

What is a rain garden?

A rain garden is a landscape feature created in a depression to catch and infiltrate stormwater runoff. Native plants that are tolerant of both dry and periodically saturated conditions are best suited for a rain garden. These gardens help reduce and filter runoff from impervious areas.

Why use native plants?

Native plants are beneficial to use in gardens because they are adapted to local soil and climate conditions and create habitat for a variety of wildlife. They mimic authentic landscapes of the Chesapeake Bay region. In addition, they are naturally low maintenance plants.

How are rain gardens constructed?

There are many guides available for rain garden design. Rain gardens should be placed in an area that collects water from a downspout, driveway, or other impervious surface. Make sure it is at least 10-30 ft. away from the foundation of a building.

What about size, shape and soil?

The rain garden should be 20-30% the size of the impervious areas draining into it. Create a shallow depression approximately 6" deep in an irregular or kidney shape. Till the soil 1 ft. deep (2 ft. if clay soil). To improve water retention and drainage, mix with 50% compost and 50% top soil into the top foot of the garden. Make sure to leave room for a few inches of mulch.

Wet Meadows

Rain gardens are replicating the natural functions of wet meadows. A wet meadow is a field or open area primarily vegetated by herbaceous and non-woody native plants, seasonally saturated with water. Meadows are beneficial to wildlife. They are also areas that allow infiltration of stormwater runoff. Wet meadows are often found in low-lying areas characterized by clay or silty soils.

Join us for our two

Open House/Native Plant Sales

the Friday and Saturday before Mother's Day and the Friday and Saturday after Labor Day. It is a great day for the retail public. Native plants available for sale as well as several workshops for the public!



Your new garden will attract a host of friends to include frogs, turtles, dragonflies and birds.

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Native Plants for Rain Gardens & Wet Meadows




Restoring the Bay...

one wetland at a time.



Species Name	Common Name	Shade Tolerance	Height	H ₂ O Tolerance	Attracts	Flowering	Flower Color	Fall/Winter
Herbaceous Plants								
<i>Acorus americanus</i>	sweet flag		2'-3'	RI (0"-6")		April-May	green spathe	
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	red columbine		1'-3'	II,U	H	April-July	red	
<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	swamp milkweed		Up to 6'	SI	P,B	June-Aug.	pink	fall seedpod
<i>Aster novi-belgii</i>	New York aster		1'-3'	II,U	P,B	July-Oct.	violet	late flowers
<i>Carex stricta</i>	tussock sedge		2'-4'	RI	S	May-Aug.	reddish-purple	
<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>	Northern sea oats		1.5'-5'	SI,U	B,M,S	July-Sept.	green-tan	persistent seeds
<i>Chelone glabra</i>	white turtlehead		1.5'-4'	II,PI	B,H	July-Sept.	white	
<i>Eupatorium coelestinum</i>	mist flower		1'-3'	SI,U	B	July-Oct.	blue-purple	
<i>Eupatorium dubium</i>	joe-pye weed		2'-5'	SI,U	S,P,B	July-Sept.	purple	
<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	boneset		2'-5'	II,U	S,P,B	July-Oct.	white	late flowers
<i>Helianthus angustifolium</i>	swamp sunflower		Up to 5.5'	II,PI	S,B	Aug.-Oct.	yellow	
<i>Iris versicolor</i>	blue flag iris		1'-3'	RI(1"-6")	S,M,W	May-June	blue	fall seed pod
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	cardinal flower		Up to 5'	II,U	P,B,H	July-Oct.	red	late flowers
<i>Mimulus ringens</i>	monkey flower		1.5'-4'	SI,RI		June-Oct.	pink, blue	late flowers
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	sensitive fern		Up to 3.5'	II,PI	S,M	June-Oct.	brown frond	
<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	cinnamon fern		Up to 5'	SI,RI	S,M	April-May	reddish frond	
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	royal fern		Up to 6'	II,RI	S,M	April-June	green foliage	
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	switch grass		2'-4'	II,U	S,M,W	July-Oct.	green foliage	persistent seeds
<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>	black-eyed susan		1'-3'	II,U	S,P,B	June-Oct.	yellow	persistent seeds
<i>Scirpus cyperinus</i>	woolgrass		4'-5'	SI	M,W	Aug.-Sept.	brown seed-head	persistent seeds
<i>Scirpus tabernaemontani</i>	soft stem bulrush		6'-10'	PI(0"-12")	M,W	June-Sept.	green foliage	persistent seeds
<i>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</i>	blue-eyed grass		4'-20'	II,U		May-June	blue	semi-evergreen
<i>Solidago sempervirens</i>	seaside goldenrod		3'-4'	II	B,P,S,M	July-Nov.	yellow	late flowers
<i>Verbena hastata</i>	blue vervain		Up to 5'	II	P,S,M,W	June-Oct.	violet	late flowers
<i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i>	New York ironweed		3'-7'	SI	P	Aug.-Sept.	purple	
Woody Plants								
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	black chokeberry		6'-12'	II,SI	S,M	April-May	white, pink	fall berry
<i>Betula nigra</i>	river birch		50'-75'	SI	S	April-May	dark brown	interesting bark
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	buttonbush		6'-12'	PI(0"-12")	P,B,M,W	July-Aug.	white	persistent seeds
<i>Chamaecyparis thyoides</i>	Atlantic white cedar		40'-50'	II,PI	M	March-April	bluish berry	evergreen
<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	sweet pepperbush		6'-12'	SI,RI	P,B,M,W,S	July-Aug.	white, pink	yellow fall color
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	redosier dogwood		6'-12'	SI	S,W,M	May-June	white	red bark
<i>Ilex opaca</i>	American holly		60'	II,SI	S	May-June	red berry	evergreen, berry
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	winterberry		6'-12'	SI	S,W,M	June-July	greenish white	red winter berry
<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	spicebush		6'-12'	SI	S,M,P	March-May	yellow	yellow fall color
<i>Morella cerifera</i>	wax myrtle		6'-15'	II	S	March-June	yellowish green	evergreen
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	elderberry		6'-12'	SI	S,M	June-July	white	young die back
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	arrowwood		6'-12'	SI	S,M	May-June	white	blue fall berry

Shade Tolerance Key

-  =Full Sun
 =Partial Shade
 =Full Shade

Water Tolerance Key

- SI=Seasonal Inundation
 II=Irregular Inundation
 U=Upland
 RI=Regular Inundation
 PI=Permanent Inundation

Plant Attractions Key

- B=Beneficial Insects
 H=Hummingbirds
 M=Mammals
 P=Pollinators
 S=Songbirds
 W=Waterfowl

The plants listed in this brochure are propagated by Environmental Concern. All plants are native to the Mid-Atlantic area.

These plants are recommended for rain gardens based on their water tolerance.

EC can deliver and ship plants depending on your location and order size.

More species are available.
 Please email
nursery-sales@wetland.org
 for current availability or visit
www.wetland.org