



melindamyers.com

how to select **RAIN GARDEN PLANTS**



WHAT MAKES A GOOD RAIN GARDEN PLANT?

- Tolerant of wet and dry soil

HARDY TO THE CLIMATE

- Plants' ability to thrive in the average minimum winter temperature

THRIVES IN EXISTING SUNLIGHT

- Evaluate sun-shade conditions
 - Throughout the year
 - Throughout the day
- Sun
 - Plants that thrive in at least 6-8 hours of direct sunlight
- Partial shade
 - 3-6 hours of sun
- Shade
 - Less than 3 hours of direct sun

MATCH TO SOIL CONDITIONS

- Clay
 - Tends to be compact and slow draining
- Loam
 - Equal parts of sand, silt and clay, creating the perfect soil for plants
- Sand
 - Fast draining
- We will discuss preparing the soil at the next webinar

ATTRACT AND SUPPORT BIRDS AND POLLINATORS

PROVIDE BEAUTY AND INTEREST YEAR-ROUND

- Flowers
- Fall color
- Seed heads and more

GRASSES

- Provide support to forbs (flowering plants)
- Create unity

MINIMUM SPACING DISTANCE LISTED WITH EACH PLANT HEIGHT MAY VARY WITH GROWING CONDITIONS SUN LOVING RAIN GARDEN PLANTS

PRAIRIE SMOKE - *Geum triflorum*

- Full sun
- 6" tall
- Space 6"
- Pink flowers April/May - June
- Attractive smoky seed heads
- Loam and sand soil
 - Moist to dry
- Spreads gradually, making a nice groundcover
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 6

LANCELEAF COREOPSIS - *Coreopsis lanceolata*

(shown with Prairie Clover)

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Long blooming, June - July
- Well-drained to dry soil
- Birds, butterflies and pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

Fresh Coast Guardians

Fresh Coast Guardians are everyday people who love Lake Michigan and want to protect it.

You can help us prevent polluted storm runoff from reaching our waterways by managing water better when it rains or snows.

Learn more at
[**freshcoastguardians.com**](https://freshcoastguardians.com)

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[**RESOURCE CENTER**](#)

HAREBELL - *Campanula rotundifolia*

- Full to part sun
- 1-2' tall
- Space 6"
- Lavender blue to purple flowers June - August
- Gravel, sand dry soil tolerant
- Pollinators, hummingbirds, deer resistant
- Zones 2 to 7

PURPLE PRAIRIE CLOVER - *Dalea purpurea*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - August
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Birds, pollinator host plant
- Tap root helps it adapt, but challenging to move established plants
- Zones 3 to 8

PURPLE LOVEGRASS - *Eragrostis spectabilis*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - September
- Sandy soil
- Host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 10

WILD PETUNIA - *Ruellia humilis*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms June - August
- Loam and sandy soils
- Hummingbird favorite
- Butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 4 to 9

SWEET GRASS - *Hierochloe odorata*

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1-2'
- Blooms May - July
- Moist to wet soil
- Fragrant foliage
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 7

SKY BLUE ASTER - *Aster azureus*

- Full sun to light shade
- 2-3' tall
- Space 1' apart
- Blue flowers August - October
- Adaptable, mesic-dry, loam and sandy soil
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 3 to 8

BUTTERFLY WEED - *Asclepias tuberosa*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Blooms June - August
- Loam and sandy soils
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators
- Monarch host plant
- Deer resistant
- Slow to emerge in spring, so mark the location to avoid accidentally digging up the plants
- Zones 3 to 10

SIDEOATS GRAMA - *Bouteloua curtipendula*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms August - September
- Loam and sandy soils
- Birds, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

MMSD

The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's (MMSD) mission is to protect public health and the environment.

MMSD is a regional government agency that provides water reclamation and flood management services for 1.1 million people in 28 communities in the Greater Milwaukee Area.

