Build your own RAIN GARDEN

What is a Rain Garden?

A "Rain Garden" is simply a shallow depression in your yard that's planted with native wetland or wet prairie wildflowers and grasses.

Trust the experts!
Authentic native plants and seed from —

TAYLOR CREEK
Restoration Nurseries

PERENNIAL GARDEN DESIGN SHEET #1

Rain Garden Design

What is a Rain Garden?

The Rain Garden is one of the most popular new perennial garden designs for three reasons:

1. Rain Gardens make good use of rainwater runoff, thus conserving precious water supplies and helping protect the water quality of downstream lakes and rivers.

2. Rain Gardens are planted with native wetland and prairie wildflowers and grasses. These perennial plants naturally grew here when the first pioneers rolled across our land — so they're hardy and low-maintenance, not to mention beautiful!

3. Rain Gardens provide food and shelter for many interesting birds, butterflies and beneficial insects — such as dragonflies, which eat mosquitoes! — and they'll provide you with many hours of enjoyable bird and butterfly watching.

Rain Gardens meet the Dragonfly Seal of Approval!

How do I make a Rain Garden?

It's not complicated.

Just follow these easy steps:

1. Dig a shallow depression, as large in circumference as you'd like.

2. Direct your downspout or sump pump outlet to your Rain Garden depression, either by digging a shallow swale for water to run into the depression, or by piping the runoff through a buried 4-inch black plastic drain tile available at any home center.

3. Plant the native plants recommended in this design sheet.

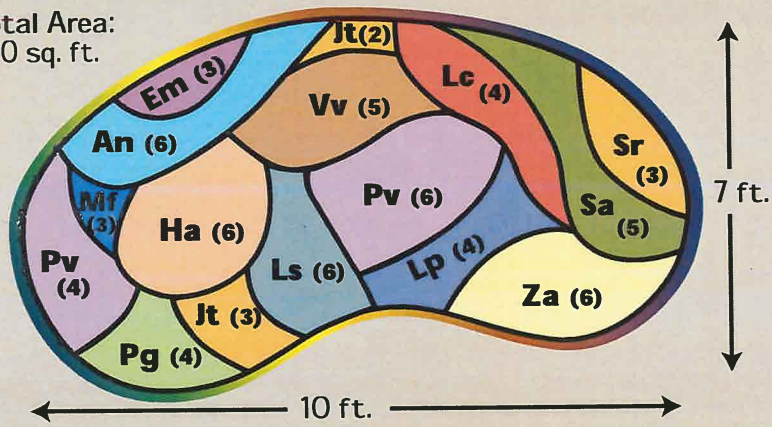
4. Water your planting every other day for the first two weeks or so, until they show that they are growing and well-established.

Once your native Rain Garden plants are established, they'll thrive without additional watering. Fertilizers are not necessary. And only minimal weeding will be needed once the initial weeds that appear when you disturb your ground have been removed.

Shown here are two suggested Rain Garden layouts, depending upon your soil type. The abbreviation of each species name is followed (in parentheses) by a recommended quantity you should install for best results. As you purchase your native plants, check (✓) the boxes provided below to be sure you've got them all for maximum Rain Garden beauty!

Rain Garden: Well-Drained to Sandy Soils

Total Area: 70 sq. ft.



Abbrev.	Common Name	Species Name	No. of Plants	Shopping List
An	New England aster	*Aster novae-angliae*	6	☐
Em	Spotted Joe-Pye weed	*Eupatorium maculatum*	3	☐
Ha	Sneezeweed	*Helenium autumnale*	6	☐
Jt	Torrey's rush	*Juncus torreyi*	5	☐
Lp	Prairie blazing star	*Liatris pycnostachya*	4	☐
Lc	Cardinal flower	*Lobelia cardinalis*	4	☐
Ls	Great blue lobelia	*Lobelia siphilitica*	6	☐
Mf	Wild bergamot	*Monarda fistulosa*	3	☐

Abbrev.	Common Name	Species Name	No. of Plants	Shopping List
Pg	Marsh phlox	*Phlox glaberrima*	4	☐
Pv	Mountain mint	*Pycanthemum virginianum*	10	☐
Sa	Green bulrush	*scirpus atrovirens*	5	☐
Sr	Stiff goldenrod	*Solidago rigida*	3	☐
Vv	Culver's root	*Veronicastrum virginicum*	5	☐
Za	Golden Alexander	*Zizia aurea*	6	☐
		Total Plants Needed	**70**	

Where should I put my Rain Garden?

Keep it at least 10 feet away from your house. Other than that, you should pick a naturally low spot in your yard, and direct water from your downspout or sump pump into it. It's best to choose a location with full sun, but if that's not possible, make sure it gets at least a half-day of sunlight.

Also, during heavy rains, your depression will fill up and overflow. Make sure this overflow drainage follows the drainage pattern originally designed for your lot. Test this by filling your depression with a garden hose and watching the overflow. After all, you certainly don't want to flood your neighbor's yard. If you need to, dig a shallow swale to direct overflow water toward the street or other downhill areas away from buildings.

How deep should I make my Rain Garden?

A depression of two to six inches will suffice if you don't want standing water. If you *do* want standing water, dig your depression deeper, perhaps down to 18 inches in the deepest spot. Slope the sides gradually from the edge to the deepest area. If you have heavy clay soil, it may well hold water without a liner. You can test this with your garden hose, too. If your soil won't hold water, purchase a plastic liner to hold the water in deeper areas, and install your plants around the edges of the liner.

