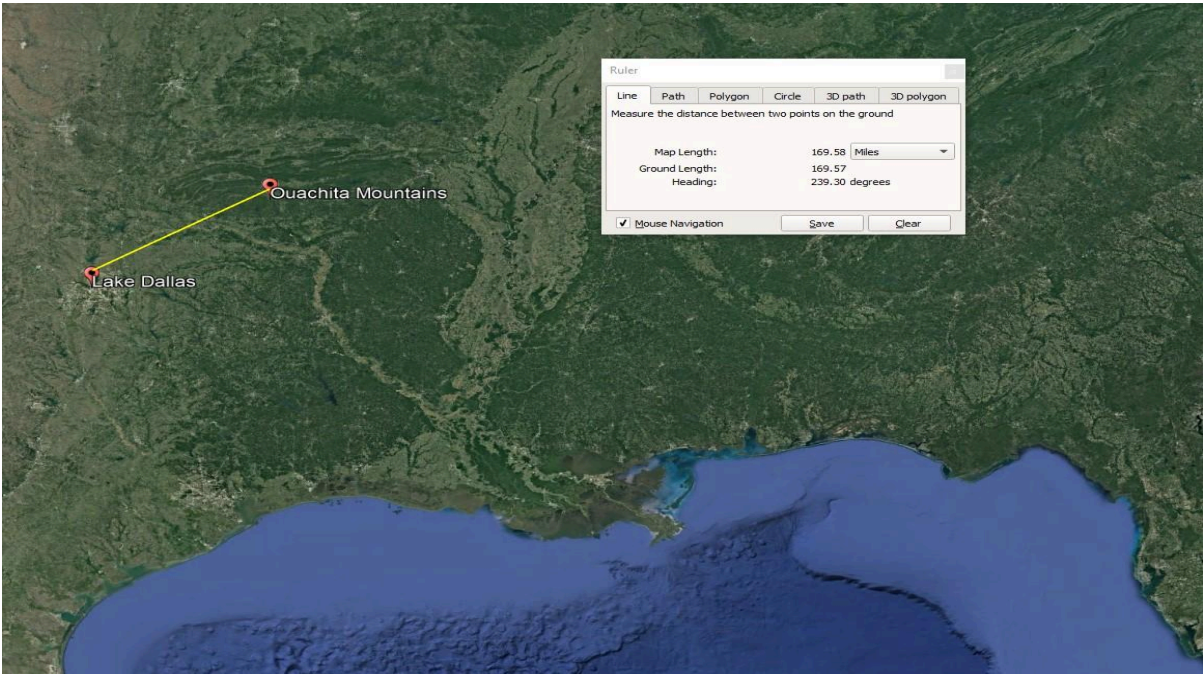


Location and Climate

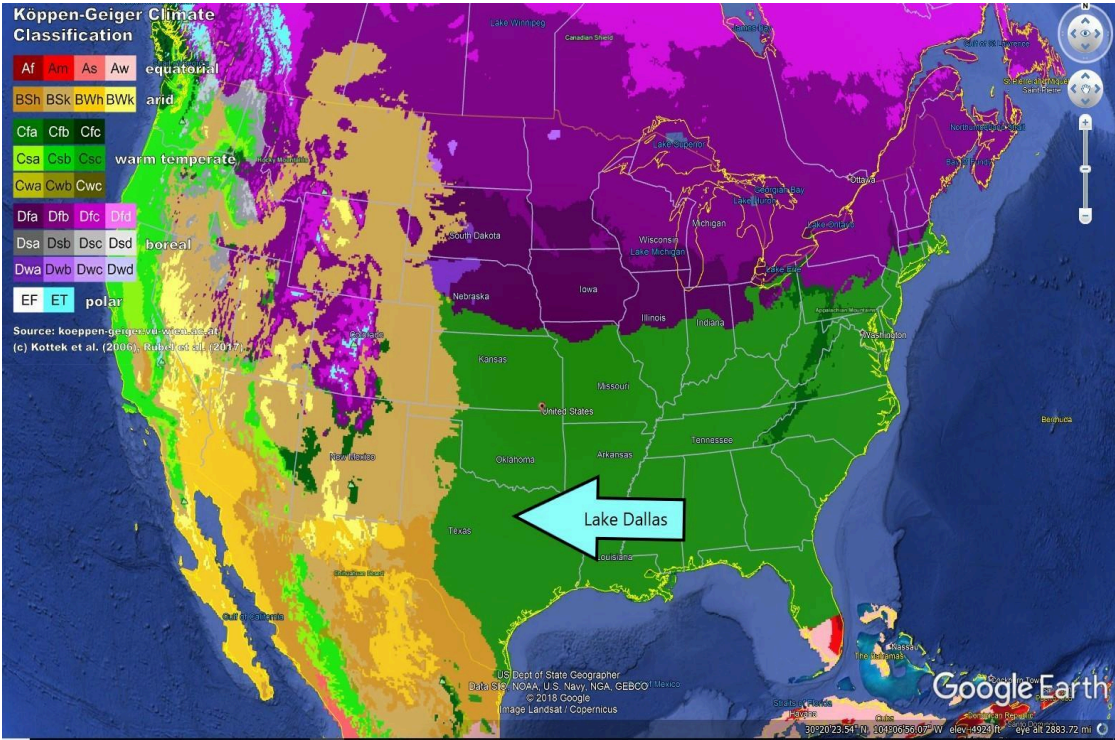
This is about a quarter mile (.4 kilometers) from a lake and about 293 miles (472 kilometers) to the ocean (Gulf of Mexico).

