

Water Scarcity Inspires Urban Oasis and New Book

In the midst of ongoing news about Southwestern water scarcity, a Tucson author sees an opportunity

TUCSON, ARIZONA, USA, June 7, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In the midst of ongoing news about Southwestern water scarcity, author Martha Retallick sees an opportunity. For nearly 20 years, she has been transforming her central Tucson home into an urban oasis. The secret to her success: Water harvesting.

In her new book, *City Nature*, Retallick explains the rationale for water harvesting – and how she put it into

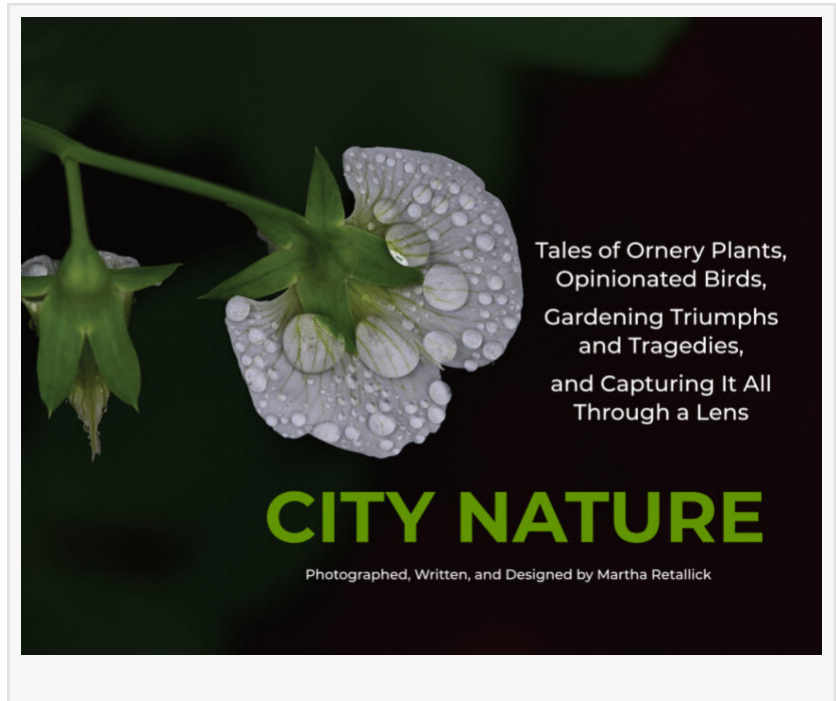
practice. Retallick writes, “Even in the best of times, water is scarce in the desert. But when it rains, oh, does it pour! This is especially true in the summer, when several inches can fall in just a few hours.

“That’s good news if you’re in a wilderness, where 50 percent of that rainwater soaks into the earth. What happens to the other half? Well, 40 percent of it evaporates and 10 percent becomes runoff.

“Now, let’s experience the same heavy rainstorm in a modern urban setting like Tucson. Sorry to say, but 30 percent of that rain evaporates, 55 percent becomes runoff that floods our streets and washes, and only 15 percent gets absorbed by the soil. What’s the solution? Water harvesting. The goal? To allow rainwater to slow down, spread, and sink into the ground.”

Since Retallick purchased her central Tucson home in 2004, she has incorporated two types of water harvesting – passive and active – into her landscape.

Passive water harvesting is simply the act of sculpting the landscape to direct the water to where



it should be – like plants – and away from where it shouldn't be – like a home's foundation. Retallick's landscape incorporates three passive water harvesting features – basins, berms, and drainage swales.

Collectively, these earthworks eliminate the need for landscape irrigation that's connected to the municipal water supply, which is served by Tucson Water. According to Tucson Water, approximately 40 percent of water use in Tucson is outdoors. This includes residential uses like landscape irrigation and garden watering. Citation:

<https://beta.tucsonaz.gov/Departments/Transportation-Mobility/Water-Harvesting>

Retallick's irrigation-free landscape also includes two active water harvesting features, a 1,500-gallon cistern that collects rainwater for use in the back-yard vegetable garden, and a laundry-to-landscape greywater harvesting system that diverts wastewater from the washing machine to three fruit trees.

City Nature is illustrated with more than 60 of Retallick's color photographs, which show the wide variety of plant life on her property, the birds she shares it with, and her various do-it-yourself projects, the most notable being a kinetic sculpture created from a recycled chandelier.

The book also includes a list of suggested resources that encompasses books, websites, organizations, and businesses that can aid readers interested in desert gardening and landscaping, and in water conservation. City Nature can be purchased via CityNatureBook.com.

Martha Retallick

Western Sky Communications

+1 520-690-1888

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/637761346>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.