

Rain Gardens

A rain garden is a linear or abstractly shaped ditch which when designed and planted correctly, helps capture, Retain, filter and ultimately return storm water runoff back into the ground. Rain gardens restore natural watershed function by mimicking upland forest and meadowland hydrological functions. This helps to mitigate the effects of land clearing and use of heavy equipment.

The use of heavy equipment for excavating and grading at construction sites compacts soil and disrupts natural hydrological functions. Studies have shown that natural undisturbed woodlands can filter and return up to 5 times more rain per hour versus a cleared woodland or lawn before runoff occurs. This, along with impervious surfaces such as parking lots, driveways, roads and conventional roof, contributes huge quantities of storm water runoff into streams, rivers and lake surface waters.

Rain gardens are designed to be about 1/3 the size of the surface area providing the runoff. This is a considerable addition of area not previously used in traditional landscape designs. The treat thing about rain gardens is that they move our perception of landscaping from adornments to necessities of a sustainable landscape environment. Although function does not supersede fashion with rain gardens, both function and fashion are inherent. They are increasingly used in residential properties, commercial, industrial and municipal sites, and along parking lots.

Because of varying conditions within a rain garden (dry, sun, wet, shade), there is a large palette of plants available to choose from.