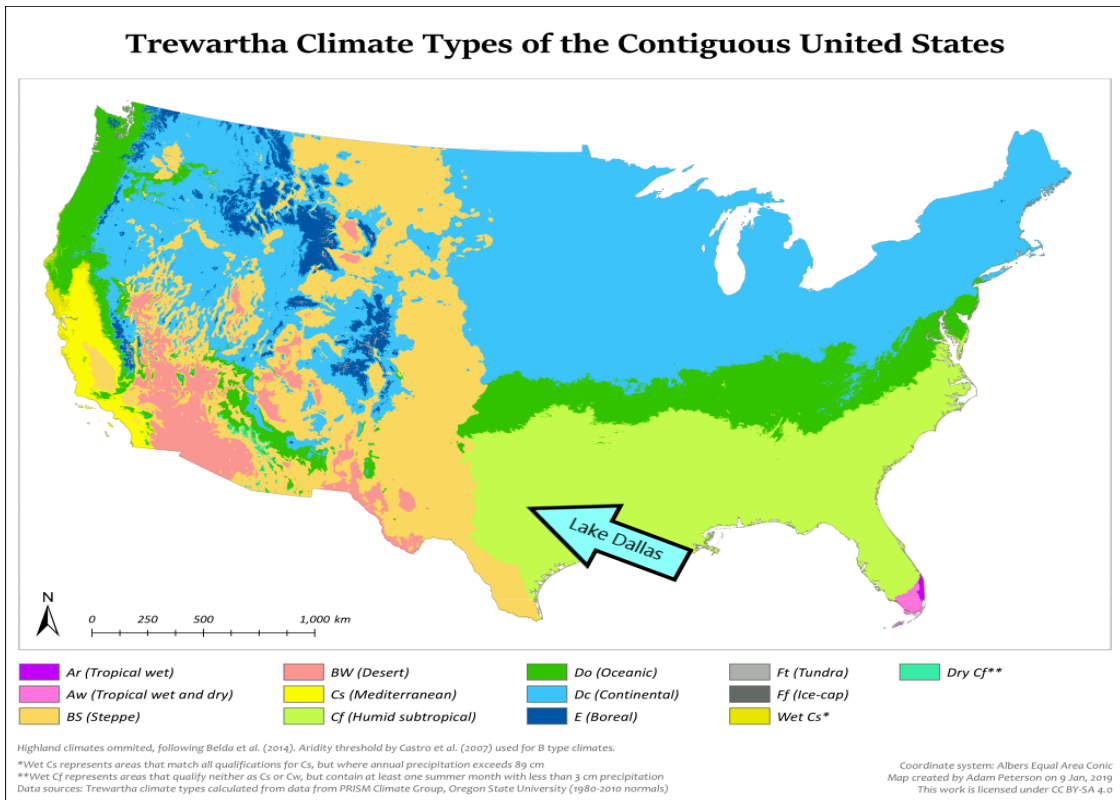


Lake Dallas is approximately 170 miles (274 kilometers) southwest from the Ozark Mountains that run through Arkansas and Oklahoma.



