

Master Rain Garden Plant List

Washtenaw County Rain Garden Program

This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather a record of the plants that have worked in the Washtenaw County Rain Garden program. See list at end for discussion of plants that were not successful.

Native? N=Native, C=Cultivar of a Native ("Nativar"), NFH=Not from around Here		Bloom		Plant	Deer	Sun/Shade: Sn=sun, P=part sun,		Moisture: D=Dry, M=Medium, Ms=Moist, W=Wet					
Perennials	Scientific Name	Common Name	Color	Height	Time	Spacing	Resistant?	Native?	Source	Size	Shade	ture	Comments
Shade / Part Shade													
	<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	Maidenhair Fern	n/a	12"		12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	3" pot	P, Sh	M, Ms	short plant, beautiful lacey texture. Resents the dry.
	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Columbine	Red/Yellow	12-36"	May	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	P, Sh	D, M, Ms	delicate texture, great for woodland setting
	<i>Asarum canadense</i>	Wild Ginger	Maroon	8"	May	12" o.c.	Y	N	CPC or HT	pot	P, Sh	M, Ms	good low, facer plant with interesting heart-shaped leaves that form a contrast texture, straight native species, but WT not cultivating at this time
	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	Swamp Milkweed	Pink/Purple	3-4'	July	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	P, Sh	M, Ms, W	when full grown, a little leggy-looking and needs plants in front, good for clay
	<i>Carex grayii</i>	Gray's Sedge	n/a	18"	May/June	18"	Y	N	WT	plug	P, Sh	M, Ms	interesting seed heads if get close
	<i>Carex sprengei</i>	Sprengel's Sedge	n/a	18"	May/June	18"	Y	N	WT	plug	P, Sh	D, M, Ms	clumper, good for drier edges, seed heads shoot up 2-3'
	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	Cardinal Flower	red	3'	July-Aug	12" o.c.		N	WT	plug	P, Sh	M, Ms	a little picky, likes moist best, narrow form, can be short lived but will re-seed if happy, aesthetically best used with shorter plants around
	<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>	Ostrich Fern	n/a	36"	n/a	18" o.c.	Y	N	HT	pot	P, Sh	M, Ms	doesn't like to dry out, can be aggressive if happy, good for clay
	<i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>	Interrupted Fern	n/a	12-24"	n/a	12" o.c.	Y	N	HT	pot	P, Sh	M, Ms, W	tall, similar to Ostrich Fern, but holds up better in the late summer
	<i>Phlox divaricata</i>	Woodland Phlox	Blue	5-1'	April-June	8" o.c.		N	WT	plug	P, Sh	M, Ms	use sparingly in woodland setting with great soils, foliage goes dormant in summer so plan for companions
	<i>Solidago flexicaulis</i>	Zig Zag Goldenrod	Yellow	2-3'	Aug.-Oct.	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	P, Sh	D, M, Ms	aggressive, but fills in large areas in the shade, delicate late season color for shade
	<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Rigid Goldenrod	Yellow	3-4'	July	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	P, Sh	D, M, Ms, W	subtle for a goldenrod, great for clay, leggy, so put a facer plant in front
	<i>Stylophorum diphyllum</i>	Wood Poppy	Yellow	1-2'	April-June	10" o.c.		N	WT	plug	P, Sh	M, Ms	good for spring in woodland setting, but can be aggressive
	<i>Thalictrum dioicum</i>	Early Meadow Rue	Pale Green	1.5-2'	April-May	10" o.c.		N	WT	plug	P, Sh	M, Ms	great plant for delicate texture in woodlands setting--beautiful with iris, but not a bottom of the rain garden plant
	<i>Actaea rubra</i>	Red Baneberry	White	12-36"	May	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sh	M, Ms	good for woodland setting, not especially showy, best massed for a nice texture, poisonous
	<i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>	Blue Cohosh	Green	24"	April	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sh	Ms	good for woodland setting, not terribly showy, but interesting foliage and berries for those who like diversity
	<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>	Virginia Waterleaf	Lavender	1-1.5'	May-June	10" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sh	M, Ms, W	not especially showy, best massed for even texture, can take water
Sun													
	<i>Aster oblongifolius</i> 'October Skies'	October Skies Aster	Lt. Blue/Lavender	4-5'	Sept-Oct	18" o.c.		C	CPC	gallon	Sn	D, M	facer plant on drier edges
	<i>Baptisia australis</i>	Baptisia or False Indigo	Blue	3-4'	June	3' o.c.		N	CPC or HT	#2 pot	Sn	D, M, Ms	good dramatic accent plant, really needs full sun, almost looks like a shrub, good for clay
	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	Rattlesnake Master	White/Lt. Green	3'	July-Sept.	18"		N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms	dramatic form, not for the faint of heart
	<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Sawtooth Sunflower	Yellow		July-Oct.	4-12'		N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms	very tall, nice late season color, can be aggressive
