

Sturgis Library Rain Garden

What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a garden in a depression that collects rainwater, often from a gutter downspout, and is filled with native plants. When rain washes over hard surfaces, such as roofs, parking lots and roadways, it picks up pollutants and sediments and becomes stormwater. Untreated stormwater runoff pollutes the Cape's ponds and coastal waters. Rain gardens filter stormwater and allow the water to slowly soak into the ground where it can replenish groundwater.

Stormwater collects in the native plant-filled depression

Rainwater inflow from gutter downspout

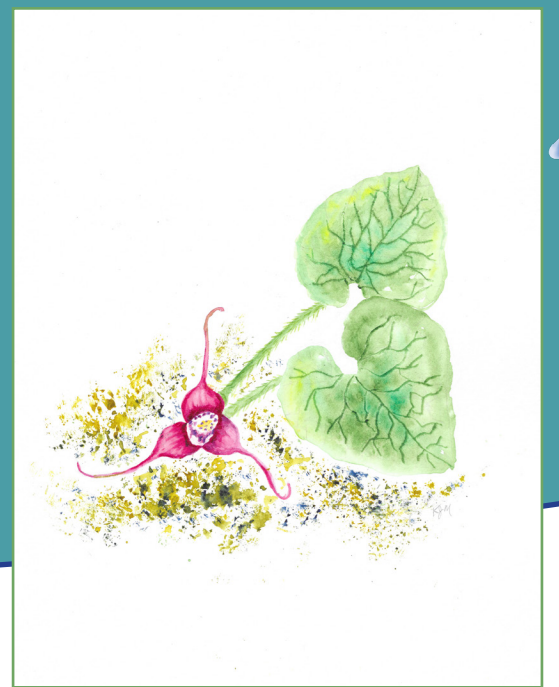
Clean water is recharged into the groundwater supply

Why Native Plants?

Native plants are highly adapted to the region. Plants in a rain garden have to be able to tolerate periods of drought as well as temporary periods of standing water after rain events. Their deep root systems allow rainwater to infiltrate slowly into the ground. Native plants can thrive in Cape Cod's poor soils and do not require fertilizers. They provide superior wildlife habitat, support our pollinators, and add value to the local ecosystem.



Athyrium filix-femina
'Lady in Red' / Lady Fern



Asarum canadense /
Canadian Wild Ginger

Clethra alnifolia 'Ruby
Spice' / Sweet Pepperbush



Native Plant Illustrations
by Kathy Miller

Did you know ... on Cape Cod our drinking water source is groundwater? The Cape's groundwater is only replenished by rain and snow, so it's important to allow rainwater to infiltrate back into the ground.

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