CFA Humid Subtropical in the blackland prairie, planting zone 8a





Zones

Zone 0 = House, Guesthouse and Workshop

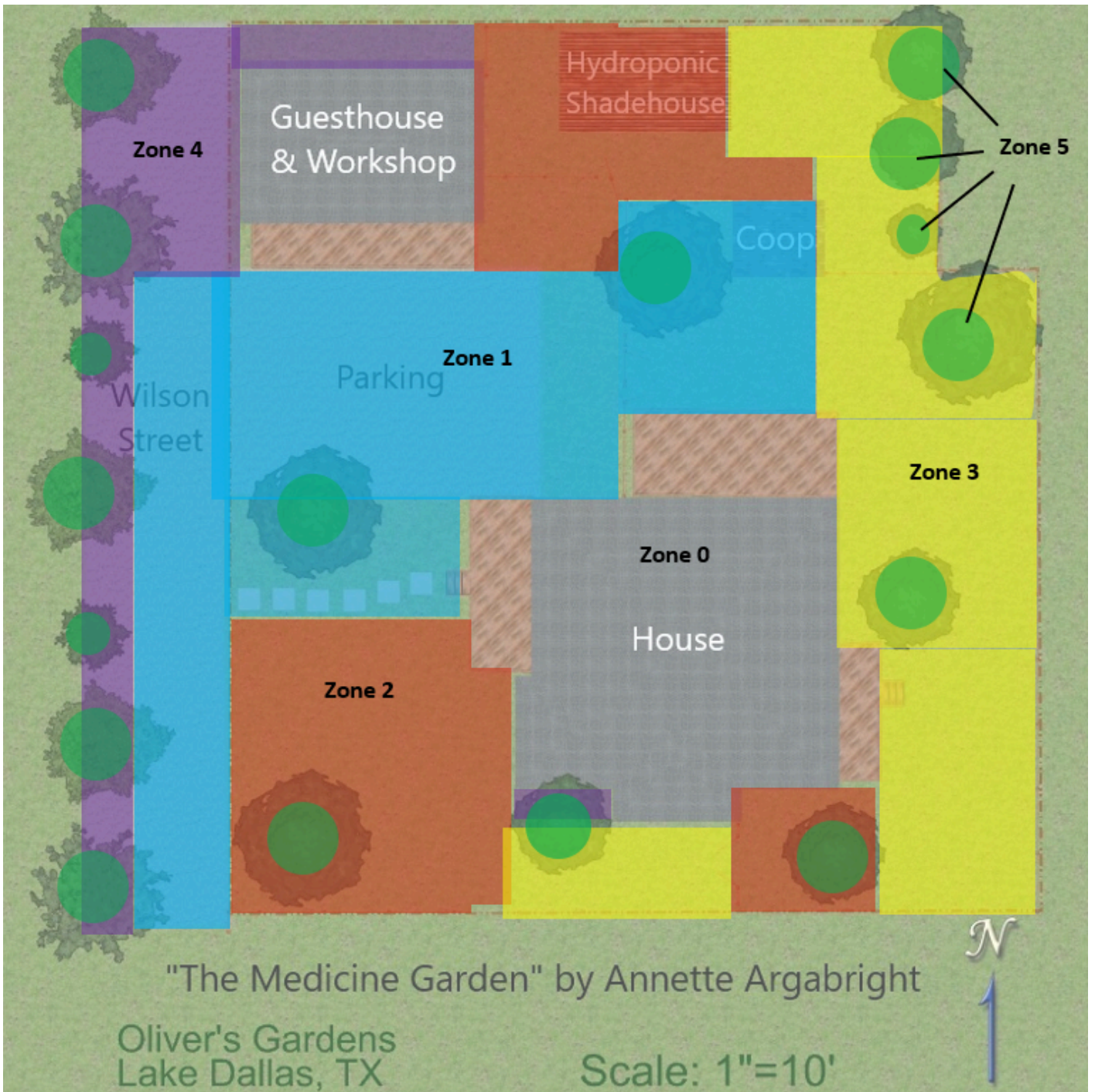
Zone 1 = Blue

Zone 2 = Orange

Zone 3 = Yellow

Zone 4 = Pink

Zone 5 = Green (ecosystem in the tops of the trees)



Sectors





Sector Solutions	
Sector	Possible Solutions
Very close neighbors (privacy and chemicals from uphill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Side spirals and wood chips to filter water Trellis over windows to offer more privacy Raise fence line or add a trellis to the top of the fence
Loud trucks on occasion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tower Garden Aeroponic system (sounds like a rain forest) More plants absorb sound Encourage more birds Plant filtration row along the fenceline to absorb sound

Neighbor that sings to her dogs	Accept her quirkiness as cheerfulness Plant filtration row along the fenceline to absorb sound
Large house behind and close-obscures view of the lake.	Use it as a backdrop and add plants to enhance
Road and boat noise	More plants absorb sound Water feature such as the Tower Gardens or fountain Encourage more birds Wind chimes
Shade	Side spirals within the shade side of the garden Appreciate the cooler microclimate it offers Include more art Include more sitting areas in shady areas
Few areas of intense sunlight	Trellis over windows to insulate Add appropriate plants to take advantage of the microclimate
Mosquitoes	Add plants that might help deter them
Potential severe storms such as tornadoes or occasional hurricanes/tropical storms	Keep our large, old trees trimmed and balanced to help prevent landing on the house if they fail. Have a safety plan in place for our family Make sure we have a water management plan to keep water from flooding areas.
Heat	We experience extreme heat from mid July-mid September. It is also a dry time of year. Our shade helps, but we also need to keep our mulch layer thick to retain water and add shade cloth as necessary.

