

What is a rain garden?

As our climate changes the UK can expect long dry summers and short periods of heavy rain, leading to flooding. A rain garden is designed to deal with these extremes and to benefit both people and wildlife. A good rain garden:

- soaks up and stores surplus water, reducing the amount of water running off into drains and helping to prevent flooding
- uses tolerant plants and clever water storage to be less reliant on mains water and able to survive periods of drought
- attracts fascinating wildlife, from bugs to butterflies to birds
- is visual and sensory, making it a great place for humans to enjoy too!



For more information, visit
www.org.uk/raingardening

or get inspired by the RBC Rain Garden at the London Wetland Centre, designed by Nigel Dunnett and The Landscape Agency
www.org.uk/london

The RBC Rain Garden in London was the first project to be funded under the RBC Blue Water Project, a 10-year, global commitment of \$50 million to help protect the world's most valuable natural resource: fresh water



The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) is a leading wetland conservation organisation, founded in 1946 by the late Sir Peter Scott.

WWT works around the world to protect important wetlands, develop sustainable livelihoods for the people that depend on them, and save species at risk of extinction.

We also manage over 2,600 hectares of wetland habitats and run a network of wetland centres in the UK, with demonstration gardens and ponds to inspire the novice and expert alike.



Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust registered charity number 1030884



How to create a Rain Garden

Simple ways to make a beautiful,
water efficient garden

Making your rain garden



The RBC Rain Garden at the London Wetland Centre

Stormwater planters

Positioning planters under downpipes is a great way to intercept and soak up rainwater from your roof. Buy them off the shelf from a garden centre, or use an old recycled container with an outlet to the existing drain or, better still, a pond. Take care to keep damp away from house walls.

Plants

Some colourful plants that will survive well in a range of moisture conditions include yellow flag, purple loosestrife, bistort, yellow coneflowers and speedwell.

Porous paving

Paved over gardens, especially in urban areas, are a big contributor to flooding, as they increase run-off into drains and put pressure on sewer systems. Porous paving, e.g. paving stones with gravel or planting in the gaps, reduces run-off by allowing water down to the soil beneath.



Rills and channels

Beloved of garden designers everywhere, rills allow you to channel water where you want. They can make fun features for kids to play with, and look and sound fantastic.

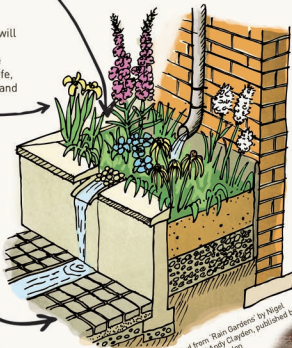
Green roofs

Green roofs absorb water and release it slowly down to the garden. They attract insects, birds, bees and butterflies.



Rainwater harvesting

Around 50,000 litres of water fall on the average roof each year. Collect it and be ready for increasingly common hosepipe bans. Water butts are easy to attach to the downpipe of any gutter. Remember to use what you collect - most water butts have taps so you can fill up your watering can easily.



Modified from 'Rain Gardens' by Nigel Dunnett and Andy Clayden, published by Timber Press, London

