

Washtenaw County Rain Garden Plant List

This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather a record of the plants that have worked in the Washtenaw County Rain Garden program. See list at end for discussion of plants that were not successful.

MNPPA = Native plants can be obtained from any members of the Michigan Native Plant Producers Association: www.mnppa.org. WA = Widely Available. Any nursery in your area would probably carry this plant

Native? N=Native, C=Cultivar of a Native ("Nativar"), NFH=Not from around Here | Sun/Shade: Sn=sun, P=part sun, Sh=Shade | Moisture: D=Dry, M=Medium, Ms=Moist, W=Wet

FULL SHADE														
Scientific Name	Common Name	Bloom Color	Height	Bloom Time	Plant Spacing	Deer Resistant?	Native?	Source	Size	Sun/ Shade	Mois- ture	Habitat	Soil	Comments
<i>Actaea rubra</i>	Red Baneberry	White	12-36"	May	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sh	M, Ms			good for woodland setting, not especially showy, best massed for a nice texture, poisonous
<i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>	Blue Cohosh	Green	24"	April	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	quart	Sh	Ms			good for woodland setting, not terribly showy, but interesting foliage and berries for those who like diversity
<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>	Virginia Waterleaf	Lavender	1-1.5'	May-June	10" o.c.		N	MNPPA	quart	Sh	M, Ms, W			not especially showy, best massed for even texture, can take water
Part Shade to Shade														
<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	Maidenhair Fern	n/a	12"		12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	3" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms			short plant, beautiful lacey texture. Resents the dry.
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Columbine	Red/Yellow	12-36"	May	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	D, M, Ms	Butterfly		delicate texture, great for woodland setting
<i>Asarum canadense</i>	Wild Ginger	Maroon	8"	May	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	quart	P, Sh	M, Ms			good low, facer plant with interesting heart-shaped leaves that form a contrast texture, straight native species, but WT not cultivating at this time
<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	Swamp Milkweed	Pink/Purple	3-4'	July	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms, W	Butterfly	Clay	when full grown, a little leggy-looking and needs plants in front, good for clay
<i>Carex grayii</i>	Gray's Sedge	n/a	18"	May/June	18"	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms	Butterfly		interesting seed heads if get close
<i>Carex sprengeii</i>	Sprengel's Sedge	n/a	18"	May/June	18"	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	D, M, Ms	Butterfly		clumper, good for drier edges, seed heads shoot up 2-3'
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	Cardinal Flower	red	3'	July-Aug	12" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms			a little picky, likes moist best, narrow form, can be short lived but will re-seed if happy, aesthetically best used with shorter plants around
<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>	Ostrich Fern	n/a	36"	n/a	18" o.c.	Y	N	WA	gallon	P, Sh	M, Ms			doesn't like to dry out, can be aggressive if happy, good for clay
<i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>	Interrupted Fern	n/a	12-24"	n/a	12" o.c.	Y	N	WA	gallon	P, Sh	M, Ms, W		Clay	tall, similar to Ostrich Fern, but holds up better in the late summer
<i>Phlox divaricata</i>	Woodland Phlox	Blue	.5-1'	April-June	8" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms			use sparingly in woodland setting with great soils, foliage goes dormant in summer so plan for companions
<i>Solidago flexicaulis</i>	Zig Zag Goldenrod	Yellow	2-3'	Aug.-Oct.	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	D, M, Ms			aggressive, but fills in large areas in the shade, delicate late season color for shade
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Rigid Goldenrod	Yellow	3-4'	July	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	D, M, Ms, W		Clay	subtle for a goldenrod, great for clay, leggy, so put a facer plant in front
<i>Stylophorum diphyllum</i>	Wood Poppy	Yellow	1-2'	April-June	10" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms			good for spring in woodland setting, but can be aggressive
<i>Thalictrum dioicum</i>	Early Meadow Rue	Pale Green	1.5-2'	April-May	10" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms			great plant for delicate texture in woodlands setting--beautiful with iris, but not a bottom of the rain garden plant
Sun to Part Sun														
<i>Allium cernuum</i>	Nodding Wild Onion	Lt. Lavender	12"	Sept-Oct	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			good short, neat plant for front
<i>Anthyrium flex-femina</i>	Lady Fern	n/a	24"-36"	n/a	24" o.c.	Y	N	WA	gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms			beautiful fern
<i>Aster dumosus 'Woods Light Blue'</i>	Woods Blue Aster	Lavender	1-2'	Aug-Oct	18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	Butterfly		very compact, florific aster with prolific lavender flowers
<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth Aster	Lt. Blue/Lavender	4-5'	Sept-Oct	12-18" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			when full grown, is leggy-looking--can be trimmed to 6" in June for bushier growth, plant something in front