Wind

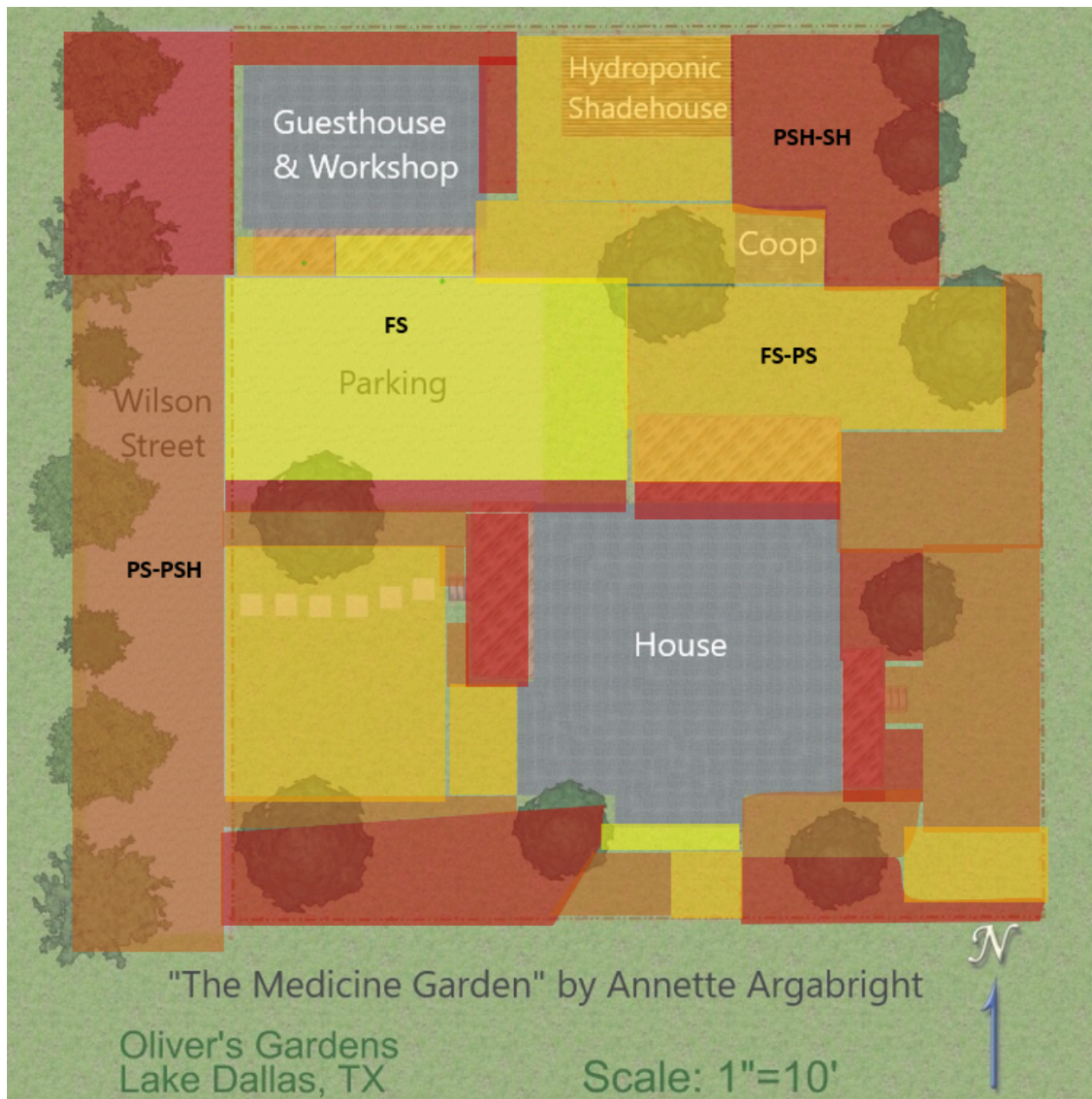
We are in a protected area surrounded by trees and other houses. This property does not typically experience extreme wind because of that.

Existing Plants

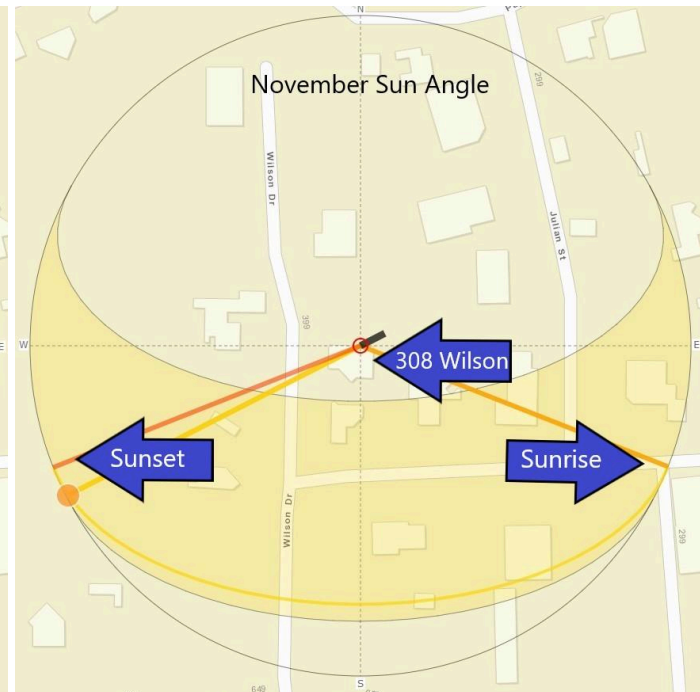
