

## Rain Gardens Are In!

A rain garden is a landscaped, shallow depression that allows rain and snowmelt to be collected and seep naturally into the ground. This helps recharge our groundwater supply and prevents a water quality problem called polluted runoff or nonpoint source pollution.

Rain gardens provide a great opportunity to make our neighborhoods and community more attractive places to live, as well as enhancing ecological health in our township. Rain gardens provide numerous benefits. Runoff water containing fertilizers, pesticides, petrochemicals and other pollutants are captured, filtered out, treated by plants and microorganisms, and slowly infiltrated into the ground. Minimizing runoff into storm drains also results in decrease sediment, flooding and shoreline damage in streams and rivers. They also can add biodiversity to your landscape, creating habitat for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects.

For details on getting started with creating a rain garden check out these sites:

[www.rutgers.edu](http://www.rutgers.edu) for a fact sheet (fs513.pdf) on Rain Gardens from Rutgers (type “rain gardens” into search box).

[www.npsnj.org](http://www.npsnj.org) to obtain the Rain Garden Manual for New Jersey from the Native Plant Society of New Jersey – look to the upper right of the home page for the special link just below the Native Plant Society of New Jersey logo.

Also check out [www.rainkc.com](http://www.rainkc.com). Kansas City’s initiative “10,000 Rain Gardens” is not government run or funded. Driven by the citizenry of KC, this huge community project stresses everyone’s role and responsibility in keeping our waterways running with clean water.