



# Rainscaping Education Program

## Demonstration Rain Garden

**County Name** Tippecanoe, Wright Center

### Background Information

The Wright Center Rain Garden was established in 2017. The garden is located in the courtyard of the John S. Wright Conference Center. The Wright Center is located in West Lafayette, IN and is managed by the Purdue University Department of Forestry and Natural Resources (FNR) for teaching and research.

Prior to the rain garden, the courtyard of the conference center was underutilized and needed landscaping updates. This rain garden was constructed as part of the 2017 Rainscaping Education Train the Trainer Program for Extension Educators. Purdue FNR staff completed the siting, sizing, and design of the rain garden. The area was selected as an exemplary area for stormwater management education. The garden is 300 square feet and 12" deep. It has an interpretive sign located in the glass hallway in front of the rain garden for visitors to learn more.



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## Garden Design: Plantings and Information

| Plant Scientific Name          | Common Name            | Number Used |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>    | Columbine              | 7           |
| <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>      | Butterfly Milkweed     | 7           |
| <i>Baptisia australis</i>      | Blue False Indigo      | 5           |
| <i>Carex granularis</i>        | Meadow Sedge           | 25          |
| <i>Chelone oblique</i>         | Rose Turtlehead        | 7           |
| <i>Coreopsis palmata</i>       | Prairie Coreopsis      | 7           |
| <i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>    | Rattlesnake Master     | 7           |
| <i>Eupatorium purpureum</i>    | Sweet Joe-Pye Weed     | 5           |
| <i>Iris versicolor</i>         | Blue Flag Iris         | 15          |
| <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>      | Cardinal Flower        | 7           |
| <i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>     | Great Blue Lobelia     | 7           |
| <i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i>     | Greenheaded Coneflower | 7           |
| <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> | Little Bluestem        | 5           |
| <i>Solidago speciosa</i>       | Showy Goldenrod        | 5           |



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## Maintenance Plan: Establishment Period

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- The garden should be weeded every 2-4 weeks for first six months, then tentatively once a month thereafter.
- Tracking progress of the garden:
  - If desired, a before and after photo of the garden should be taken when it is weeded to help keep track of what should be weeded and what plants should not be removed.
  - Taking a photo of your garden every few weeks will allow one to visually see the maturation of the garden over time; photos could be uploaded to a computer or printed and kept in a photo album to keep as part of the educational display.

## Maintenance Plan: Post Establishment Period

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### Fertilizer

- Some starter fertilizer could be used on the site due to low potassium levels. Otherwise, the native plants should adapt to the soil type on site

### Watering

- From installation for about a month – water as needed; about 30 minutes – make sure everything is moist. Once plants are established, you should not need to water them except during prolonged dry periods (about one week). If excessive rain is experienced, it is advised to temporarily reroute some incoming water away from the garden by cutting a notch in the berm. Large, mature plants handle saturation better than young, small plants. In case of a dry period a sprinkler system may be used

### Weeding

- During the first few establishment years, weeding should take place every month as needed. Over time, the plants will fill in and weeding won't be necessary. Hand pulling of weeds should be sufficient. Weeding will be provided by the office or it's grounds crew.

### Mulch

- It should be coarse, double shredded hardwood or another alternative which does not easily float. Approximately 3 inches should be maintained in the garden at all times.



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## Maintenance Plan: Establishment Period

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*This is namely for after the two-three year establishment period, but should still be carried out during those first two years.*

- Year-round
  - Keep drain clear and garden clean of garbage
  - Weed (except winter)
- Spring
  - Prune dead vegetation and plants that have grown too large
  - Weed the garden and add mulch if needed
  - Remove excess sediment (i.e. leaves, sticks, debris) that may have collected over winter
  - Remove dead stalks/seed heads from previous season
  - Replenish mulch layer to maintain 3 inch layer
  - Best time to plant new/different plants and replace plants that may have died over winter
  - Plugs establish more successfully than seeds
- Summer
  - Remove weeds (i.e. crabgrass, dandelions etc.)
  - Water during dry periods (based on whether National Weather service declares drought; if no rain for one week)
  - Monitor berm around edge of garden for erosion
- Fall
  - Do not remove (too many) leaves that may have fallen into the garden – leaves will provide compost material for following spring growth; layer of leaves is fine but mounds of leaves are not
  - Remove weeds and diseased plants
  - If fall is dry continue to water until grounds begin to freeze (late October)
- Winter
  - No maintenance is needed; can cut back rain garden to clean up for spring if wanted
  - You should check to make sure garden is clean of garbage, leaves, etc. every few weeks



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### Resource Contact

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### About the Rainscaping Education Program

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The Rainscaping Education Program is a bi-state partnership which offers state-wide training for Master Gardeners, conservation agencies and organizations, stormwater professionals, and landscape companies and consultants.

The two day workshop sessions cover an introduction to rainscaping and rain gardens with specific modules for rain garden site selection, plant selection and garden design, installation, maintenance, and community engagement.

Workshops include hands-on activities, interactive discussions, and field trips to community rainscaping projects. Participants also gain experience through creation of a demonstration rain garden with community partners in a public space.

### About Our University Partners

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