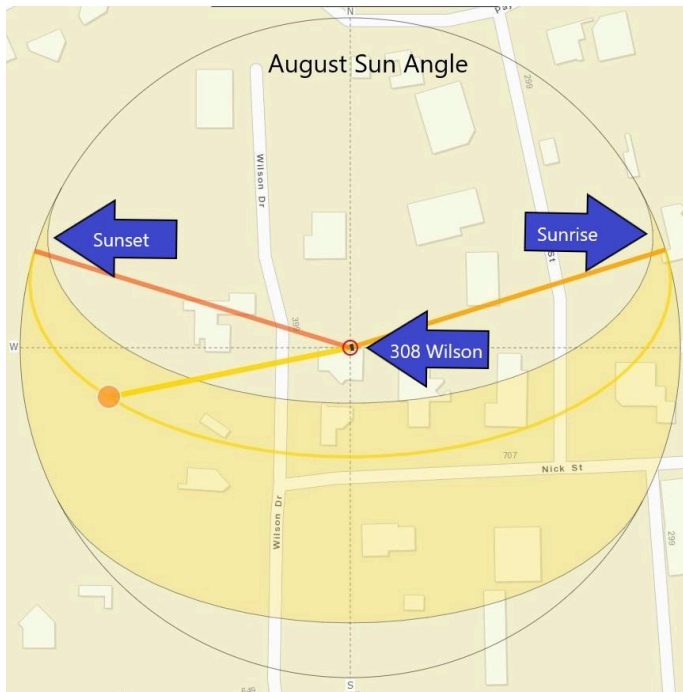
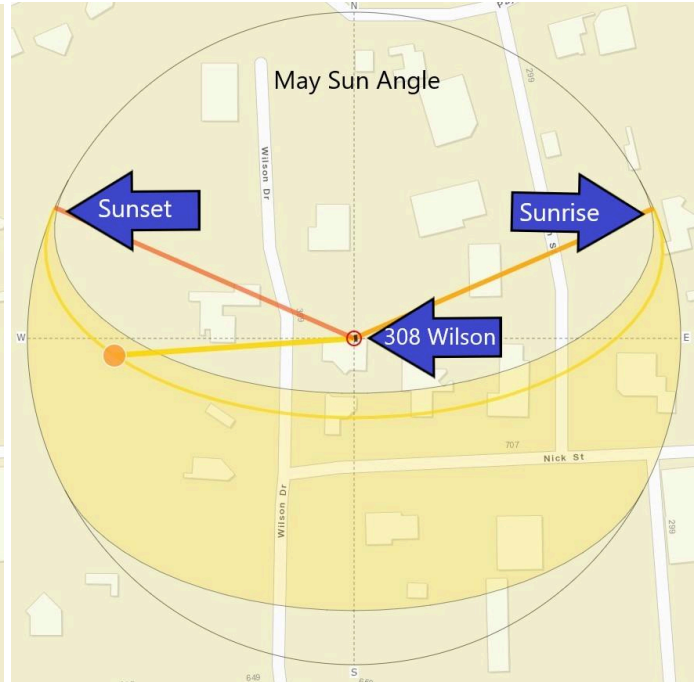
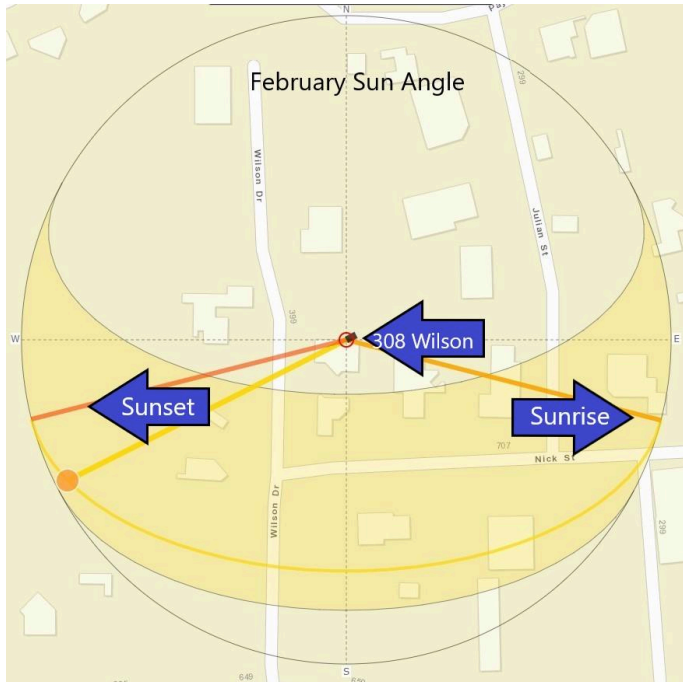
Existing and desired herbs and pollinator plants are in this [Herb list](#). Existing Plants is the first tab and Desired Plants is the second tab.

