

Rain Gardens

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A Rain Garden is a shallow planted depression designed to slowdown excess rain water to allow it to infiltrate the subsoil and reduce storm runoff.

Here are a few common characteristics of Rain Gardens.

Location

- Stay 10 feet away from any structure to prevent seepage into it.
- Full sun is best for most plants. However, a shade garden can also be a rain garden.
- Water should not stand for more than 3 days in the garden.

Construction

- Dig a shallow depression.
- Clayey soils require larger but shallow gardens. Sandy soils can be the opposite. The average depth is 4-6 inches.
- A common size garden is 7 feet by 10 feet.
- Place rocks to slow the water entering and through the garden.
- Heavy rains will overflow the garden. You may need to direct overflow to keep it away from buildings and neighbors.

Planting

- Rain gardens will contain very wet spots, wet to dry and dry spots. Use plants that thrive under these moisture conditions. (See suggested plants on back side).

Care

- Weed and mulch as needed.
- Water plants for establishment if necessary.
- Remove and compost dead vegetation in spring.
- Plants should not need any fertilization.

For in-depth information on Rain Gardens, visit these websites

- Rain Gardens: A how-to manual for homeowners
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/shorelandzoning/documents/rgmanual.pdf>
- 10,000 Rain Gardens
http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/Documents/SCI/Case_Study/Case_Study_Kansas_City_10000_Rain_Gardens_Initiative.pdf

Wet to Dry Plants (low part of garden)

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
Acorus calamus	Sweet Flag
Asclepias incarnate	Swamp Milkweed
Aster novae-angliae	New England Aster
Carex sp.	Sedge
Chelone glabra	White Turtlehead
Equisetum	Horsetail
Eupatorium perfoliatum	Boneset
Juncus	Rush
Lobelia cardinalis	Cardinal Flower
Mimulus ringens	Monkey Flower
Panicum virgatum	Switch Grass
Sagittaria latifolia	Arrowhead
Scirpus	Bulrush
Solidago gigantea	Giant Goldenrod
Spartina pectinata	Prairie Cordgrass
Verbena hastata	Blue Vervain



Picture of rain garden at International Student Center on Kansas State University Campus



Picture of Sunset Zoo rain garden

Dry Plants (Slopes & Fringe Area)

Achillea sp.	Yarrow
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Weed
Baptisia bracteata	Plains Wild Indigo
Dalea purpurea	Purple Prairie Clover
Echinacea purpurea	Purple Coneflower
Hemerocallis	Daylily
Liatris	Gayfeather
Oenothera macrocarpa	Missouri Primrose
Ratibida columnifera	Mexican Hat
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyed Susan
Schizachyrium scoparium	Little Bluestem
Silphium laciniatum	Compass Plant
Sporobolus heterolopsis	Prairie Dropseed
Zizia aurea	Golden Alexanders

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