<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	New England Aster	Deep Purple	4-5'	Sept-Oct	12-18" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	Butterfly		is leggy-looking--can be trimmed to 6" in June for bushier growth (plant something in front) good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Aster novae-angliae 'Purple Dome'</i>	New England Aster Purple Dome	Deep Purple	1.5-2'	Sept-Oct	18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			more compact, florific version of the species w/ deep purple flowers, can be prone to fungus
<i>Carex hystericina</i>	Porcupine Sedge	n/a	2-3'	June-Oct.	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	M, Ms, W	Butterfly		good workhorse for all settings, provides nice texture if massed
<i>Chelone lyonii 'Hot Lips'</i>	Hot Lips Turtlehead	Pink	2-3'	Aug-Sept	18-24" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	Butterfly	Clay	good for clay, neat and long blooming, combines beautifully with joe pye weed
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple Coneflower	Pink/Lavender	3'-3.5'	July-Aug	12-18" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms		Clay	good for clay, good butterfly plant
<i>Echinacea purpurea 'Magnus'</i>	Magnus Purple Coneflower	Pink/Lavender	2.5'-3'	July-Aug	12-18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms		Clay	good for clay, more compact and full than straight species, good butterfly plant
<i>Echinacea purpurea 'Snowcone'</i>	Snowcone Cone Flower	White	2.5-3'	June-Aug.	12-18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			good for clay, good butterfly plant
<i>Eupatorium 'Phantom'</i>	Joe Pye Weed--Phantom	Dusky Pink	4-5'	Aug.-Sept.	24" o.c.		C	WA	#2 pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			shorter version of following straight species
<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	Joe Pye Weed	Dusky Pink	5-6'	July-Aug	24" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			really tall and dramatic, draws beneficial insects
<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Blazing Star	Pink/Purple	3-5'	July	10" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	M, Ms		Clay	a clumper, flower spike can get quite tall, needs facer plant in front, nice color for that time of season, can take clay
<i>Liatris spicata 'Kobold'</i>	Kobold Blazing Star	Pink/Purple	2'	July	12-18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms			a clumper, a great cultivated version of the species, full form w/ multiple flower spikes, can take clay
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Horsemint	White/Pink	18-30"	July-Aug	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms		Sand	has showy, dramatic bracts, can get a little spindly, prefers sandy soils, self sows, bee attractor, salt tolerant
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	White Beardtongue	White	3-4'	June	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			fills the void of blooming native plants in June, good for clay, but can look a little leggy--needs a facer
<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	Obedient Plant	Pink	2-3'	Sept-Oct	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms			good plant for late season color, can be aggressive (use with someone who is not much of a weeder and doesn't like space between plants)
<i>Potentilla simplex</i>	Common cinquefoil	Yellow	6-12"	May-June	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M	Butterfly		good native groundcover under drier parts of the garden, can spread into lawn (make sure OK with owner)
<i>Ranunculus hispidus</i>	Swamp Buttercup	Yellow	1'	May	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	quart	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			spreader, aggressive in the right soils. Only available in limited quantities in 2014.
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	Yellow	1-3'	July-Oct	12" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	Butterfly		short-lived, but aggressively self sows, not especially neat, and can look tired when it is done--best used with native lover, good for clay
<i>Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm'</i>	Goldsturm Black-eyed Susan	Golden Yellow	2'	July-Sept.	18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms		Clay	long-blooming, but people either love it or hate it, can spread fast if it's happy, good for clay
SHRUBS														
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Red-twig Dogwood	White	5-8'	May-June	6' o.c.		N	MNPPA	1 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	Butterfly		can get big, but has great red winter stem color (trim 1/3 each year to promote best red color), best with groundcover underneath
<i>Cornus sericea 'Flaviramea'</i>	Yellow-twig Dogwood	White	5-8'	May-June	4' o.c.		C	WA	3 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	Butterfly		can get big, but has great chartreuse winter stem color, best with groundcover underneath
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Blackgum	White	30'-60'	May-June	na		N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W			beautiful fall color
<i>Rhus aromatica 'Gro Low'</i>	Gro Low Fragrant Sumac	n/a	2-3'	n/a	3' o.c.	Y	C	WA	#3 pot	Sn, P	D, M		Clay	good woody edge plant--not especially showy, but a 'workhorse' with good fall color, good for clay, salt tolerant
