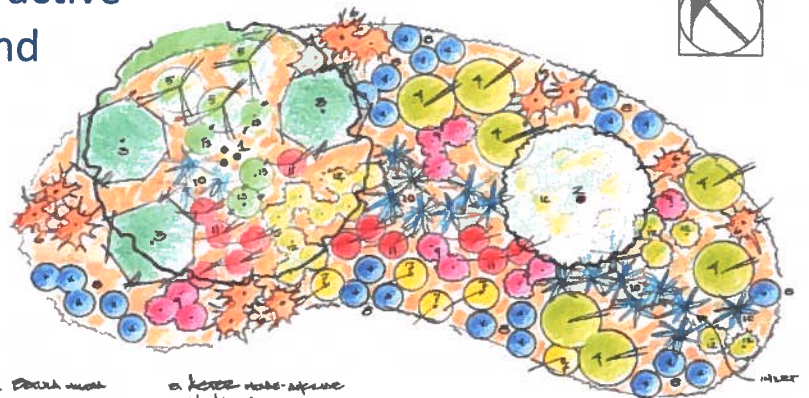


# Rain Gardens

Cleaning runoff  
one yard at a time



Rain gardens are a simple and attractive solution for runoff from footing and roof drains, driveway drains, and from lawns laden with pesticides and fertilizer. Rain gardens work best in well-drained soils and are the most common type of Low Impact Development (LID) system used to clean polluted stormwater runoff created in residential areas. They also provide an opportunity to add habitat for birds, pollinators and other wildlife year-round.



- |                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Betula nigra</i>        | 9. <i>Keteleeria macrocarpa</i> |
| 2. <i>Corylus americana</i>   | 10. <i>Rhus glabra</i>          |
| 3. <i>Castanea americana</i>  | 11. <i>Urtica dioica</i>        |
| 4. <i>Bambusa nana</i>        | 12. <i>Phlox paniculata</i>     |
| 5. <i>Chamaecyparis</i>       | 13. <i>Chamaecyparis</i>        |
| 6. <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>  |                                 |
| 7. <i>Solidago canadensis</i> |                                 |

Rain Garden #2  
Full Sun Exposure  
Scale 3/8" = 1'0"  
February 2017 SHEET 2  
RJR

Graphics by Richard  
Rosiello  
NYBG Certified Landscape Designer  
APLD National Board Member

# A Guide to Residential Rain Gardens 101

Careful planning is an important step in ensuring the success of residential rain gardens. Suitable soil types (well-drained soils) are an important component and are essential for proper infiltration. Not every site has suitable soils and even if an area does, not every location is ideal for installing rain gardens. Rain gardens are NOT water gardens or wetlands. Placing rain gardens in poorly drained soils may lead to slow infiltration and unwanted long term ponding. A homeowner can determine their property's soil drainage class by visiting the [nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens](http://nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens) website under "Checking Soils" link.

In most residential settings, a homeowner will be trying to capture runoff from footing and roof drains, driveway drains and lawn areas and directing runoff into the rain garden. A good recommendation to follow for choosing suitable locations is siting rain gardens at least 10 feet away from any residential structure with a basement. Infiltrating water close to a foundation can lead to water problems in the basement. Also, rain gardens should not be installed over a septic system, reserve area site or close to a drinking water well. Information about the location of residential septic systems or wells can be obtained from a local town sanitarian or area health district.

Rain gardens should not be installed in areas where bedrock or stone outcrops are closer than 2 feet to the surface. Steep slopes should also be avoided. Rain gardens are easiest to install in flat or slightly sloped areas. They may also be installed using a retaining wall design on moderate slopes, but the construction of these types of gardens is more complicated. In all cases, plans for overflow should be considered. For more information regarding sizing, siting, design, installation, maintenance and cost, visit [nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens/](http://nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens/). A great resource for all!

Rain gardens also provide a GREAT opportunity to add habitat for pollinators and other wildlife year-round. Simple and attractive, rain gardens are environmental champions. Consider installing one in your yard!

## GREAT RAIN GARDEN PLANTS

### Trees

*Acer rubrum* - Red Maple  
*Betula nigra* - River Birch  
*Juniperus virginiana* - Eastern Red Cedar

### Tall Shrubs

*Hamamelis virginiana* - Witch-hazel  
*Ilex verticillata* - Winterberry  
*Salix discolor* - Pussy Willow  
*Sambucus canadensis* - Elderberry

### Medium and Small Shrubs

*Aronia arbutifolia* - Red Chokeberry  
*Aronia melanocarpa* - Black Chokeberry  
*Cephalanthus occidentalis* - Button Bush  
*Clethra alnifolia* - Summersweet  
*Cornus amomum* - Silky Dogwood  
*Ilex glabra* - Inkberry  
*Lindera benzoin* - Spice Bush  
*Viburnum nudum* - Winterthur

### Perennials and Ferns

*Aruncus dioicus* - Goatsbeard  
*Asclepias incarnata* - Swamp Milkweed  
*Baptisia australis* - Blue Wild Indigo  
*Caltha palustris* - Marsh Marigold  
*Chelone glabra* - Turtlehead  
*Echinacea purpurea* - Coneflower  
*Eupatorium dubium* - Joe Pye Weed  
*Iris versicolor* - Blue Flag Iris  
*Lobelia cardinalis* - Cardinal Flower  
*Lobelia siphilitica* - Blue Cardinal Flower  
*Mertensia virginica* - Virginia Bluebells  
*Oenothera fruticosa* - Sundrops  
*Osmunda cinnamomea* - Cinnamon Fern

\* Check for suitable natives