

Water Shed Position

The League of Women Voters of Brown County supports resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning for the Lake Monroe Watershed, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government

Watershed

We all live in a watershed and everyone effects what happens in a watershed by how we treat the natural resources. Construction, logging, farming, and the application of lawn chemicals affect the quantity and quality of a watershed.

Development activities cover the land with impervious surfaces, like roofs, parking lots, driveways and roadways. These areas prevent groundwater infiltration and deprive aquifers the water they need to remain stable. Development activities also disturb and compact the soil, greatly decreasing water infiltration capacity, increasing soil erosion and flow of nonpoint source pollutants into watersheds.

League of Women Voters of
Brown County

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Rain Garden

Reduce non source pollutants, recharge groundwater and improve water quality





What is and Why Have a Raingarden?

A rain garden is a landscaped, shallow depression created to capture, filter, and infiltrate storm water runoff. A raingarden has two main goals. The first goal is to serve as a functional system where non source pollutants are removed via absorption and metabolism of plants. The second goal is to slow water runoff, preventing erosion and recharging ground water. Raingardens are an important tool for communities, neighborhoods, and municipalities to create diverse and attractive landscapes while protecting the health of the natural environment.

Site Selection.

Observe your property during heavy rains, note where puddles form and where runoff is flowing. Determine the exact site and decide the size and depth required. Area should slope between 1% and 10% and be at least ten feet from any foundation. Full to partial sun will allow widest selection of plants.

Size and Depth of Rain Garden

Identify your soil as sandy, silty or clayey. A clay soil will have a slow percolation rate and will require a larger garden than one located in a sandy or silty soil. Try to make the raingarden approximately twice as long as it is wide, with width measured from uphill to down. 10ft x 20ft x 6in. works well for 1000 square foot roof or a 100 cubic foot of water. If your area is smaller, consider multiple smaller gardens, such as 5ft x 5ft x 2ft deep or 5ft x 10ft x 1.5ft deep.

Preparing Site

Mark the outline of the garden using a garden hose, rope, or lime. Eliminate turf by covering area with black plastic for several weeks until plants die. Start digging on the uphill side of the rain garden and use that soil to build a berm along the lower side. A curved berm at least 1ft wide, will look more natural and attractive than a straight one. Using a carpenter's level, level the area between the upper edge of the raingarden and the top of the berm. Compact the berm firmly with a tamper.

Planting

Add compost to improve soil quality, texture, and percolation. You can also add gravel to clayey soil for better water infiltration. Put down 2 to 4 inches of mulch. Mulch allows gentle absorption of water and encourages biological activity that filters pollutants

and converts them into a harmless substance.

It is far better to transplant pots of plants with established roots, than to broadcast seed. Transplants establish more quickly to fulfill their role of slowing down and absorbing runoff water. If you already grow some of the plants adapted to the raingarden, use this as an excuse to divide and replant.

A Few Native Plant Suggestion

Scientific Name followed by *Common Name*

Perennials: *Asclepias incarnate* Swamp milkweed, *Cheleone glabra* White Turtlehead, *Eupatorium maculatum* Joe-Pye Weed, *Helenium autumnale* Sneezweed, *Lobelia cardinalis* Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia siphilitica* Great Blue Lobelia.

Ferns & Sedges: *Athyrium filix-femina* Lady Fern, *Osmunda regalis* Royal Fern, *Osmunda cinnamomea* Cinnamon Fern, *Carex pendula* Drooping Sedge, *Carex stipata* Tussock Sedge.

Shrubs: *Fothergilla gardenia* Dwarf Fothergilla, *Cephalanthus occidentalis* Buttonbush, *Viburnum dentatum* Arrowwood, *Lindera benzoin* Spicebush.

Trees:

Betula nigra River Birch, *Betula papyrifera* White Birch

For more info visit:

<https://secure.in.gov/indot/2892.htm>

www.water.rutgers.edu

And

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