

WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?



SAMPLE PLANT LIST:

- ❑ **Ferns:** sensitive fern, ostrich fern and lady fern.
- ❑ **Sedges:** bladder sedge, carex spp.
- ❑ **Rushes:** red-tinge bulrush.
- ❑ **Other plants:** Blueflag iris, bloodroot, jack-in-the-pulpit, turtlehead, skunk currant, swamp currant, lungwort, Canada lily, swamp milkweed and common milkweed.

TIPS

Bring in community: This is a lovely project to do as a homeowner, but also great for a community garden, school or office space. If you are willing to host a small get-together when you build your own rain garden you could really get some action going locally. If you have a road/street-front property you might also put up a small sign letting people know that your bed is a rain garden.

Thoughtful procurement: Please do not harvest native plants to save money. Any perennial that suits your habitat will work well. If cost is an issue, you might organize a neighborhood plant swap in the spring or fall. People always have plants that need to be broken up. You can also go to the plant sale in June that is hosted by the Fredericton Botanical Society.

Understand your soil: If you have heavy clay soil, you may not want to make a rain garden or you may need to remove some of the clay and add enough compost/humus to allow drainage. Remember, you want water to penetrate the earth. Too much clay will likely give you a wetland or a pond instead.

RAIN GARDEN PROGRAM

RAIN GARDENS HAVE NATIVE PLANTS, ARE POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY AND HELP REDUCE FLOODING!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE NASHWAAK WATERSHED THAT WOULD LIKE A **FREE RAIN GARDEN.**

WE WILL DESIGN AND PLANT THE GARDEN FOR **FREE.**

For more information or to request a garden contact:
info@nashwaakwatershed.ca
or (506) 261-4664



Thanks to our funders for their support:



*A **rain garden** is designed to collect rainwater run-off, slow its movement and allow it to filter back into the ground and ultimately back into the water table.*



HOW TO CREATE A RAIN GARDEN

- Think about where the most water is on your property.
- Measure the dimensions you want your garden to be and mark the edges off.
- Remove the grass turf and pile it up.
- Dig 12” down and remove the soil (pile in one area). The dug-out area is your “swale”.
- Make the bottom of your swale flat and level.
- Dig an entrance channel for water (maybe where your downspout is) and put some crushed rock in to reduce erosion.
- Add compost, the dirt you removed, and more soil if needed (6” is ideal for plants).
- Take the turf you removed and place it on the side of the swale opposite where water enters. This is your “berm”. Berms slow water and can eventually be planted in, if you desire.
- Dig an overflow channel in your berm (in case of a severe flood). You can also dig more than one swale and connect them if you want. This is helpful on a hill. Add crushed rock to the overflow channel to reduce erosion.
- Put your plants into the swale and mulch with wood chips, etc.

Choose your plants depending on the site conditions. If you have a wetter, shadier area you would choose more plants that are found in forest or wetland habitats. Plant several of each plant species to establish natural “clumps” of plantings.



WHY ARE RAIN GARDENS IMPORTANT?

- As rain water runs over concrete and asphalt it can pick up chemical residues and salts. This contaminated water often ends up in the lowest points of our watershed (Nashwaak and St. John/Wolastog Rivers).
- Rainwater that runs into storm drains must be treated by municipal water systems, which is costly. However, treatment cannot remove all heavy metals and chemicals that may be suspended in the water.
- The level of run-off we have today is not natural. It happens because so much of our cityscapes are paved. When water moves quickly over land and doesn't percolate into the soils, it can alter the natural water table specific to that area. Fast-moving water can also cause serious erosion.
- When erosion happens, it can deposit significant levels of silt into our waterways. This can potentially cause death for fish and other small aquatic animals with gills.
- Rain gardens create habitat for pollinating insects, birds and other small animals.

WHAT DO YOU PUT IN A RAIN GARDEN?

We recommend species that are native to or hardy in New Brunswick. We select species that have multiple uses: pollinator plants, edible berries or plants with medicinal value.

You can choose whatever plants you like for your property, if they are appropriate for your ecosystem. Perennials are probably better than annuals because they root deeper and become more established. They will also help out in the early spring and fall when it's too cold for annuals. Annuals can always be mixed in for decoration if you wanted.