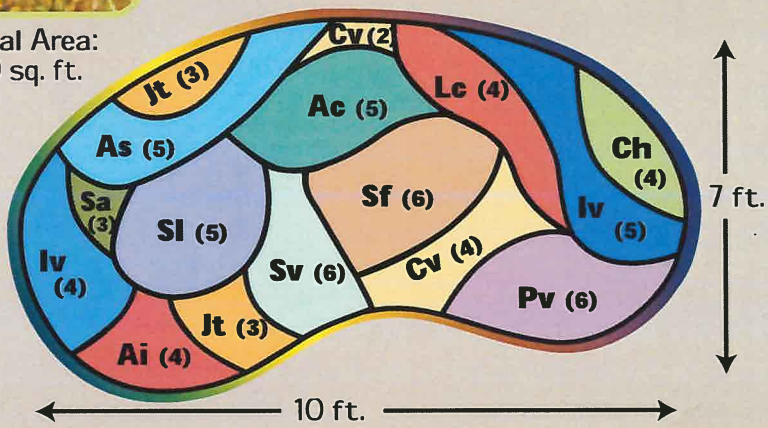
Anything else?

A few more tips . . .

- Try not to spread or spray lawn fertilizers too close to the Rain Garden. Fertilizers will actually stimulate weeds and create competition for the native plants.
- Don't worry about mosquitoes. Dragonflies, swallows and purple martins will take care of them. If they do become a problem, however, you can buy a "mosquito dunk" (containing organic bacteria Bt) to kill mosquito larvae in your areas of standing water.
- In the winter, the dead vegetation in your Rain Garden will catch snowflakes and frost, providing additional interest as a beautifully textured winter landscape.
- Come spring, mow and remove dead vegetation. Or if you can, burn it off. Native plants are adapted to the historic fires of the American prairie region and it won't hurt them at all. Check your local ordinances, or call your fire department for regulations.
- To attract birds, place a purple martin house nearby.
- Put a comfortable bench nearby so you can relax with a friend while watching the birds and butterflies.
- Place natural rocks or other garden ornaments in and around your Rain Garden — be creative! You'll learn and have fun while designing your own backyard landscape.

RAIN GARDEN:
Clay Soils

Total Area: 70 sq. ft.



Abbrev.	Common Name	Species Name	No. of Plants	Shopping List
Ac	Sweet flag	*Acorus calamus*	5	☐
Ai	Swamp milkweed	*Asclepias incarnata*	4	☐
As	Water plantain	*Alisma subcordatum*	5	☐
Ch	Bottle brush sedge	*Carex hystricina*	4	☐
Cv	Fox sedge	*Carex vulpinoidea*	6	☐
Iv	Wild blue flag iris	*Iris virginica shrevei*	9	☐
Jt	Torrey's rush	*Juncus torreyi*	6	☐
Lc	Cardinal flower	*Lobelia cardinalis*	4	☐
Pv	False dragon's head	*Physostegia virginiana*	6	☐
Sl	Arrowhead	*Sagittaria latifolia*	5	☐
Sa	Green bulrush	*Scirpus atrovirens*	3	☐
Sf	River bulrush	*Scirpus fluviatilis*	6	☐
Sv	Soft-stemmed bulrush	*Scirpus validus*	6	☐
		Total Plants Needed	**69**	

Rain Garden Plants

(Listed in alphabetical order by common names)

Arrowhead
Sagittaria latifolia
(1-3' High, Blooms: July-Sept.)

Bottlebrush sedge
Carex hystericina
(1-3' High, Blooms: May-July)

Cardinal flower
Lobelia cardinalis
(2-4' High, Blooms: July-Sept.)

Culver's root
Veronicastrum virginicum
(3-5' High, Blooms: July-Aug.)

False Dragon's Head
Physostegia virginiana
(1-4' High, Blooms: July-Sept.)

Fox sedge
Carex vulpinoidea
(1-3' High, Blooms: June-Aug.)

Golden Alexander
Zizia aurea
(1-2' High, Blooms: May-June)

Great blue lobelia
Lobelia siphilitica
(1-4' High, Blooms: Aug-Sept.)

Green bulrush
Scirpus atrovirens
(2-4' High, Blooms: May-July)

Marsh phlox
Phlox glaberrima
(2-4' High, Blooms: June-July)

Mountain mint
Pycnanthemum virginianum
(1-4' High, Blooms: July-Sept.)

New England aster
Aster novae-angliae
(1-4' High, Blooms: Aug.-Oct.)

Prairie blazing star
Liatris pycnostachya
(2-4' High, Blooms: July-Sept.)

River bulrush
Scirpus fluviatilis
(3-5' High, Blooms: June-Aug.)

Sneezeweed
Helenium autumnale
(2-4' High, Blooms: Aug.-Oct.)

Soft-stemmed bulrush
Scirpus validus
(3-9' High, Blooms: May-July)

Spotted Joe-pye weed
Eupatorium maculatum
(2-5' High, Blooms: July-Sept.)

Stiff goldenrod
Solidago rigida
(1-4' High, Blooms: July-Oct.)

Swamp milkweed
Asclepias incarnata
(2-4' High, Blooms: July-Aug.)

Sweet flag
Acorus calamus
(1-3' High, Blooms: May-June)

Torrey's rush
Juncus torreyi
(1-3' High, Blooms: June-July)

Water plantain
Alisma subcordatum
(1-3' High, Blooms: June-Sept.)

Wild bergamot
Monarda fistulosa
(2-4' High, Blooms: July-Aug.)

Wild blue flag iris
iris virginica shrevei
(1-3' High, Blooms: May-July)

Want more information?

Contact *Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries* or *Native Landscapes by AES*
at 608-897-8641, or by e-mail at info@appliedeco.com.
We'll be glad to answer your questions.

Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries

Native Landscapes design and creation by AES

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Professional native landscape services are available; please call 608-897-8641.

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