

Syncing with Nature



2016 Garden Trends Report



It began as a conservation movement to get the land back to its natural state.

Now millions of people are “rewilding” to do the same. Whether it’s syncing to the iCloud, sinking their toes in the grass or syncing plants with local ecosystems that support wildlife, people want to get back in sync with nature.

People are connecting with Mother Nature, both in an au natural way - camping, hiking and gardening - and in a connected state using technology, to create a more personalized experience.

Our connection with nature is hardwired. So much so, that going on a strenuous hike is considered fun, whereas weeding a garden for the same amount of time is seen as work or a chore. “Nature” is easy and open to everyone. Gardening is seen as a chore.

And people are taking technology into nature for exploration, education and entertainment.

Whether catering to an adult demographic or younger groups, these initiatives and outdoor excursions encourage people to feed their need for technology while at the same time breaking from their tech obsession and opt for fresh air.

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CONNECTED Greenery

We walk, talk and sleep with our phones.

Now, people are getting plugged-in outside, too, syncing garden habits with technology and garden hobbyist with each other. People want to be successful with plants without a lot of work or information. To do this, they are turning to technology to help grow plants both indoors and in the garden.





Newly enhanced digital tools make gardening more approachable for younger generations with limited gardening knowledge.

Modern systems, like the sleekly designed Nest, work on the 'one home, one app' model. They are focused on ease of use and connectivity in which people can wirelessly and remotely control what happens in their home and garden.

Don't count boomers out of the connectivity.

Despite popular opinion, 46- to 64-year-olds spend more money on technology than any other demographic. And one in five of them now use social media every day, up from one in 10 last year. They see social as a way to get something done -- whether that's something at work or staying in touch with gardening peers.



The in-store shopping experience has gone from purchasing to browsing.

To continue driving sales, independent retailers must provide the customer with two experiences: one they interact with digitally from their home and one that inspires them in-store.

Mobile coupons and proximity marketing are growing as a driving force in purchasing decisions.





naTECHure

NaTECHure is the intersection of two of the hottest trends in education: **technology and nature.**

It combines virtual and augmented reality to engage kids with gardening, health and fitness in fun, new ways.

With Generation Z, born 1995-2009, being the most sedentary generation in American history,

It's vital to get children, and their parents outdoors. Create adventures that layer mysteries, stories, and puzzle-solving over unpredictable environments – or backyards. Whether it's camping on The White House lawn, attending outdoor kindergarten or using a motor-sensory shovel, experiences that heighten the senses and get people outside playing are necessary.

Whether running, playing, storytelling, or even geocaching, NaTECHure has the potential to mobilize a new generation of nature lovers.

It will get people off the couch, outside and digging in the dirt again.



A man in a light green t-shirt and white shorts is walking on a wooden pier, pushing a red bicycle. The pier has a white railing, and the background shows a body of water and a clear sky. The scene is captured in a soft, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

WELLTALITY

Horticulture is intrinsically tied to health and wellness.

People are putting their health first, from what we put in our mouths and on our bodies or the environment, even when we're on vacation.





Welltality, a trend in the hospitality industry, is cashing in on the benefits of plants.

Hotels are becoming destination locations with living walls, indoor forests and serving locally grown food.

From helping people heal faster, concentrate better and elevating people's moods, greenery is incorporated throughout the guest experience.

With the help of O2 For You® 'Plants with a Purpose,' consumer awareness of the benefits will only grow.

A healthy staple in every kitchen, berries are essential in the garden, too.

Blueberries, packed with nutrition and antioxidants, are easy to grow in containers to support the garden to table movement.

New from the BrazelBerries® Collection is Perpetua, a delicious blueberry that produces fruit in mid-summer and then again in the fall.



THE **MAKERS** LIFESTYLE

The DIY movement gets a facelift as people shift from “doing” to “making.”

Homeowners and renters alike want to experience outdoor living in a way that maintains a sense of home and familiarity but personalized to their tastes.

Called Yuccies, they are cultural offspring of yuppies and hipsters.

They like to be makers – taste makers, craft makers – not just making things, but experiences. They engage with nature hands-on through projects like growing hops for backyard brewing and testing out natural dyes with fruits and vegetables.

