

Mimicking Nature: How Life Green Group Will Help Cedar Lakes Thrive Through Ecological Disturbance

In a world where urban living and manicured landscapes dominate residential estates, Life Green Group is proud to partner with Cedar Lakes Lifestyle Estate to implement an Environmental Integration Management Plan (EIMP) that embraces a radically different and truly sustainable approach: using human intervention to mimic natural disturbances and promote biodiversity.

Moving Beyond the Manicured

Modern estates often favour uniformity, neatly mown lawns, trimmed hedges, and overly controlled landscapes. While aesthetically pleasing to some, these artificial environments can be ecologically sterile, leaving little room for the complexity and richness of natural ecosystems.

At Cedar Lakes, we are shifting this paradigm. The vision is clear: create a heterogenous, wild-feeling landscape that does not scream “human-made,” but instead whispers the language of nature. A landscape that evolves, supports life, and fosters resilience.

Why Disturbance Is Good for Nature

In untouched ecosystems, natural disturbances such as grazing, trampling, drought, and fire play a crucial role in shaping the landscape. These events create microhabitats, reset ecological succession, and support a wide variety of species with different needs. But in a controlled estate environment, these natural forces are absent or suppressed.

That’s where Life Green Group comes in; with tools, expertise, and boots on the ground. Our approach? Use human effort to replicate the dynamics of nature.

How We Mimic Nature at Cedar Lakes

1. Controlled Mowing and Patch Dynamics

Instead of mowing the veld uniformly, we practice rotational and patchy mowing, just like how natural grazers would affect an area unevenly. Some patches are left long, providing

shelter for small mammals and nesting birds, while others are short, encouraging new plant growth and open foraging space.

2. Manual Trampling and Selective Clearing

In nature, large herbivores and fire create clearings in dense vegetation. We achieve this by using manual trampling, slashing, and selective brush clearing to open up spaces, reduce over dominant species, and allow sunlight to reach the soil. These clearings are hotspots for pioneer plants, insects, and reptiles.

3. Soil Disruption for Diversity

Occasional shallow soil disturbance (simulating digging or hoof action) encourages seed germination of indigenous grasses and forbs. We mimic this process to break soil crusts, creating germination niches for underrepresented species in the seed bank.

4. Planting in Patterns, Not Rows

When reintroducing plants, we avoid straight lines and monoculture blocks. Instead, indigenous species are planted in irregular clumps, resembling how they would be dispersed naturally—by animals, wind, or water. This layout supports pollinators and creates visual and structural complexity.

5. Creating Microhabitats

Using natural materials like logs, rocks, and reed bundles, we build artificial dens, basking spots, and shelters to support reintroduced wildlife such as hedgehogs, bush babies, and reptiles. These structures look natural and are strategically placed to provide habitat diversity.

Designed to Look Undesigned

The beauty of this approach is that the final result does not appear manicured. To a casual observer, the estate may seem untouched, wild yet safe, varied yet harmonious. That's exactly the goal.

By designing with the grain of nature, we are building a self-sustaining system that encourages:

- Seasonal flowering and pollination
- Small mammal movement and nesting
- Bird hunting perches and cover
- Amphibian habitat in varied wetland shallows
- Insect-rich grassland mosaics

The Human Touch That Hides the Human Hand

This is not about neglect or rewilding without guidance. It is intentional design backed by ecology. Our team understands the interactions between soil, plants, water, and wildlife. Every intervention is based on the question: *“How would nature do this?”* and *“How can we help, then step back?”*

Why It Matters

This method goes beyond beauty—it supports climate resilience, water filtration, pollinator networks, and ecological education for Cedar Lakes residents. Children grow up seeing frogs return, owls nesting, and butterflies dancing. Residents walk past wildflowers and buzzing bees instead of just lawn edges.

It's a landscape that lives.

A Living Legacy

As Life Green Group continues to implement this plan alongside Cedar Lakes Estate, we invite all residents and staff to embrace this new ecological identity. Let's celebrate a landscape that looks and acts like nature because it is inspired by nature.

Together, we're not just managing a property. We're restoring an ecosystem—one subtle disturbance at a time.