

# RAIN GARDEN RESOURCES

Visit these websites for more information about rain gardens:

- [www.nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens](http://www.nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens)
- [www.raingardennetwork.com](http://www.raingardennetwork.com)
- [www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/rain-gardens](http://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/rain-gardens)
- [www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/Stormwater/raingarden](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/Stormwater/raingarden)
- [www.lowimpactdevelopment.org](http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org)



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**Long Island Sound Study**

A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound

# WHY SHOULD YOU PLANT A RAIN GARDEN?

When you plant a rain garden, you help make the water in your neighborhood cleaner.

Each time it rains, rainwater flows over and through the ground, picking up contaminants that are left by our everyday activities – like lawn fertilizers and pesticides; oil, gas and heavy metals from our vehicles; viruses and bacteria in animal waste; even soil. Without intervention, these contaminants eventually find their way into nearby waterways and ultimately Long Island Sound, where they can harm wildlife and make the water unsafe for drinking, swimming and all types of fishing.

By planting a rain garden, you catch rainwater from areas in your yard where it can't soak in, like roofs, decks and driveways, and send it to your rain garden, where it can soak in. By soaking rainwater into the ground, you protect the environment by keeping polluted rainwater out of our ponds and streams – every time it rains!

# RAIN GARDENS

*Reduce flooding, clean water  
and provide pollinators with  
food and shelter!*



**EASTERN CONNECTICUT  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

# Choose Your Plants

The following list is just a handful of plants, native to New England that could thrive in your garden



**Swamp Milkweed**  
*Asclepias incarnata*  
Perennial  
Prefers wet soil (base/center)  
Prefers full sun



**Moonbeam Coreopsis**  
*Coreopsis Verticillata*  
Perennial  
Prefers wet soil (base/center)  
Prefers partial sun to full shade



**Cardinal flower**  
*Lobelia cardinalis*  
Perennial  
Prefers wet soil (base/center)  
Prefers full sun to part shade



**Common Ninebark (Eastern)**  
*Physocarpus opulifolius*  
Shrub  
Any soil (base/slope/berm)  
Prefers full sun to part shade



**Wild Geranium**  
*Geranium Maculatum*  
Perennial  
Prefers damp soil (slope/berm)  
Prefers partial sun to full shade



**Switch grass or Panic grass**  
*Panicum virgatum*  
Grass  
Any soil (base/slope/berm)  
Prefers full sun to part shade



Photo Credit - Judy Rondeau

## How to Design and Install a Rain Garden:

1. Choose a location where water comes out of a gutter or directly off an impervious surface, such as a deck, driveway or sidewalk.
2. Measure the area of the roof, deck or driveway that the water is draining from. Then divide that area by 6 to determine how big your rain garden should be in order to catch the first inch of rain.
3. Test the soil to make sure rain water will soak in. Dig a small hole about 10-12 inches deep and fill it with water. The water should drain out within 24 hours. If it does not, you will want to select a different location.
4. Mark out the area with marking paint or a hose, and dig down into the ground about 8-10 inches, leaving the edges sloping towards the middle to create a shallow bowl shape.
5. You can add compost or fertilizer to the bottom of the rain garden to help your plants grow.
6. Choose a variety of plants to go in the rain garden, including plants that will add interest throughout the seasons. Plants that are native to your area will require minimal attention once they are established and will attract pollinators and birds. Select plants that can tolerate temporary wet conditions or "wet feet" for the base (deepest spot) of the rain garden.
7. Add 2-3 inches of mulch around the plants to suppress weeds, help protect the rain garden from erosion and keep moisture in the soil.
8. Water generously every few days or as needed until the plants are established.

### **Important Note:**

Avoid underground utilities – contact **Call Before You Dig** at 1-800-922-4455 or online at [www.cbyd.com](http://www.cbyd.com) to locate underground utilities.