They want to get down and dirty and engage with outdoor environments in a more hands-on way. How much it costs, be it high or low, is immaterial. What is important is if what bought validates their intellect, taste and lifestyle.



backyard boldness

Taking a bolder approach to outdoor living, people are turning to new customization, lighting and movement to add a sense of whimsicality to their backyards.

Transforming porch swings and swimming pools, homeowners are moving away from subtle, minimalist aesthetics toward designs that heighten sensory appeal. Toss boring planters and make a statement with a combination LED and speaker container.



NIGHTSCAPE

A Light and Sound Experience



Stages are being set with light graffiti, multifunctional planters and colorful plants that make a statement.

At first glance, an LED Tree Swing might look like a typical rope swing found in a quaint backyard, but upon closer inspection it's clear that it's not. It has been wrapped with Electroluminescent Tape with RGB LEDs on the bottom that creates a striking glow at night.

Longwood Gardens' Nightscape exhibit is drawing record breaking crowds to the gardens after dark.



The outdoors returns as a destination.

People are making childhood memories and family experiences that offer the nostalgia of catching fireflies and reminiscing at summer BBQ's.

Bold colors of red, orange and purple flower bulbs from Longfield Gardens planted close together in varying patterns can make a major personality statement – and get kids in the garden.

LAYERED LANDSCAPES

The landscaping trend is shifting from green deserts to 'Living Landscapes.'

Doug Tallamy, professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, says people want to bring their yard back to its natural habitat as each plant serves a purpose in supporting local, natural ecosystems, pollinators and other wildlife.

Dr. Tallamy says a living landscape starts with trees and is layered underneath with shrubs and flowers.





World renowned garden designer Andrew Fisher Tomlin says design trends are shifting.

People want a hardy combination of trees, conifers, shrubs and perennials, rather than endless meadows of perennials.

Tomlin says this move is driven by a desire to create more impactful, lasting and sustainable plantings which will last not just throughout the year -- but for many years to come.



As people's passion for preserving the earth increases,

they will see and purchase plants for their function as well as their beauty.