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Elderberry	White	5-10'	June-July	5' o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	1 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W			takes a wide variety of conditions, a little loose in character, there are several cultivars out now worth exploring
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood Viburnum	White	5-12'	May-June	7' o.c.		N	MNPPA	1 gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			native is a large shrub, with beautiful dark leaves.
<i>Viburnum dentatum 'Blue Muffin'</i>	Blue Muffin Arrowwood Viburnum	White	3-4'	May-June	3' o.c.	Y	C	WA	3 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W			nice smaller alternative to straight native Viburnum dentatum, neat and round, beautiful blue berries
<i>Viburnum dentatum 'Chicago Lustre'</i>	Chicago Lustre Arrowwood Viburnum	White	5-7'	June	4' o.c.	Y	C	WA	3 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W			a little larger than the previous, a very hardy plant
<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Nannyberry	White	5-7'	June	7' o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	1 gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			straight native, so a large shrub
Full Sun														
<i>Aster oblongifolius 'October Skies'</i>	October Skies Aster	Lt. Blue/Lavender	4-5'	Sept-Oct	18" o.c.		C	WA	gallon	Sn	D, M	Butterfly		facer plant on drier edges
<i>Baptisia australis</i>	Baptisia or False Indigo	Blue	3-4'	June	3' o.c.		N	WA	#2 pot	Sn	D, M, Ms		Clay	good dramatic accent plant, really needs full sun, almost looks like a shrub, good for clay
<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	Rattlesnake Master	White/Lt. Green	3'	July-Sept.	18"		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms			dramatic form, not for the faint of heart
<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>	Rose Mallow	Pink	4'-6'	Aug-Sept	32" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	M, Ms, W			Huge pink flowers, shrub-like
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switch Grass	n/a	4-6'	Aug.-Sept.	3' o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	Butterfly		as long as it has sun, this plant really performs, but can be too floppy for some (use cultivars below if want neater appearance), can re-seed assertively
<i>Panicum virgatum 'Cloud Nine'</i>	Cloud Nine Switch Grass	n/a	5-7'	Aug.-Sept.	3' o.c.	Y	C	WA	2 gal. or #2	Sn	D, M, Ms, W			tall, neat and dramatic--this is a great plant, takes a while to look like something in the spring, best with low groundcover (fragaria virginiana, potentilla simplex)
<i>Panicum virgatum 'Shenandoah'</i>	Shenandoah Switch Grass	n/a	3'	Aug.-Sept.	2.5' o.c.	Y	C	WA	gallon	Sn	D, M, Ms, W			shorter switch grass, beautifully highlighted with wine tinged foliage, takes a while to look like something in the spring, best with low groundcover (fragaria
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow Coneflower	Yellow	4-6'	July-Oct.	15" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms			tall, use with someone into the native look
<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	Compass Plant	Yellow	4-7'	July-Aug.	24" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms, W		Clay	tall, use with someone into the native look, can spread aggressively if happy, good for clay
<i>Silphium terebinthinaceum</i>	Prairie Dock	Yellow	8' (flower)	Aug.	18" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms			short broad foliage is great contrast plant, flower stalk is airy and tall (sometimes needs staking), good for clay
<i>Solidago riddellii</i>	Riddell's Goldenrod							MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	Ms, W			nice good-looking foliage, looks like a garden plant. Pretty yellow flowers the same time as Asters and Boltonia.
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie Dropseed	n/a	2'	Aug.-Sept.	1.5' o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms			a great performer, but takes a while to get going, beautiful fall texture, great for front edge of sunny garden, since it has neat winter presence, but can be hard
<i>Verbena hastata</i>	Blue Vervain	Purple	4-6'	June-August	12" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	D, M, Ms			tall, nice deep color, best for native setting
SHRUBS														
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry	White	4-6'	June-July	3.5' o.c.		N	MNPPA	1 gallon	Sn	M, Ms, W			Acidic needs acid soil (not clay!), makes it possible for companion female plant below to bloom and fruit
<i>Ilex verticillata 'Jim Dandy'</i>	Winterberry-Male	White	4-6'	June-July	3.5' o.c.		C	WA	5 gallon	Sn	M, Ms, W			Acidic needs acid soil (not clay!), makes it possible for companion female plant below to bloom and fruit
<i>Ilex verticillata 'Nana Red Sprite'</i>	Winterberry-Female	White	2-3'	June-July	2.5' o.c.		C	WA	5 gallon	Sn	M, Ms, W			Acidic needs acid soil (not clay!), amazing winter berries (needs male above--1 male for every 5 females)
<i>Potentilla fruticosa 'Goldfinger'</i>	Goldfinger Potentilla	Yellow	3-4'	June-July	36" o.c.	Y	C	WA	3 gallon	Sn	D, M, Ms			Clay long blooming flowers, good neat plant, may need hard pruning in a couple of years, good for clay, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects

