Rain Gardens

What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a shallow garden with special soils and a rock reservoir designed to collect rainwater from roadways, parking lots or any less absorbent surface. It can be planted with a combination of shrubs, grasses and flowers. The garden temporarily traps water long enough so it can percolate, filtering out pollutants and improving water quality as it replenishes groundwater levels. See one in action and gather ideas for your own garden at Lake Ellyn Park or Prairie Path Park.

Why a Rain Garden?

Rain gardens help limit the amount of water that enters storm sewers; reduce the potential for flooding; drainage problems and bank erosion; remove pollutants that run from yards, parking lots, and roads straight into waterways; restore and recharge ground water; attract birds, butterflies, and beneficial insects such as mosquito-consuming dragonflies; rain gardens are planted with beautiful, hardy plants that require little to no watering.

Meet Our Water-Wise Plants!

In addition to being a beautiful space to relax and enjoy, the courtyard surrounding the Lake Ellyn Boathouse is also a working rain garden! The paths are gravel and absorb rainwater. The plants have deep roots which wick water back into the ground. Pollinators flock to the garden, which also attract birds and small animals. When the weather warms up, see if you can spot the plants below or consider planting some in your own rain garden.

- Allium ‘Summer Beauty’
- Agastache ‘Blue Fortune’
- Calamintha ‘Montrose White’
- Carex pensylvanica
- Echinacea ‘Magnus’
- Liatris spicata ‘Kobold’
- Mertensia virginica
- Monarda didyma
- Stachys ‘Hummelo’

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