Learn more at [mmsd.com](https://www.mmsd.com)



ROUGH BLAZING STAR - *Liatris aspera*

- 2-3'
 - Shorter than other blazing stars
- Space 6-12"
- Blooms August - September
- Loam and sandy soils
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

SHOWY BLACK-EYED SUSAN

Rudbeckia fulgida speciosa

- Full to part sun
- 2-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Orange-yellow flowers July - August/September
- Clay, loam, moist soils
 - More drought tolerant once established
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 4 to 8

HOARY VERVAIN - *Verbena stricta*

- 2-4' tall
- Space 1'
 - Not aggressive
- Blooms July - September
 - 4 to 6 weeks
- Loam and sandy soils
 - Drought resistant
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

BLUE FALSE INDIGO - *Baptisia australis*

- Full sun to light shade
- 3-5' tall
- Space 2-3' apart
- Blue flowers May - June
- Clay, loam, sand - mesic soils

- Pollinators, hummingbirds, host plant, deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

SHOWY MILKWEED - *Asclepias speciosa*

- Full sun
- 3-4' tall
- Space 2-3'
- Lavender-pink flowers June - August
- Adaptable to clay, loam, sand-mesic, dry
- Butterflies, pollinators, hummingbirds, host plant, deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

SWAMP MILKWEED / RED MILKWEED

Asclepias incarnata

- 3-5' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Blooms June - July
 - Fragrant
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Hummingbirds, birds, butterflies, pollinators
- Monarch host plant
- Zones 3 to 9

PALE PURPLE CONEFLOWER - *Echinacea pallida*

- 3-5' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms June - July
 - Earlier than Purple Coneflower
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Highly adaptable to all but wet, poorly drained soil
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 4 to 8



About Melinda

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/ radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including Can't Miss Small Space Gardening, the Midwest Gardener's Handbook, and Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on over 115 TV and radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series, including the latest Food Gardening for Everyone DVD set. She is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine, writes the twice monthly "Gardeners' Questions" newspaper column and a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website,
melindamyers.com

MEADOW BLAZING STAR - *Liatris ligulistylis*

- Full sun preferred
- 3-5' tall
- Space 6-12"
- Purple flowers August - October
- Medium moist loam soil
 - Will tolerate dry
- A favorite of Monarch butterflies, other butterflies, pollinators, hummingbirds, songbirds
- Zones 3 to 6

STIFF GOLDENROD - *Solidago rigida*

- Full sun
- 3-5' tall
- Space 1'
- Yellow flowers July - September
- Reseeds readily
 - Removing some faded flowers can reduce spread, but also removes seeds for birds
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant, deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

EARLY SUNFLOWER - *Heliopsis helianthoides*

- 3-6' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms June - September
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Tolerates fertile soil
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

BLUE VERVAIN - *Verbena hastata*

- 3-6' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - September

- Up to 2 months
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Moisture lover
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

SUN TO PART SHADE PLANTS

WILD STRAWBERRY - *Fragaria virginiana*

- 3-6" tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms May - June
- Loam and sandy soils
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Small, edible fruit
- Red fall color
- Zones 3 to 9

NODDING PINK ONION

Allium cernuum

- 1-2' tall
- Space 6-12"
- Blooms July - August
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

DOWNY WOOD MINT - *Blephilia ciliata*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Blooms June - July
- Medium to well-drained soils
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 4 to 8

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WILD LUPINE - *Lupinus perennis*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms May - June
- Sandy soils
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

COMMON YARROW

Achillea millefolium

- **AGGRESSIVE - INVASIVE IN SOME AREAS**
- 1-3' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Blooms June - September
- Well-drained clay, loam and sandy soils
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

BROWN FOX SEDGE - *Carex vulpinoidea*

- 1-3' tall
- Space 18"
- Blooms May - June
 - Bronze seed heads
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Tolerates wet soils
- Deer resistant
- Looks similar to Prairie Dropseed
- Zones 3 to 8

BLACK-EYED SUSAN / GLORIOSA DAISY

Rudbeckia hirta

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms June - September

- Biennial that self-sows, acting like a perennial
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 10

GREAT BLUE LOBELIA - *Lobelia siphilitica*

- 1-4' tall
- Space 1'
 - Forms colonies if properly sited
 - Not overly aggressive
- Blooms July - September
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Easier than Cardinal Flower
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

LEAD PLANT - *Amorpha canescens*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 2'
 - Takes a few years to mature
 - Do not cut back when young
- Blooms June - July
- Loam and sandy soils
 - Taproot, so very drought tolerant
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

NEW JERSEY TEA

Ceanothus americanus

- 2-3'
- Space 3'
- Blooms July - August
- Loam and sandy soils
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- **Shrub**
- Zones 3 to 9

FOXGLOVE OR SMOOTH PENSTEMON

Penstemon digitalis

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms June - July
 - For a month or longer
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Tolerates clay better than other penstemons
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

