

# Why a Rain Garden?

It's a great way to help make your home and our community a greener place.

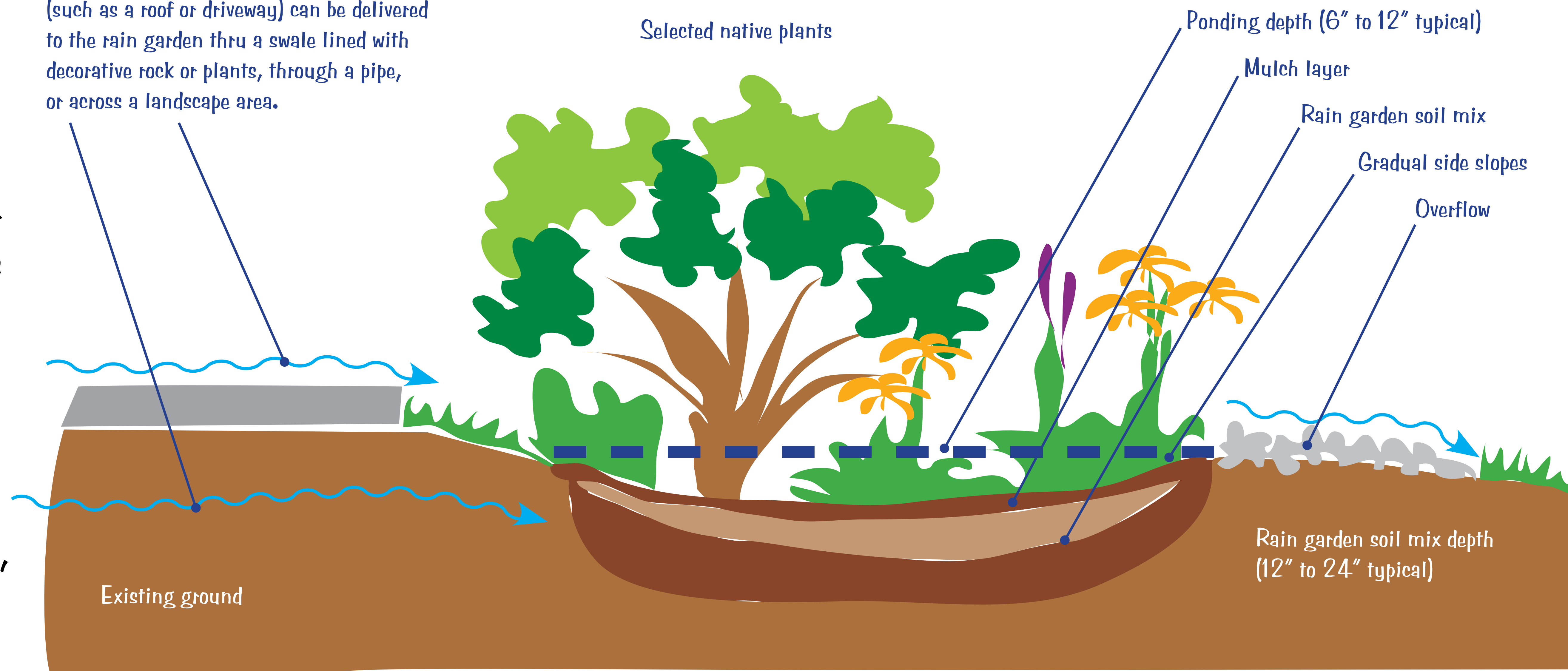
Stormwater runoff is both a quality and quantity problem. Stormwater starts as rain or melting snow that runs off fields and hard surfaces (paved streets, driveways, parking lots and roofs).

As it flows through ditches, culverts, and street drains, stormwater accumulates, sometimes creating local flooding.

At the same time, stormwater picks up oil, metal particles, litter, animal waste, fertilizer, pesticides, and sediment, becoming polluted, and flowing untreated into waterways.

A rain garden is an attractive garden with a special purpose--to reduce the amount of stormwater entering our beautiful streams, rivers, and lakes. A rain garden is constructed in a place where rain from your roof or driveway can be directed to and is landscaped with plant species native to our area.

Water flowing off impervious surfaces (such as a roof or driveway) can be delivered to the rain garden thru a swale lined with decorative rock or plants, through a pipe, or across a landscape area.



**Compare:** A one inch rain storm on a one acre natural meadow produces 218 cubic feet of runoff while the same storm on a one acre paved parking lot produces 3,450 cubic feet of runoff.

(W. Virginia DEP)

EPA's Phase II Stormwater Regulations require all Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4's) within an "urbanized area" to develop a Stormwater Management Plan. Putnam County, all six towns and the Village of Brewster are considered regulated MS4's. By installing a rain garden you can help your MS4 manage stormwater.

Turn Your Home into a Stormwater Pollution Solution!  
A beautiful solution to storm water pollution.

## FAQ's

### Does a Rain Garden Form a Pond?

No. The rain water will soak in so the rain garden is dry between rainfalls.

### Are they a Breeding Ground for Mosquitoes?

No. Mosquitoes need 7 to 12 days to lay and hatch eggs, and standing water in the rain garden will last for a few hours after most storms. Mosquitoes are more likely to lay eggs in bird baths, storm sewers, and lawns than in a sunny rain garden. Also rain gardens attract dragonflies, which eat mosquitoes!

### Do They Require a Lot of Maintenance?

Rain gardens can be maintained with little effort after the plants are established. Some weeding and watering will be needed in the first two years and perhaps some thinning in the later years as the plants mature.

### Is a Rain Garden Expensive?

It doesn't have to be. A family and a few friends can provide the labor. The main cost will be purchasing the plants, and even this cost can be minimized by using some native plants that might already exist in the yard or in a friend's yard.



# Putnam County's Demonstration Rain Garden

This rain garden captures stormwater runoff from the Park Office roof, adjacent paved walkway and lawn area which helps to prevent stormwater from polluting the surrounding environment.

Blue Flag Iris



Coral Bells



Winterberry  
Holly



Red Osier  
Dogwood



Black-Eyed Susans



Blazing Star



Astilbe

Inkberry



Fern



Everyone can help prevent  
stormwater pollution  
A cleaner Environment  
begins with you!

Why do we need rain gardens?

Rain is natural; stormwater isn't.

Government studies have shown that up to 70% of the pollution in our streams, rivers and lakes is carried there by stormwater. Although most people never think about stormwater, about half of the pollution that stormwater carries comes from things we do in our yards and gardens!

Planting a rain garden may seem like a small thing, but if you calculate the amount of rain that runs off your roof, you would be very surprised. That rain is supposed to soak into the ground, but instead heads down the street to the storm drain, carrying pollution with it. Keeping rain where it falls, by putting it into a beautiful rain garden, is a natural solution. You not only get a lovely garden out of it, you have the added benefit of helping protect our rivers, streams and lakes from stormwater pollution.

**You can be part  
of a beautiful solution!**

For an expanded list of native plant options, visit our website at [www.putnamcountyny.com](http://www.putnamcountyny.com)

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