

## Gardening Ideas

Written by Administrator - Last Updated Thursday, 01 May 2008 12:07

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Learn more about how to transform your yard into a watershed-wise garden! These gardens help absorb excess fertilizer used on lawns, absorb more storm water that would flow into storm drains, provides food and habitat for critters, and helps reduce the need for tapwater, mowing, and chemical treatments. There are lots of options depending on your soil, slope, and needs. If you have a fairly flat area, a native



meadow or [Rain Garden Installation](#) may be suitable. [Rain Garden Installation](#) is a terrific way to integrate native plants into your yard, reduce turf, provide vital habitat for birds and insects, and help reduce stormwater runoff. Rain gardens are saucer- or bowl-shaped depressions that collect and filter excess water. The soil and plant roots act as a natural filter for toxics, like fertilizers and pesticides. If you have a sloped yard, a native meadow, hummingbird/butterfly garden, or xeriscapes may be appropriate. If you live near a stream, [Riparian Buffer Restoration](#) might be a good solution.

[Contact us](#) about giving a watershed-wise garden workshop for your organization or [Attend a Watershed Meeting or Event](#)

One of the best guides to native plants we have found for our region is the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Guide to Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping](#)

. Other online guides include the

[National Park Service guide to Maryland Plants](#)

, the

[Va. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation tables of native plants](#)

, the

[Pa. Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources online guide to Pa. plants](#)

, and the

[West Virginia University native plant list](#)

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To collect a bit of the water from your rooftop to use during dry times, rain barrels are a great idea! And ICPRB Rain Bear [Rain Barrels Are Here!](#) The ICPRB sells rain barrels through several partners throughout the watershed and has a limited number of barrels for the 2008 season! Other sources for rain barrels include

[Aaron's Rain Barrels](#)

,  
[Arid Solutions](#)

, and

[Aqua Barrels](#)

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In addition to learning about native plants, it is also important to learn about non-native invasive plants. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's [Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas](#) provides pictures of the problematic plants and suggestions for alternative native plants.