MOUNTAIN MINT

Pycnanthemum virginianum

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - September
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Native to moist soils to wet meadows
- Hummingbirds, butterflies
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 7

LITTLE BLUESTEM

Schizachyrium scoparium

(pictured with Purple Coneflower at Lurie Gardens)

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms August - October
- Loam and sandy soils
 - Flops in heavy soils
- Birds, butterflies
- Great foliage
 - Blue-green, turning reddish-bronze with tufted seeds
- Zones 3 to 10

PRAIRIE DROPSEED

Sporobolus heterolepis

- 2-3' tall
- Space 2'
- Blooms August - September
 - Fragrant flowers
 - Seeds coated with ice look like gems in the garden
- Loam and sandy soils
- Birds, pollinators
- Foliage turns gold in fall
- Zones 3 to 8

BLUE WOOD ASTER

Symphotrichum cordifolium

- 2-3' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Blooms August - September
- Dry to moist soil
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Self-seeds readily
- Zones 3 to 8

LAVENDER HYSSOP

Agastache foeniculum

- 2-4'
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - September
- Loam and sandy soils
- Hummingbirds, birds, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 2 to 6

WOOD MINT - *Blephilia hirsuta*

- Part sun to part shade
- 2-4' tall
- Space 10-18"
- White blooms June - September
- Wet-moist mesic soils
- Forms dense colonies
- Favorite of many native bees
- Fragrant leaves that critters tend to leave be
- Zones 3 to 8

CARDINAL FLOWER - *Lobelia cardinalis*

- 2-4' tall
- Space 6-12"
- Blooms July - September
- Loam and sandy soils
 - Moist to wet
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Short lived, but self-seeds
- Zones 3 to 9

WILD BERGAMOT - *Monarda fistulosa*

- 2-5' tall
- Space 2'
- Blooms July - September

- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

PURPLE CONEFLOWER

Echinacea purpurea

- 3-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - September
 - 2 months or more
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 4 to 8

SWEET BLACK-EYED SUSAN

Rudbeckia subtomentosa

- 4-6' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms August - October
 - Fragrant
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
 - Long-lived in rich soils
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 4 to 8

SHADE TOLERANT PLANTS

PLAINS OVAL SEDGE - *Carex brevior*

- Full sun to shade
- 1' tall
- Space 6-10"
- Green flowers April - May
- Moist, wet - dry soils
- Food source for insects, seeds for birds
- Zones 3 to 8

WILD GERANIUM - *Geranium maculatum*

- Part sun - prefers shade
- 1-2' tall
- Space 1' apart
- Lavender flowers April - June
- Rich loam, sand, mesic soils
- Pollinators
- Zones 3 to 8

WILD COLUMBINE - *Aquilegia canadensis*

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms May - June
- Loam and sandy soils
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Reseeds readily
- Zones 3 to 8

BIG LEAF ASTER - *Aster macrophyllus*

- Partial sun to shade
- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Lavender-white flowers August - September
- Clay, loam, sand soils
 - Moist to dry

- Pollinators, host plant, deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 7

HEARTLEAF GOLDEN ALEXANDER

Zizia aptera

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms May
- Sandy-clay to sandy soils
- Butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 4 to 8

LONG BEAKED SEDGE - *Carex sprengelli*

- Part sun to shade
- 1-3' tall
- Space 18"
- Clay, sand, loam soils
 - Moist, wet-dry
- Green flowers May - July
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 5

MIST FLOWER - *Eupatorium coelestinum*

- Full sun to shade
- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Blue flowers June/July - October
- Clay, loam, sand soils
 - Medium to moist
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Zones 5 to 10

ZIG ZAG GOLDENROD

Solidago flexicaulis

- Part sun to shade
- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Yellow flowers July - August/September

- Clay, sand, loam soils
 - Dry to moist
- Spreads readily
- Pollinators
- Zones 3 to 8

TALL ANEMONE - *Anemone virginiana*

- Part sun to shade
- 2-3' tall
- Space 18"
- White flowers June - August
- Fluffy seed heads attractive
- Medium soils
 - Dry, mesic
- Bees, flower flies
- Animals tend to leave it be
- Zones 3 to 8

