

## What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is an attractive landscaping feature planted with perennial native plants. It is a bowl-shaped garden, designed to absorb stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces such as roofs and parking lots. Rain gardens can suit many styles and functions, from a small information home rain garden to large complex bio-retention gardens, or anything in between.



## How do you get started?

For specific details on designing and building your rain garden, preparing the site, and defining the borders, see our website:

[ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org)



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## Rain Gardens



Find more Yard Smart  
recommendations at  
**[yardsmart.org](http://yardsmart.org)**

## Yard Smart

### Why would you want a Rain Garden?

Rain is natural; stormwater is not. Up to 70% of the pollution in our streams, rivers and lakes is carried there by stormwater. A major source of stormwater pollution is runoff from our yards and gardens.

A rain garden is a natural solution that keeps rain where it falls. You get a lovely garden *and* you help protect our rivers, streams and lakes from stormwater pollution. Your rain garden can filter out pollutants, recharge groundwater, and reduce stormwater flow; all of which help the environment. You can be part of a beautiful solution!



## Tips for

### What kind of plants will you use?

We recommend using native plants (or a combination of cultivated varieties and natives) in your rain garden since they are uniquely adapted to thrive in the local weather, soils, and ecosystems. They can live through droughts and downpours, and survive the winters without special care. Native plants have deep roots (especially compared to shallow turf grass roots) which provide soil stabilization and increased water absorption and filtration; helping protect the water quality in your neighborhood. Native plants are also attractive sources of food and habitat for beneficial insects and birds.

Planting natives in your landscape can help support important species like monarchs, and native plants will thrive with little care, once established. Designing the garden for easy maintenance is part of your planning process. You can pick tall plants for privacy, or short plants to preserve your view.

## Rain Gardens

### A Rain Garden is a Garden!

Remember that a rain garden is not just a functioning filtration system, but also a beautiful, attractive improvement to your property. Native plants are diverse, and range in size, color and type, giving you a variety of options to create a beautiful garden. You can expect and should plan for a variety of songbirds, butterflies, other insects, colors and fragrances. Rain gardens can become a wildlife oasis; you may have squirrels, rabbits, or deer visiting your garden regularly.