Microclimates

Full Sun = Yellow
Sun - Part Sun = Light Orange
Part Sun - Part Shade = Dark Orange
Part Shade - Shade = Red



Sun Study



Soil Analysis



First spiral in the welcome garden



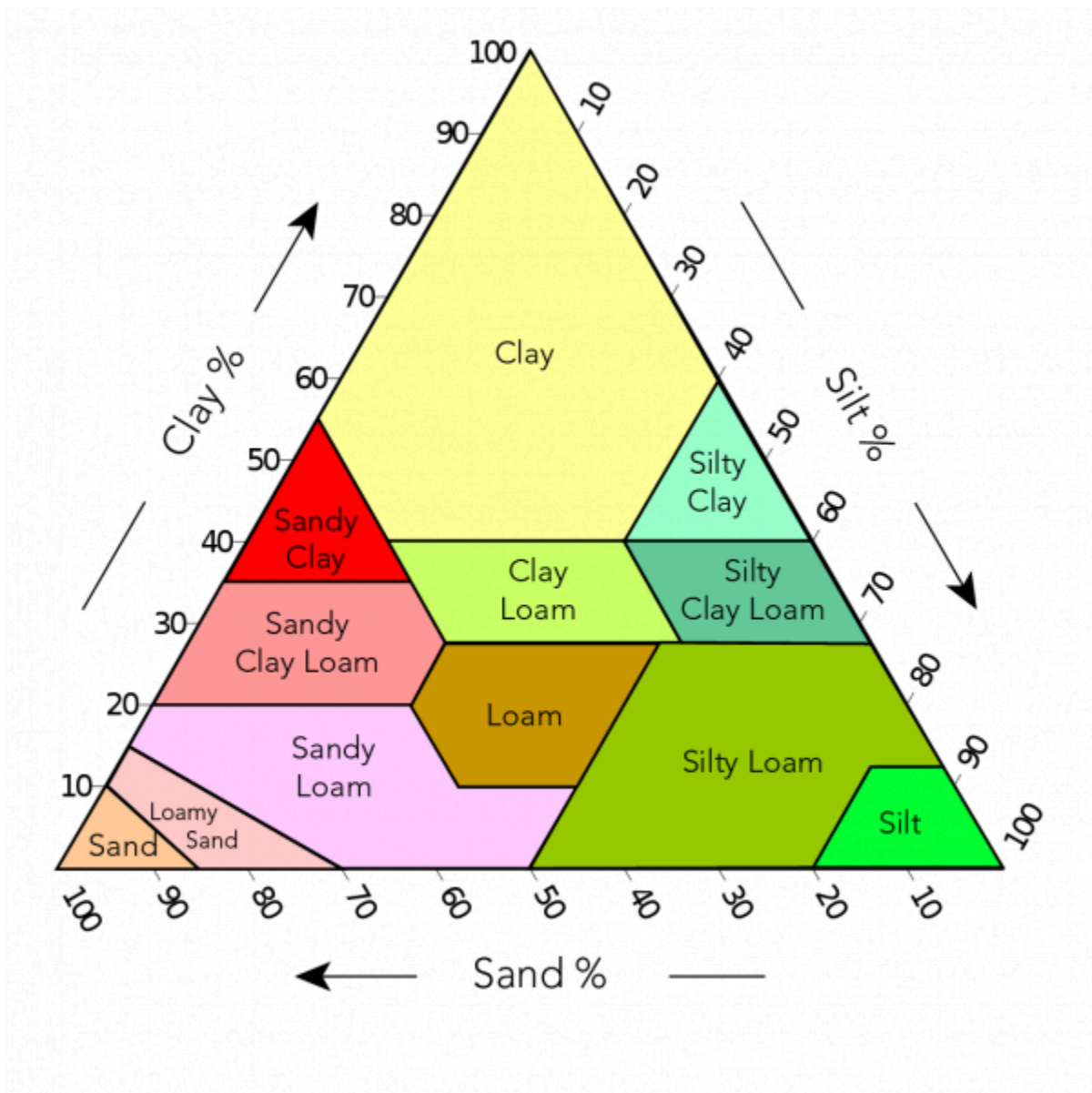
Second spiral in the welcome garden



Mystical Garden Soil Sample

The soil analysis was a little surprising as I thought there was more silt and clay. Apparently we have a higher percentage of sand. We had an abnormal winter storm in March 2021 that left much of Texas without power and with broken pipes. We were fine, but there has been a big difference in our soil. There is less life and less silt than last year. More compost is needed this year.

50% sand + 30% silt + 20% clay = Loam



Another growing system used to grow herbs and other plants is the Tower Garden by Juice Plus. It is a soilless aeroponic system and uses rockwool as the growing medium. Rockwool is basalt and chalk rock heated and spun together at a high heat, much like cotton candy. It retains water and allows roots to grow easily through it. Being rock, the cubes do not decompose, but they do add to the mulch in water retention after being used in the towers. Because I have 18 towers they are considered a Tower Farm with a dosatron nutrient system that feeds all the towers simultaneously.



