What is a Rain Garden?

- A garden planted in a shallow depression, designed to capture rainwater from downspouts, driveways, parking lots
- Rain gardens improve water quality by reducing stormwater runoff and removing pollutants
- Rain gardens beautify our neighborhoods with attractive landscapes using a variety of native plants

Rain garden at Hilltop Elementary in Reading, Ohio

What are the Benefits?

- Increases the amount of water soaking into the ground
- Recharges local groundwater supply amd reduces the amount of surface water runoff
- Reduces drainage problems and localized flooding
- Protects rivers, lakes and streams from sediment as well as pollutants carried in stormwater runoff
- Increases the beauty of our yards and neighborhoods
- Creates valuable habitat for birds, bees & butterflies

A Rain Garden is Not . . .

- A rain garden is NOT a pond, water feaure or wetland (Rain gardens are designed to hold water ONLY 24-48 hours)
- A rain garden is NOT a breeding ground for mosquitoes, which need 7-12 days in standing water to reproduce
- A rain garden is NOT a highly engineered or expensive system to build and maintain

For more information about Rain Gardens visit:

Mill Creek Watershed Council
www.millcreekwatershed.org/rain_garden.html

10,000 Rain Gardens
www.rainkc.com

Grow Native!
www.grownative.org

Healthy Landscapes (Rain Barrels)
www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/#

Rain Garden Network
www.raingardennetwork.com

Rain Gardens of Western Michigan
www.raingardens.org/Index.php

Soil & Water Conservation Districts
www.nacdnet.org/resources/cdsonweb.html

Rain Gardens Recycle Water

Contacts:

Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District
P.O. Box 549, 1000 Locust Street
Owensville, OH 45160
Phone: 513.732.7075
Website: www.clermontswcd.org

Greater Cincinnati Rain Garden Alliance
Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities
1 North Commerce Park Drive, Suite 124
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215
Phone: 513.563.8800
Website: www.millcreekwatershed.org

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Gardens: Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities

Rain Gardens

a Green Design to

Reduce Stormwater Runoff
Improve Water Quality
Beautify Our Communities

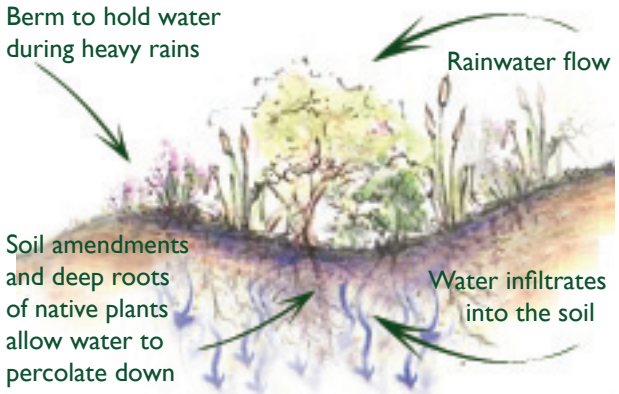
Give Rain A Chance

Why a Rain Garden?

Rain gardens help keep our streams and rivers clean by filtering stormwater runoff before it enters local waterways, as well as help alleviate problems associated with localized flooding and drainage.

Rain gardens recharge the ground water supply and remove pollutants as well as provide food and habitat for wildlife. Rain gardens also add beauty to our communities.

The Runoff Stops Here



(Courtesy of CDP Engineers, Inc.; Mill Creek Watershed Council)

Effects on Storm Water

A substantial amount of pollution is carried into our waterways by runoff from our lawns, rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots and roadways. High volumes of stormwater runoff increase the risk of flooding and property damage. Storm drainage systems, including sewers and open ditches, can flow untreated into our rivers, lakes and streams.

Rain gardens capture rainwater runoff from driveways, sidewalks and downspouts.

Water is absorbed by the rain garden plants and infiltrated into the ground. The deep roots of native plants penetrate the soil, increase water infiltration and filter out pollutants.

Simple Steps for a Rain Garden

Find a spot for your Rain Garden

Locate your rain garden downslope from downspouts, driveways or other areas that direct water through your yard. Sunny or partly sunny locations are ideal, but shady areas can also work.

Construct the garden 10 feet or more from your house to keep water away from the foundation. Consider where the water will enter the garden and where it might overflow. Make sure it doesn't go in an unwanted direction!

Identify a location where you can dig a shallow depression. Sloping areas are ideal for catching runoff and allowing overflow during large rainfall events.

Avoid placing rain gardens over or near the drain field of a septic system or below-ground utility lines.

Prepare the Bed

Once you've decided on a location for your garden, get ready to dig in! Most rain gardens are only 4-8 inches deep. For clay or compacted soil, dig down about 12 inches and amend the soil with sand and compost. This will help the rainwater percolate down into the soil.

Grade the interior of the garden so water will spread out over a large, flat area. Add a berm on the downslope side of your garden to allow the rainwater to infiltrate.

Test Your Garden:

After the garden bed is prepared, fill it with water to make sure the water can infiltrate within 24 hours – and flows where you want it to go!

If you have questions about your soil conditions, contact your county Soil & Water Conservation District for assistance.

Plant Selection

Avoid invasive species

Native plant species are recommended for planting Rain Gardens.
Native plants thrive in local conditions, have deep root systems and many tolerate both spring rains and summer drought.
You can mix native flowers, shrubs, grasses, sedges and ferns to create a formal look or a "naturalized" look for your landscape. And once established, they're low maintenance.

Plants for Rain Gardens:

Flowers (Perennials)

Blue Flag Iris	Celandine Poppy	Milkweeds
Cardinal Flower	Wild Columbine	Coneflowers
Great Blue Lobelia	Wild Geranium	Prairie Dock
Joe Pye Weed	Wild Indigo	Blazing Stars
Blue Vervain	Spiderwort	Coreopsis
Turtlehead	Phlox, Asters	Purple Prairie Clover
Virginia Blue Bells	Penstemon	Culver's Root
Monarda (Bee Balm)	Alum Root	Prairie Smoke

Grasses, Sedges

Lirrle Bluestem	June Grass	Fox Sedge
Prairie Dropseed	Switch Grass	Torrey's Rush
Indian Grass	Northern Sea Oats	Common Rush

Shrubs, Ferns

Red-Twigged Dogwood	Swamp Rose	Ostrich
Winterberry	Spicebush	Cinnamon
Prairie Ninebark	Chokeberry	Interrupted
New Jersey Tea	Blueberry	Sensitive

Keep Rain From Your Drain

What about Rain Barrels?

Rain barrels can also be incorporated into your rain garden plans. They can hold a set amount of rain water which can be used at a later time, while the overflow can be directed to your rain garden. Rain barrels can also be suited to your taste.