		Bloom	Bloom	Plant	Deer			Sun/	Mois-					
All Light Levels		Color	Height	Time	Spacing	Resistant?	Native?	Source	Size	Shade	ture	Habitat	Soil	Comments
<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	Canada Anemone	White	12"-20"	May-July	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms			groundcover, spreads quickly & fills in (can be aggressive--good for someone who doesn't want to weed), resents long periods of drought
<i>Carex muskingumensis</i>	Palm Sedge	n/a	2-3'	June-Oct.	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W	Butterfly		good workhorse for all settings, provides nice texture if massed
<i>Carex stipitata</i>	Common Fox Sedge	Green	24"	May	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms			provides nice texture if massed
<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	Brown Fox Sedge	n/a	2-3'	June-Oct.	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms, W	Butterfly		good workhorse for all settings, provides nice texture if massed
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild Strawberry	White	6-12"	May-June	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms			edible, great groundcover for spreading in between plants that are spaced far, can spread into adjoining lawn (check with owner), nice fall color
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild Geranium	Lavendar	12"-24"	May-June	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms			neat native that clumps, stays small and keeps leaves throughout season, nice fall color
<i>Iris virginica</i>	Blue Flag Iris	Lt. Blue/Lavender	2-3'	May-June	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W			great clean and neat foliage, nice flower, really tough--an excellent workhorse
<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	Blue Lobelia	blue purple	30"	July-Sept	12" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms			longer lived than sister cardinal flower, nice blue at end of the season, neat for native, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Sensitive Fern	n/a	12-24"	n/a	12" o.c.	Y	N	WA	gallon	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W			a short, neat fern for the sun, as long as not too dry, great combined with iris
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Culver's Root	White	4-6'	July-August	12-18" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms			nice bloom late in summer, can be aggressive if happy