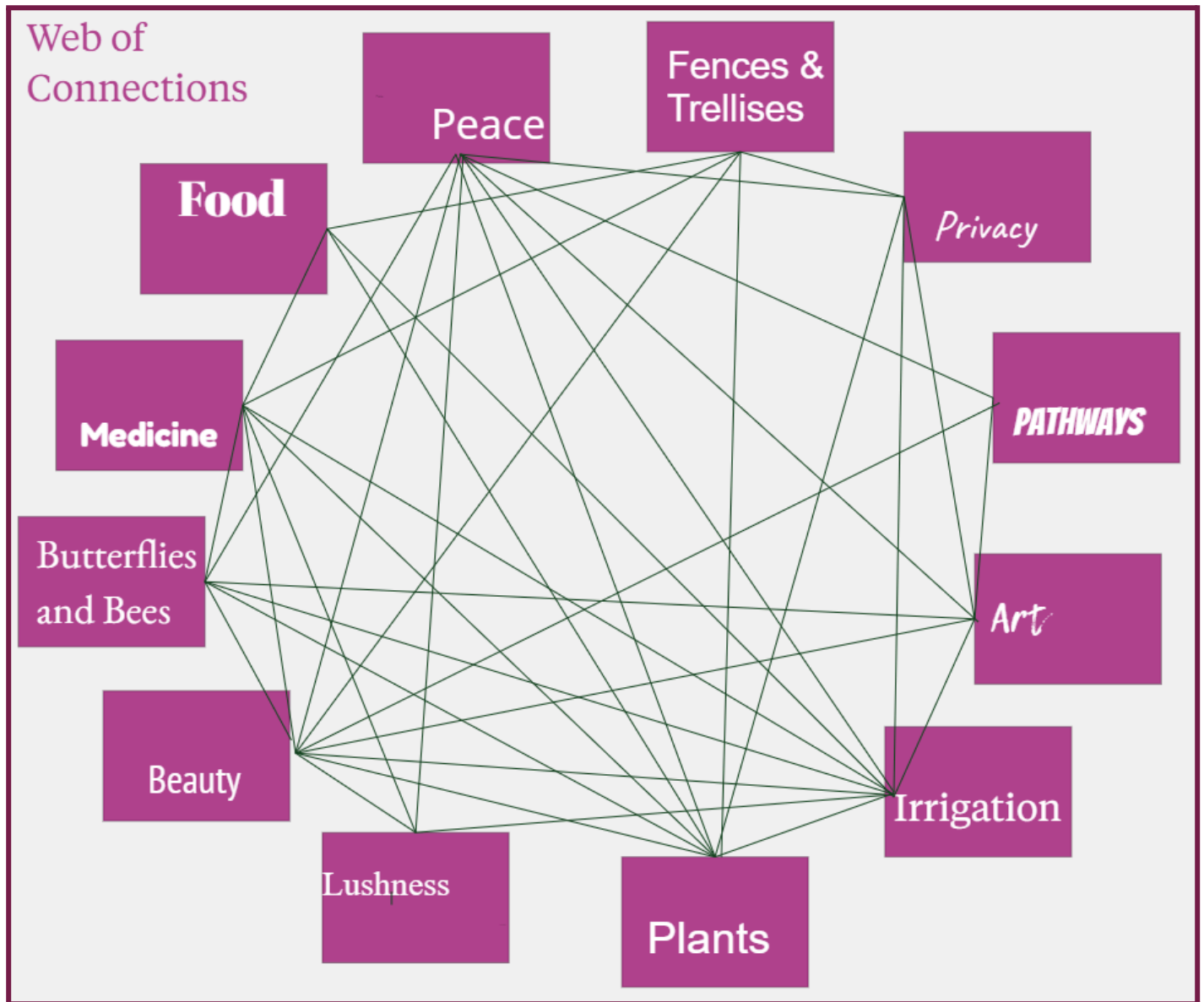
E

Evaluate Information

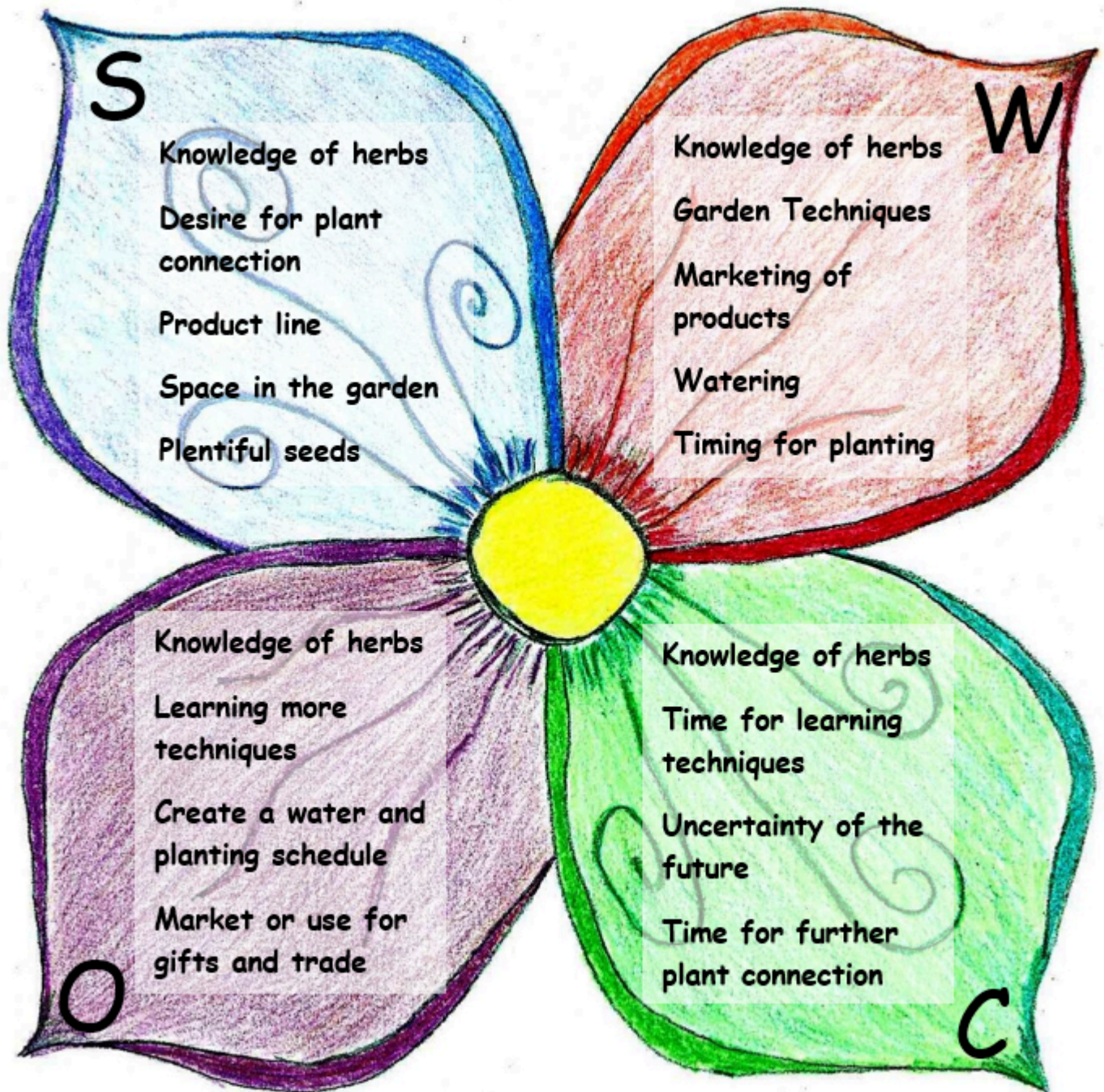
Functions & Elements

Function	System	Elements
Herb production	Spirals, Towers, trellises, containers, soil gardens	<u>Herb Plants</u> , rockwool, soil, compost, containers, trellises, knowledge, seeds
Encourage pollinators and soil life	Spirals, Towers, trellises, containers, soil gardens	<u>Pollinator plants</u> , soil, compost, containers, trellises, raise butterflies and educate
Make medicine and teas	Soil gardens, towers, containers, trellises, spirals	Plants, seeds, books, knowledge, recipes, dehydrator, blender, jars, packaging, labels
Irrigation	All gardens, Towers	PVC, sprinkler heads, hoses, sprinklers, rain water, grey water lines, dosatron system, rain gardens, mulch, drip lines
Soil Improvement	All gardens	Compost, soil, wood chips, plant choices, chickens
Simplicity	All gardens, Towers	Realistic plans and time frame. Clear timeline for plans, maintenance and watering
Creative elements	All gardens, Towers	Use spirals, trellises and artistic elements to create a sense of wonder and peace. Allow the boys to add in art.

