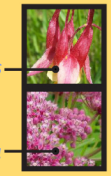
WHY USE NATIVE PLANTS

Roots of native plants are much longer than those of non-natives, so they can filter more rainwater and absorb 30% more water than a typical lawn of the same size.

Below are just a few examples of the many native plants that can be used in your rain garden.

PERENNIALS

Blue Star-*Amsonia tabernaemontana*



Columbine-*Aquilegia canadensis*

Red Milkweed-*Asclepias rubra*

Swamp Milkweed-*Asclepias incarnata*

FERNS

Lady Fern-*Athyrium aplenoides*

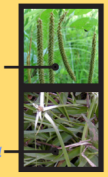
Royal Fern-*Osmunda regalis*

Cinnamon Fern-*Osmunda cinnamonea*

Marsh Fern-*Thelpteris palustris*

SEDGES AND RUSHES

Lurid Sedge-*Carex luridia*

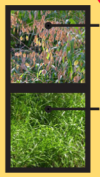


Fringed Sedge-*Carex crinita*

Waxy Sedge-*Carex glaucescens*

White Sedge-*Rhynochospora latifolia*

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES



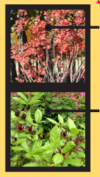
River Oats-*Chasmantium latifolia*

Muhly Grass-*Muhlenbergia capillaries*

Sweet Grass-*Muhlenbergia filpes*

Switch Grass-*Panicum vigatum*

SHRUBS



Red Chokeberry-*Aronia arbutifolia*

Beautyberry-*Callicarpa americana*

Sweet Shrub-*Calycanthus floridus*

CONSTRUCTING A RAIN GARDEN

1. Determine the size of your rain garden by estimating your drainage area (include rooftops, driveways, sidewalks). A rule of thumb is that the rain garden area should be up to 20% of the drainage area in well-drained sandy soil, and between 20%-60% of the drainage area in more poorly drained loamy soil.

2. Choose a spot that is a depressed area in your yard and at least 10 feet from your home's foundation.

3. Dig a shallow, flat-bottomed hole with gradually sloping sides. The average depth of a rain garden is 6"- 12". Have a spot located in your landscape for excavated materials or build a berm with it on the lower side of your rain garden.

4. Test the overflow pattern. Fill the excavated area with water and observe where the excess water flows. If necessary, dig a shallow channel to direct water away from buildings and toward the street or creek.

5. Direct your gutter downspout to your rain garden depression by digging a shallow channel.

6. Plant! Mix your soil amendments in the bottom of the garden (if you are using them). Place the plants at the appropriate spacing. Once planted, put a 3" layer of untreated shredded hardwood mulch around the plants to conserve moisture and deter weeds.

HOW MANY PLANTS

Your garden size divided by 2.25 for plants spaced 18" apart.

PERCOLATION TEST

Test your soil to calculate how much water will infiltrate in 24 hours.

1. Dig an 8" deep hole.
2. Fill with water. Let saturate for an hour.
3. Refill hole. Mark water level.
4. Measure water level after 1, 2, and 4 hours.
5. Calculate how many inches will infiltrate in 24 hours.
6. A good infiltration rate is 1" per hour.

FIX YOUR SOIL

If the composition of your soil does not allow for proper infiltration (see percolation test above), you may need to amend the soil. A good soil amendment mixture is 50% sand, 25% topsoil and 25% compost. These items can be found at your local lawn and garden store. You are now ready to mix these amendments in the bottom of the excavated area and continue the construction your rain garden.