SHRUBS														
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Red Bud	Pink	25'	May			N	MNPPA	1 gallon	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms			great small native floodplaining tree, can be susceptible to wind damage
<i>Itea virginica 'Henry's Garnet'</i>	Sweetspire	White	4'	May-June	3' o.c.		C	WA	6 gallon	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms			beautiful fall color, but susceptible to winter kill, need to prune off winter dead in spring

PLANTS TO TRY These plants are untested in rain gardens - but seem like they might work. Would you plant one or two of these species, and then report back to us on how they turned out? Thanks!

<i>Actaea pachypoda</i>	White Baneberry "Doll's Eyes"	White	1'-2'	May	12" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sh	M			A delicate little plant with lacy leaves. The berries really do look like "doll's eyes". Beautiful garden plant - does it work in rain gardens?
<i>Agrimonia parviflora</i>	Swamp Agrimony			July	3-4'	?	N	MNPPA	plug	Sn, P	Ms, W			Recommended by Greg Vaclavek, so probably grows fine in a rain garden. Is it pretty?
<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	Cinnamon Fern	na	2'-3'	na	24" o.c.	Y	N	WA	gallon	P, Sh	M, Ms, W			A bit smaller than Ostrich Fern, and doesn't spread as aggressively as Ostrich Fern does. Does it do well in a rain garden? Is it pretty?
<i>Eupatorium rugosum</i>	White Snakeroot	White	2'-4'	Jul-Sep	24" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M			Nice white flowers in shade, I hear it is a spreader. There is a cultivar 'Chocolate'. How does it do in a rain garden?
<i>Senecio aureus</i>	Golden ragwort	Yellow	2'-3'	spring	12" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms, W?			a beautiful, well-kept looking little plant with big dark leaves, similar to hostas
<i>Juncus tenuis</i>	Path Rush	Green	1'-2'	late spring	12" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms			A little rush. Is it pretty enough to be a garden plant?
<i>Aralia racemosa</i>	Spikenard	White	2'-5'	Jun-Aug	5' o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms, W			Almost shrub-like in its size and shape. Beautiful, graceful limbs. Has purple clusters of berries in the late summer. How does it do in a RG?
<i>Arisaema dracontium</i>	Green dragon	Green	1'-3'	May-Jun	12" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms, W			Small little woodland dragon, related to Jack-in-the-Pulpit.
<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Marsh Marigold	Yellow	1'-1.5'	Apr-Jun	12" o.c.	?	N	WA	gallon	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W			Beautiful native, short with big yellow flowers in spring. Grows along pristine streams. How does it do in a rain garden?
<i>Heracleum maximum</i>	Cow Parsnip	White	4'-7'	Jun-Jul	6" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W			Very big, tall plant. Dramatic! A good focal point. Resembles the toxic Giant Hogweed, but otherwise is very pretty. Pretty enough for gardens?
<i>Coreopsis tripteris</i>	Tall Coreopsis	Yellow	4'-7'	Jul-Sep	24" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	M			Tall, and stays upright. Good in dry sand, well-drained sand rain gardens, and possibly heavier soils - try it and see.
<i>Tradescantia 'Sweet Kate'</i>	Spiderwort - Sweet Kate	Purple	1'	June	12" o.c.	?	C	WA	gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			Cultivar of spiderwort, very short, yellow chartreuse leaves in full sun. Cut back when the leaves go dormant.
<i>Lilium michiganense</i>	Michigan Lily	Orange	4'-5'	Jun-Aug	4" o.c.		N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	M			I have no idea if this would thrive in a rain garden, but wouldn't it be cool if it did?
<i>Senna hebecarpa</i>	Wild Senna	Yellow	3'-5'	Jul-Aug	18" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	M, Ms, W?	Butterfly		in the pea family, so yellow pea-like flowers
<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	Mountain-Mint	White	2'-4'	Jul-Sep	18" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	M, Ms, W?			We are pretty sure this works in rain gardens. Is it pretty enough to be a garden plant?
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Sneezeweed	Yellow	3'-6'	Aug-Sep	18" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn, P	Ms, W	Butterfly		Nice flowers. Does it do ok in a rain garden?
<i>Ranunculus hispidus</i>	Swamp Buttercup	Yellow	1'	May	18" o.c.	Y	N	MNPPA	quart	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			Beautiful yellow flowers. Nice and short - a good ground-cover. Aggressive spreader in the right soils.
<i>Solidago riddellii</i>	Riddell's Goldenrod	Yellow	2'-4'	Aug-Sep	18" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	M, Ms, W?			This worked fine in a big bioretention area. Is it pretty enough to be a garden plant?
<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	Black Bullrush	Brown	3'-5'	Jun-Jul	18" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	2" pot	Sn	Ms, W			Probably great for rain gardens - is it pretty enough to be a garden plant?

SHRUBS TO TRY														
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush	White	6'-15'	Jun-Aug	na	?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	Ms, W			Beautiful, glossy leaves. Often grows in the wild in a woody opening, on the edges of a vernal pond.
<i>Cornus amomum</i>	Silky Dogwood	White	3'-9'	Jun-Jul	na	?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P, Sh	Ms, W	Butterfly		A spreading shrub. Does it sucker and spread too much to be in a residential garden?
<i>Hypericum kalmianum</i>	Kalm's St. John's Wort	Yellow	1'-2'	Jun-Aug	2' o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P	Ms, W			A nice little spreading shrub. We just have never tried it! Does it do ok in a rain garden situation?
<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spicebush	Yellow	5'-10'	Apr-May	8" o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	gallon	P, Sh	Ms, W	Butterfly		Beautiful little shrub. How does it do in a rain garden?
<i>Myrica gale</i>	Sweet Gale	Green	3'-5'	June	5' o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P	W			A small shrub, sweetly scented leaves, this plant is similar to the northeast's Bayberry
<i>Ribes americanum</i>	Wild Black Currant	White	2'-4'	Apr-May	5' o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			A small shrub; lacks prickles; edible berries can be used to make jelly, wine, or pie.
<i>Salix discolor</i>	Pussy Willow	Green	6'-20'	Mar-Apr	7' o.c.	?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn	W			The old-fashioned pussy willow with soft, furry flower buds. A big shrub/small tree.