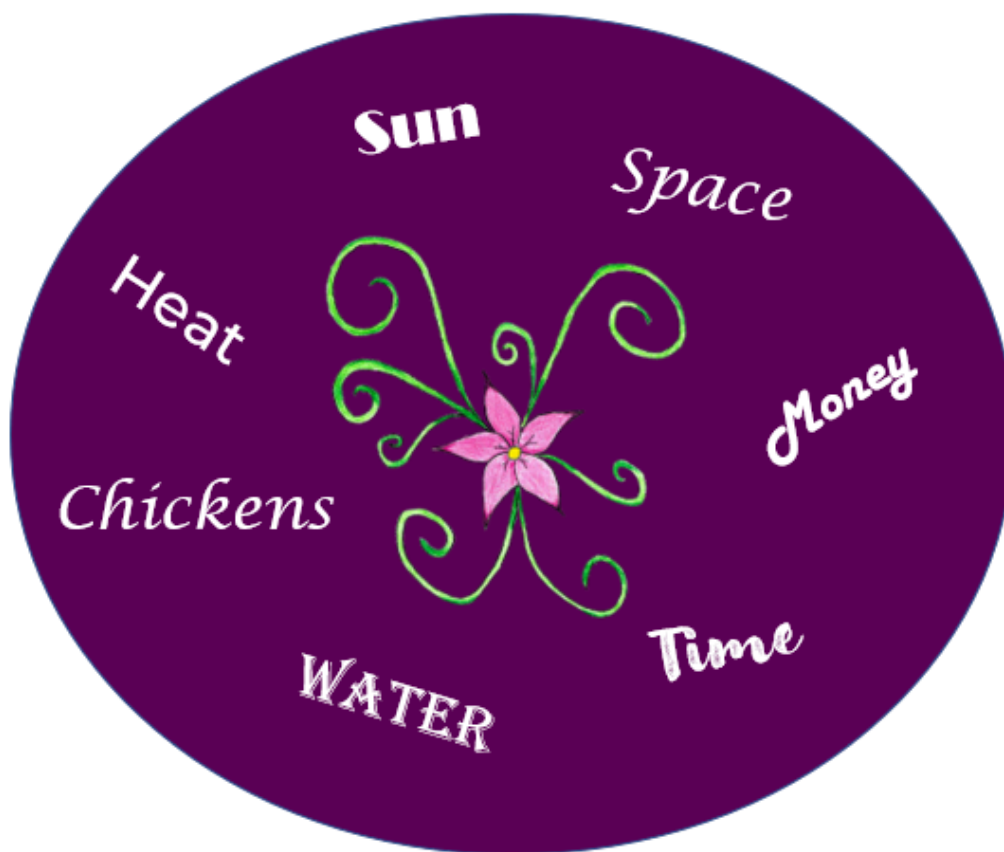
Web of Connections



SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges)



Limiting factors



Heat-Texas heat is extreme and kills several plants

Chickens-They are escape artists and dig up or eat several plants

Water-Watering everything is my personal challenge

Sun-I primarily have shade and must optimize sunny locations

Space-There is limited space available

Money-Could always use more \$ for plants!

Time-Very limited schedule for maintenance

Using the Design
Web, limits are seeds

Appreciation
Embrace the shade as heat protection
Thankful for Tower space
Criteria process
Embrace open space and fewer plants
Embrace native plants
Thankful for nice weather most of the year

Momentum
Seasonal sun studies
New plant options
Educational

Vision
Grow on rooftops
Save on space and \$ by including more art

Helps
Can design water system solutions
Can plant hardy plants near chickens
Can plan around heat
Can grow vertical
Time & maintenance can be a criteria

Action
Schedule seasonal sun studies
Establish network for trade
Set system for seedlings and propagation
Set plant budget
Design efficient & simple water/plant systems & create schedule
Collect "Easy Snaps"
Criteria list
Create a rotational fodder schedule for the chickens using Towers

Patterns
Good at dreaming & designing, struggle with fitting into time realities, & and space. Can make that a criteria

Integration
Trim trees as able for sun
Utilize balcony & roofs in spring & fall
Plant in nearby woods
Fully utilize Towers
Participate in local plant trade FB page
Include gardening & propagating with homeschool more
Create criteria list
Design efficient water systems & planting schedule

Ideas
Can grow on trellises, rooftops, fence tops, & balcony for more sun
Plant natives in nearby woods
Trade with others for plants & seeds
Propagate plants
Water systems & rain gardens
Research chicken resistant plants
Grow fodder in the bottom of Towers

Criteria for Plant Choices

Because of the limits process, I was able to create criteria for plant choices. The Existing and Desired Plant Lists as well as the Criteria Table can be seen in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd tab of the [Herbal Plant List](#).

End of part one