



# Rain Gardens Have Many Benefits

## What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a landscaped, shallow depression that captures, absorbs, and filters stormwater runoff from roofs, driveways, and roads. Rain gardens are designed to hold water for soil and plants to trap, absorb, and filter out pollutants such as fertilizers, oil, grease, pesticides and sediment, while recharging groundwater supplies.

## Rain Gardens Help:

- Reduce pollution entering our waters.
- Boost property values while cutting landscape maintenance costs.
- Reduce local flooding potential.
- Attract native birds and butterflies.



**Depth**  
A typical rain garden is between 4-8 inches deep. This depth, proportionate to the surface area that generates stormwater runoff, helps ensure that water soaks back into the ground instead of ponding.

**Plant Choices**  
Choose native plants based on need for light and moisture. Native plants live longer and are more tolerant of local weather and soil conditions!

**Soil**  
A good soil mix for a rain garden is 60% sand, 20% compost and 20% topsoil.

**Size**  
A rain garden is typically 5-10% the size of the surface area (ex. rooftop, driveway, walkway) that generates stormwater runoff.

**Location**  
Rain gardens are often located at the end of a roof gutter or drain spout as a buffer between the lawn and the street.

Here are some great **NATIVE PLANT OPTIONS** to check out when you are planning your rain garden!

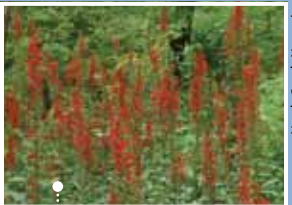
### FLOWERING PLANTS



Blueflag Iris (*Iris versicolor*)



Great Blue Lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)



Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)



Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

Check out our website for places to go buy these plants!

North Creek Nurseries

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Melinda Zoelner

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### GRASSES

Switchgrass  
(*Panicum virgatum*)



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Big Bluestem  
(*Andropogon gerardii*)

Broomsedge  
(*Andropogon virginicus*)

Tussock Sedge (*Carex stricta*)



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Soft Rush  
(*Juncus effusus*)

### SHRUBS

Buttonbush  
(*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Silky Dogwood  
(*Cornus amomum*)



John Frett

Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)

Spicebush  
(*Lindera benzoin*)

Arrowwood Viburnum  
(*Viburnum dentatum*)

## Our Polluted Waters

Our waterways are not as clean as they once were due to water pollution such as stormwater runoff. Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that does not quickly soak into the ground. Stormwater runs from rooftops, over driveways, sidewalks and lawns collecting and carrying pollutants such as dirt, pet waste, oil and grease, pesticides, fertilizers, leaves, and litter into our waterways.

Houses and neighborhoods that are not next to a stream or lake can still contribute to the problem. Storm drains found in most local neighborhoods are designed to move runoff from your neighborhood to the nearest body of water. While many people believe otherwise, stormwater is not filtered in wastewater treatment plants before entering streams and rivers. Storm drains carry UNFILTERED and UNTREATED water directly into our local rivers and streams. Lots of pollution from stormwater runoff can make our waterways very unhealthy for people, plants and animals.



Help us green our neighborhoods and protect our streams by joining the Rain Gardens for the Bays Campaign to create thousands of rain gardens in local watersheds! Participate in a community rain garden planting or install a rain garden in your own yard! Your support will help to keep our waters healthy and protect our communities from flooding and polluted runoff during storms.

The Rain Gardens for the Bays Campaign is supported by the Mid-Atlantic National Estuary Program, state, and local partners. The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, the Center for the Inland Bays and the Maryland Coastal Bays are collaborating to encourage healthier bays by creating thousands of rain gardens in our backyards, school campuses, town halls, libraries, local businesses and on our corporate lands.

### TO FIND OUT MORE:

Call 302-739-9939

Visit [www.raingardensforthebays.org](http://www.raingardensforthebays.org)

Brochure illustrations provided by the  
Appoquinimink River Association.

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Funding provided by the Environmental Protection Agency.



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