Rain Garden Plants

It’s a rough life...
The Job of a Rain Garden Plant

1. Absorb rainwater and handle standing water

Not This!

The 6 inch guideline…
The Job of a Rain Garden Plant

2. Deal with drought
The Job of a Rain Garden Plant

3. Meet Aesthetic/Cultural Sustainability Goals
The Job of a Rain Garden Plant

4. If part of regulation requirement—be a utility
The Job of a Rain Garden Plant

5. Create Habitat  http://www.wildtypeplants.com/butterfly.html
The Job of a Rain Garden Plant

6. Grow!
The Right Plant in the Right Place to do its job
Environmental Conditions

In order to grow and thrive....

Sun Analysis

Soils:
- Understanding Type (most important difference is clay vs. sand)
- Enough organics? (look for dark color)

Hydrology:
- How wet will it get? (soils, sizing and depth related to this)
Visual Connections

Look at visual context of yard

Are there connections to make?

If don’t see them—make them!
Aesthetics

Wild to Neat continuum

Space around plants? Or more massing?
Aesthetics

Edging?
Evolution of plants over time

1 Month

3 Months

3 Years
Plants

3 (1/2) zones

Wettest: Water Zone (most wet where comes out)

Moist: Side slopes

Dry: Upper banks where put excess soil
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

Wettest Water Zone (inflow point)

Sensitive Fern

Wild Iris

Fox Sedge
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

General Bottom of Rain Garden: **Sun**

- **New England Aster**
  - ‘Purple Dome’
- **Switch Grass** & cvs.
- **Purple Cone Flower** & cvs.
- **Swamp Milkweed**
- **Prairie Dock**
- **Joe Pye Weed** & cvs.
- **False Sunflower** & cvs.
- ‘**Hot Lips’ Turtlehead**
- **Liatris** ‘**Kobold’**
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

**General Bottom of Rain Garden: Shade**

- Maidenhair Fern
- Ostrich Fern
- Blue Lobelia
- Cardinal Flower
- Early Meadow Rue
- Astilbe cvs.
- Snakeroot
- Wild Iris
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

**Side Slopes: Sun**

- **Canada Anenome**, but beware...
- **Rudbekia & cvs**
- **Nodding Wild Onion**
- **Wild Strawberry** (but a creeper)
- **Baptisia**
- **Prairie Dropseed**
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

**Side Slopes:** Shade

- **Canada Anenome**
- **Wild Geranium**
- **Wild Strawberry** (but a creeper)
- **Wild Ginger**
- **Wild Columbine**

*but beware…*
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

Berms

Wild Strawberry

Common Cinquefoil

Switch Grass & cvs.

Can have a big variety here…
Plant Possibilities—a few examples

Shrubs and Trees

- Red Twig Dogwood
- Elderberry
- Potentilla
- Arrowwood Viburnum
- Redbud
- Ninebark & cvs.
Use with Caution

- Tall Bellflower
- Solomon's Plume
- Turtlehead
- Golden Alexanders
- Sawtooth Sunflower
- Bee-balm
- Starry-false Solomon's Seal
- Blue-stemmed goldenrod
Use with Caution

- Common Milkweed
- Boneset
- Beardstongue
- Blue-eyed grass
- Spiderwort
- Big Bluestem
- Ironweed
- Alum Root
- Yellow Coneflower
Class Brainstorm