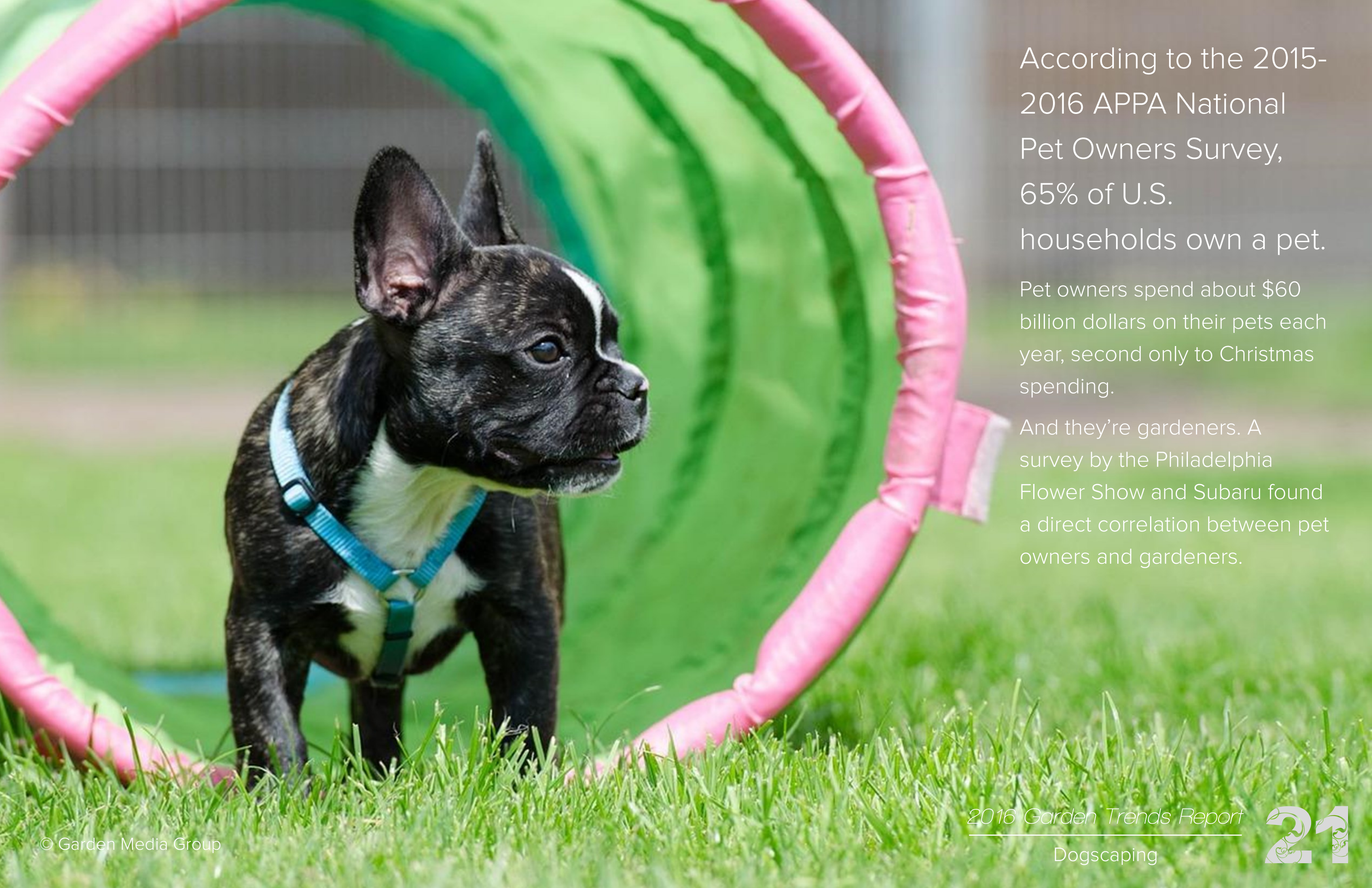
A grass roots gardening movement is just beginning and with it, a relaxed look and feel.

Dogscaping

Pets run through the lawn, roll in it, dig in it and often eat it so it's no wonder that pet owners are thinking more and more about how to make their gardens pet friendly and pet safe.

Petscaping to protect dogs and cats from poisonous plants and harmful chemicals is as important as protecting precious plants from pets.





According to the 2015-2016 APPA National Pet Owners Survey, 65% of U.S.

households own a pet.

Pet owners spend about \$60 billion dollars on their pets each year, second only to Christmas spending.

And they're gardeners. A survey by the Philadelphia Flower Show and Subaru found a direct correlation between pet owners and gardeners.

Creating a chemical free environment from the ground up is key for a safe lawn and garden.

With 1 in 3 dogs getting cancer each year, pet parents believe, like eating nutritious food, the safest practice is to use organic lawn products and limit the use of potentially harmful garden chemicals.

Espoma's Safe Paws program helps pet parents make the switch from chemical to organic lawns, safe for people, pets and the planet.





Precious RESOURCES

The resources that we depend on to garden, particularly water, are limited and need protection.

Precious resources is a trend where necessity meets innovation. New technologies and plants offer the opportunity to protect and conserve resources with small lifestyle changes that will make an evolutionary impact on the gardening experience.

Brownscaping is becoming more acceptable.

In California, cities and towns have been ordered to cut water consumption by 25%. How to garden with less water continues to be a top priority.

The new Keyhole Garden from Vita Gardens uses up to 80% less water than a traditional garden bed.

Based on an ancient African gardening technique of growing in dry conditions, it combines a raised bed with a built-in composter that turns biodegradable scraps into rich soil.





People are making small changes in the landscape that have a big impact on Earth's precious resources.

Drought tolerant plants such as Costa Farm's new Drop and Grow sedum tiles and the new Desert Escape collection of cacti and succulents are smart choices to save time and water.

Being mindful of Earth's precious resources enables brands to foster a new connection with consumers and create a better environment.



Being in sync with nature is the first
step in a healthy, rewarding life.

Contact us for interviews or high-res images
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