

RAIN GARDEN DESIGN SHEET

FROM TAYLOR CREEK RESTORATION NURSERIES AND NATIVE LANDSCAPES BY AES

What is a Rain Garden?

A Rain Garden is simply a shallow depression in your yard that is planted with native wetland or wet prairie wildflowers and grasses. It is designed to naturally collect water that runs off from your roof or is discharged from your sump pump. Rain Gardens are gaining popularity for three reasons:

1. Rain Gardens make good use of stormwater runoff, conserving precious water supplies and helping protect water quality in downstream lakes and streams.
2. Rain Gardens are planted with beautiful, hardy, low-maintenance native perennial plants.
3. Rain Gardens provide food and shelter for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects, such as mosquito-devouring dragonflies!

Simple, Straightforward Construction

It's not complicated. Just follow these easy steps:


1. Dig a shallow depression with a level bottom, as large in circumference as you'd like.
2. Direct your downspout or sump pump outlet to your Rain Garden, either by digging a shallow swale for water to run through, or by routing it through a buried 4" PVC pipe.
3. Plant the native plants recommended in this design sheet.
4. Water your planting every other day for the first few weeks, until plants are growing and well-established.

Once your native Rain Garden plants are established, they'll thrive well without additional watering. Fertilizers are not necessary.

Location, Location, Location

Pick a naturally low spot in your yard—at least 10 feet from your house—and direct water from your downspout or sump pump into it. Full sun is best, but make sure the site gets at least a half-day of sunlight.

During heavy rains, your rain garden may 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. If needed, dig a shallow swale to direct overflow water toward the street, road or other downhill areas away from buildings.

Digging In

A depression of two to six inches will suffice. Slope the sides gradually from the edge to the level bottom. Deeper rain gardens in heavy clay soils will hold water longer. Test this with a garden hose. French drains can be installed to aid infiltration.

More Tips

- Hand weed biweekly until native plants are established.
- Avoid using lawn fertilizers near the Rain Garden. Fertilizers will stimulate weed competition without benefiting your native plants.
- Don't worry about mosquitoes. Most rain gardens will not hold water long enough for mosquitoes to reproduce. Even so, dragonflies, swallows and other natural control processes will keep them in check.
- Come spring, mow and remove dead vegetation. Or simply burn it off if your fire department regulations allow it. Native plants thrive under fire management.
- Place natural rocks, bird houses, a bench or garden ornaments in and around your Rain Garden—be creative! You'll learn and have fun in designing your own backyard landscape.

For more information, contact *Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries* or *Native Landscapes by AES* at 608-897-8641. Send e-mail to info@appliedeco.com. We are happy to answer your questions. A more detailed rain garden design sheet and a link to a technical manual are available online at www.appliedeco.com.

Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries and *Native Landscapes by AES* are divisions of Applied Ecological Services, Inc., 17921 Smith Road, Brodhead, WI 53520.

DESIGN YOUR OWN RAIN GARDEN

On the planning grid below, draw out your rain garden plan. Ecological designers often cluster same-species plants together in groups of two to six plants. Maintain 1-foot spacing between plants throughout the bed.



Rain Garden Plants for Well-Drained to Sandy Soil

SPECIES NAME	COMMON NAME	QUANTITY TO BUY/OTHER INFO
Aster laevis	Smooth blue aster	_____
Carex scoparia	Pointed-broom sedge	_____
Echinacea purpurea	Purple coneflower	_____
Elymus canadensis	Canada wild rye	_____
Eupatorium perfoliatum	Boneset	_____
Helenium autumnale	Dog-toothed daisy	_____
Monarda fistulosa	Bergamot	_____
Parthenium integrifolium	Wild quinine	_____
Ratibida pinnata	Yellow coneflower	_____
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyed Susan	_____
Schizachyrium scoparium	Little blue stem	_____
Solidago rigida	Stiff goldenrod	_____
Sorghastrum nutans	Indian grass	_____
Tradescantia ohiensis	Spiderwort	_____
Veronicastrum virginicum	Culver's root	_____

Many additional species are available. The lists at left include some of the more popular, showy species. Please contact our nearest restoration nursery for recommendations on additional species.



Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries
Brodhead, WI
608.897.8641 • www.appliedeco.com/tcrn/



Spring Lake Restoration Nurseries
Prior Lake, MN
952.447.1919 • www.appliedeco.com/slrn/

Rain Garden Plants for Poorly Drained Clay Soils

SPECIES NAME	COMMON NAME	QUANTITY TO BUY/OTHER INFO
Asclepias incarnata	Red milkweed	_____
Aster novae-angliae	New England aster	_____
Carex hystericina	Bottlebrush sedge	_____
Carex scoparia	Pointed-broom sedge	_____
Carex vulpinoidea	Fox sedge	_____
Elymus canadensis	Canada wild rye	_____
Eupatorium maculatum	Spotted joe pye	_____
Eupatorium perfoliatum	Boneset	_____
Helenium autumnale	Dog-toothed daisy	_____
Lobelia cardinalis	Cardinal flower	_____
Lobelia siphilitica	Great blue lobelia	_____
Pycnanthemum virginianum	Mountain mint	_____
Rudbeckia subtomentosa	Sweet black-eyed Susan	_____
Silphium perfoliatum	Cup plant	_____
Solidago graminifolia	Grass-leaved goldenrod	_____



For more information on Native Landscape Design, Contact Applied Ecological Services:
608.897.8641 • www.appliedeco.com/NLD.cfm



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