How to create a rain garden

Designing and planting a rain garden is much like creating any other perennial garden, with a few unique differences.

The garden must be located where runoff can be diverted into it, away from building foundations and utilities.

A shallow, saucer-shaped depression is created in the garden to hold rain as it soaks in.

Soil replacement and additional preparation are sometimes needed for success. A good soil mix for rain gardens is 50-60% sand, 20-30% topsoil, and 20-30% compost.

Species of perennial plants native to our region are recommended, as they are adapted to local conditions and will not need extra care once they are established.

A mulch of shredded hardwood is an integral part of your rain garden. It keeps the soil moist and ready to soak up rain, and makes your garden low-maintenance.

You can easily create a simple rain garden in a weekend, for no cost if you use plants you already have. Or, you can install a deluxe rain garden that will take more effort and investment. It's all up to you!

A beautiful solution to water pollution

You can help protect the Great Lakes and our streams, rivers, and inland lakes by planting a beautiful rain garden.

Keeping rain on your property, where it naturally belongs, will help solve some of our water pollution problems.

Tiger Swallowtail

New England Asters

Joe Pye Weed

Black-Eyed Susans

Cardinal Flower

Culvers Root

Great Blue Lobelia

rain gardens of West Michigan

For free instructions and garden designs, visit our web site!

www.raingardens.org

RAIN GARDENS

Why do you need a rain garden?

Saving the Great Lakes, one garden at a time

www.raingardens.org

Rain Gardens of West Michigan
West Michigan Environmental Action Council
1514 Wealthy SE, Suite 280
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616-454-RAIN
www.raingardens.org

We are intimately connected to one of the largest fresh water systems on earth, and that water is in trouble.

What threatens it? We do.

When rain and snowmelt flow off our yards, roofs, sidewalks, roads and parking lots, the resulting stormwater runoff washes pollution into our streams, rivers and lakes.

Up to 70% of the water pollution in our region is carried there by stormwater. And much of this pollution comes from things we do in our yards and gardens!

Polluted stormwater runoff entering a river

*Water wasn't meant to run **off** our land.*

Nature's original plan for rain is this: To soak into the soil, replenish groundwater supplies, be taken up by and filtered by plants, and enter our surface waters as clean, cool groundwater, nurturing and nourishing our world.

This is where rain gardens come in.

A rain garden is a special kind of stormwater garden designed to collect and absorb runoff from a roof or parking lot. By planting a rain garden, you can help solve some of our stormwater problems.

Rain Gardens…

Come in all shapes and sizes

Can be designed for any site

Are easy to install and maintain

Are beautiful landscaping features

Attract birds and butterflies

www.raingardens.org