TREES TO TRY														
<i>Asimina triloba</i>	Paw Paw	Purple	15'-30'	Apr-May		?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W			Huge leaves, produces yummy banana-flavored fruit after a decade or so. Beautiful tree - will it work in a rain garden?
<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>	Yellow Birch	Yellow	40'-70'	Apr-May		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			Beautiful tree, not often planted.
<i>Betula pumila</i>	Bog Birch	Brown	5'-12'	May-Jun		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	Ms, W			Shrubby birch.
<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	Musclewood	Green	15'-30'	Apr-May		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W			Beautiful small tree, "muscle" bark. Lives in floodplains, how about a rain garden?
<i>Carya cordiformis</i>	Bitternut Hickory	Yellow	50'-85'	May-Jun		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			Slow growing tree, yellow fall color.
<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>	Kentucky Coffee Tree	White	60'-85'	Jun		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W			Pre-historic looking tree. Bulletproof in street-side locations. Seeds used by native americans as marbles.
<i>Larix laricina</i>	Tamarack	na	40'-75'	na		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	Ms, W			Yellow fall color, deciduous conifer. How does it do in a rain garden?
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip Poplar	White	60'-110'	Apr-May		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn, P	Ms, W	Butterfly		Yellow fall color, beautiful tree, big orange/green flowers in spring. How does it do in a rain garden?
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	Sycamore	Green	65'-100'	May		?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W			Huge tree, bark comes off in strips, leaving a white trunk.
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp White Oak	Green	50'-80'	May-Jun		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn	Ms, W	Butterfly		Big oak tree.
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur Oak	Green	40'-70'	May-Jun		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	Butterfly		Big oak tree; the oak that the "arbor" in Ann Arbor was named after.
<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>	Chinquapin Oak	Green	50'-80'	May-Jun		?	N	MNPPA	5 gallon	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	Butterfly		Big oak tree, cool shaped leaves.
<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>	American Bladdernut	White	8'-18'	Apr-May		?	N	MNPPA	gallon	P, Sh	M, Ms			Beautiful shrub/small tree with lantern seed pods in the fall. Grows on riverbanks, but how does it do in a rain garden?
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Northern White Cedar		30'50'			?	N	MNPPA	gallon	Sn, P	Ms, W			Evergreen tree! How does it do in a rain garden?

Plants that we have had issues with in the past

This list is here to discuss the problems and issues with plants that, on the whole, did not work very well within the context of Washtenaw County residential rain gardens

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<i>Aesclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	Quite aggressive, but good for monarch habitat
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem	Some people who are truly into natives like it, but generally it is too tall and to spindly for most, is use it--mass it in a big area
<i>Campanula americana</i>	Tall Bellflower	Too spindly for most
<i>Chelone glabra</i>	Turtlehead	Very sensitive to varying moisture levels, tends to flop, has conservative soil type range--not good for general rain garden use
<i>Euaptirum perfoliatum</i>	Boneset	Can be quite aggressive--use with caution, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Heuchera americana</i>	Alum Root	Not showy at all, but if massed is OK for texture
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Bee-balm	Gets an ugly fungus on it after it blooms
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow Coneflower	Very tall, if used needs to be in a big space, good for drawing beneficial (predator) NPN
<i>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</i>	Blue-eyed grass	A little sensitive--can get 'mowed' down by other plants in its area
<i>Smilacena racemosa</i>	Solomon's Plume	Needs to be massed in a big area, and planted close together to work--otherwise looks spindly
<i>Smilacena stellata</i>	Starry-false Solomon's Seal	Would have like to have used it, but had lots of problems with propagation
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	Blue-stemmed goldenrod	Super aggressive--beware!
<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>	Spiderwort	Looks nice when it blooms (only in the daytime), but then totally flattens to the ground when it is done blooming in June
<i>Vernonia missurica</i>	Ironweed	Very tall and thin, if used needs to be in a big space
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden Alexanders	Clients found it too floppy and messy, but good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Sawtooth Sunflower	very tall, nice late season color, can be aggressive. Not available.

Washtenaw County Rain Garden Program

www.ewashtenaw.org/raingardens

Master Rain Gardener training

Master Rain Gardeners are volunteers who have earned their Master Rain Gardener certificate - trained in designing and installing rain gardens. They volunteer to help out friends and neighbors to learn about, design and plant rain gardens. Recognize them by their t-shirts and nametags! Classes held every Feb/March in person, every July online.

Rain Garden Design Assistance

The Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner and staff work with several homeowners each year to design and install rain gardens on their property. The result is residents all over the county are happy with their new gardens, while the Huron River receives less fertilizers, chemicals and other harmful runoff.

Rain Garden Coordinator Susan Bryan 734-222-3814