VIRGINIA WILD RYE - *Elymus virginicus*

- Full sun to shade
- 3-5' tall
- Space 1'
- Green flowers July - August
- Clay, loam, sand, wet-mesic
- Birds, host plant, deer resistant
- Zones 2 to 9

TALL BELLFLOWER

Campanulastrum americana

or *Campanula americana*

- 3-5' tall
- Space 1'
- Blooms July - September
- Clay, loam and sandy soils
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators
- Self-seeding biennial, acts like perennial
- Zones 3 to 8

A FEW COMBINATIONS

- Goldenrod with Asters
- Gray-headed Coneflower, Cardinal Flower & Wild Bergamot
- Early Sunflower, Grey-headed Coneflower & Wild Bergamot
- Coneflower, Penstemon & Coreopsis
- Pale Coneflower, Lavender Hyssop & Goldenrod
- Grey-headed Coneflower, Rattlesnake Master, Nodding Onion & Butterfly Weed
- Baptisia with Wild Columbine
- Black-eyed Susan, Coneflower, Blazing Star, Royal Catchfly & Hoary Vervain
- Nodding Onion, Rattlesnake Master, Blazing Star & Grey-headed Coneflower
- Blazing Star, Wild Bergamot, Hoary Vervain, Butterfly Weed, Prairie Dropseed
- Prairie Dropseed with Sedges
- Cup Plant, Hoary Vervain, Black-eyed Susan, Wild Bergamot, Early Sunflower

CALL 811 AT LEAST 3 BUSINESS DAYS BEFORE YOU PUT
THE FIRST SHOVEL IN THE GROUND

In Wisconsin you can also file an online request at diggershotline.com. Contact this free service at least three business days in advance of digging. Diggers in Wisconsin or your underground utility locating service will contact all the appropriate companies.

These companies will mark the location of their underground utilities in the designated work area.

This reduces the danger and inconvenience of accidentally knocking out power, cable or other utilities while creating a beautiful landscape and productive garden.



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RAIN GARDEN
PLANT
SALE

LIMITED SUPPLIES

MMSD's spring plant sale is open now with prices on natives up to 50% off retail prices. Not only will you beautify your yard, but you will be doing your part to help attract pollinators and protect our Great Lake. Please keep in mind that **supplies are limited**, so if inventory sells out, the sale will end prior to April 4th. To learn more, come to our rain garden webinars, workshops, or visit freshcoastguardians.com

UPCOMING APPEARANCES & WEBINARS

Check often as more appearances and webinars continue to be added.

March 20th Webinar

Maximize the Beauty and Your Enjoyment in Any Small Space

March 23rd

REALTORS Home & Garden Show

Designing with Four Season Foliage -

High Voltage Color Gardens Without the Flowers

Incorporating Native Plants into the Landscape for You and the Pollinators

More Information

March 27th Webinar

How to Start a Garden for Beginners

April 3rd

Franklin Public Library

Garden Trends

More Information

April 10th Webinar

Container Gardening Throughout the Year

April 11th Webinar

Seven Steps to Managing Water Where It Falls in Your Yard

April 20th

Pasquesi Home and Gardens

The Why and How of Pruning Hydrangeas and Other Shrubs

More Information

April 27th

Ridges & Rivers Book Festival

First Steps to Creating an Eco-friendly, Low Maintenance Landscape

More Information

April 28th

Ebert's Greenhouse Village

Flowering Trees and Shrubs for Your Garden

More Information

May 1st Webinar

Ornamental Fruits and Vegetables

MORE WEBINARS & APPEARANCES

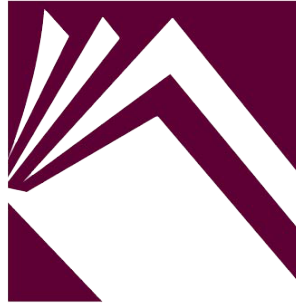


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Melinda's Garden Moment AUDIO TIPS

Melinda's Garden Moment VIDEO TIPS

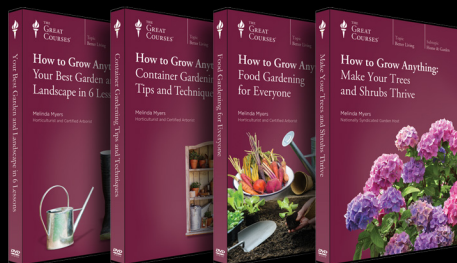
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MONTHLY GARDENING CHECKLISTS & MORE

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