

## What is the purpose of a rain garden?

Whether you live in a city or along a lake or river, managing storm water run-off is something to consider in your landscape. Roof tops, roads, driveways and sidewalks create impervious surfaces that cannot absorb water. If rainwater and snowmelt is not able to be absorbed into the soil, run-off occurs. Run-off can carry sediments and pollutants such as oil, pet waste, debris and nutrients from lawn clippings and fertilizers. These pollutants can then end up in our rivers and lakes. Even municipal storm sewers may lead directly to rivers and lakes.

Simply put, a rain garden is a shallow depression filled with selected trees, shrubs, flowering plants and grasses designed to allow rainwater run-off to absorb into the soil. Rain gardens help to filter pollutants, absorb nutrients and allow sediments to settle before entering the ground water. They are useful in controlling erosion by trapping and allowing the water to infiltrate rather than run down a slope. Rain gardens add interest and beauty to a landscape or add elements to attract butterflies and birds.