	<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>	Rose Mallow	Pink	4-6'	Aug-Sept	32" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn	M, Ms, W	Huge pink flowers, shrub-like
	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switch Grass	n/a	4-6'	Aug.-Sept.	3' o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	as long as it has sun, this plant really performs, but can be too floppy for some (use cultivars below if want neater appearance), can re-seed assertively (warning!), best with low groundcover (fragaria virginiana, potentilla simplex)
	<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Cloud Nine'	Cloud Nine Switch Grass	n/a	5-7'	Aug.-Sept.	3' o.c.	Y	C	CPC or HT	gal. or #1	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	since spaced far apart, good for clay, salt tolerant
	<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Shenandoah'	Shenandoah Switch Grass	n/a	3'	Aug.-Sept.	2.5' o.c.	Y	C	CPC or HT	gal. or #1	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	tall, neat and dramatic--this is a great plant, takes a while to look like something in the spring, best with low groundcover (fragaria virginiana, potentilla simplex) around since spaced far apart, good for clay, salt tolerant
	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow Coneflower	Yellow	4-6'	July-Oct.	15" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms	shorter switch grass, beautifully highlighted with wine tinged foliage, takes a while to look like something in the spring, best with low groundcover (fragaria virginiana, potentilla simplex) since spaced far apart, good for clay
	<i>Sedum 'Autumn Joy'</i>	Autumn Joy Sedum	Magenta	1.5-2'	July-Sept.	16" o.c.		NFH	CPC or HT	pot	Sn	D	tall, use with someone into the native look
	<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	Compass Plant	Yellow	4-7'	July-Aug.	24" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms, W	only use at edge for sandy soils, good for neat aesthetics
	<i>Silphium terebinthinaceum</i>	Prairie Dock	Yellow	(flower)	Aug.	18" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms	tall, use with someone into the native look, can spread aggressively if happy, good for clay
	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie Dropseed	n/a	2'	Aug.-Sept.	1.5' o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms	short broad foliage is great contrast plant, flower stalk is airy and tall (sometimes needs staking), good for clay a great performer, but takes a while to get going, beautiful fall texture, great for front edge of sunny garden, since it has neat winter presence, but can be hard to distinguish from weed grass that invades the garden so 'plant' the identification too
	<i>Verbena hastata</i>	Blue Vervain	Purple	4-6'	June-August	12" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn	D, M, Ms	identification too
Sun / Part Sun													
	<i>Allium cernuum</i>	Nodding Wild Onion	Lt. Lavender	12"	Sept-Oct	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	tall, nice deep color, best for native setting
	<i>Anthyrium flexifemina</i>	Lady Fern	n/a	24"-36"	n/a	24" o.c.	Y	N	WT	3" pot	Sn, P	M, Ms	good short, neat plant for front
	<i>Aster dumosus</i> 'Woods Light Blue'	Woods Blue Aster	Lavender	1-2'	Aug-Oct	18" o.c.		C	HT	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	beautiful fern
	<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth Aster	Lt. Blue/Lavender	4-5'	Sept-Oct	12-18" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	very compact, floriferous aster with prolific lavender flowers
	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	New England Aster	Deep Purple	4-5'	Sept-Oct	12-18" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	when full grown, is leggy-looking--can be trimmed to 6" in June for bushier growth, plant something in front
	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i> 'Vibrant Dome'	New England Aster Purple Dome	Deep Purple	1.5-2'	Sept-Oct	18" o.c.		C	CPC	gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	is leggy-looking--can be trimmed to 6" in June for bushier growth (plant something in front) good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
	<i>Chelone lyonii</i> 'Hot Lips'	Hot Lips Turtlehead	Pink	2-3'	Aug-Sept	18-24" o.c.		C	CPC or HT	pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	more compact, floriferous version of the species w/ deep purple flowers, can be prone to fungus
	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple Coneflower	Pink/Lavender	3'-3.5'	July-Aug	12-18" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	good for clay, neat and long blooming, combines beautifully with joe pye weed
	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> 'Magnus'	Magnus Purple Coneflower	Pink/Lavender	2.5'-3'	July-Aug	12-18" o.c.		C	CPC or HT	pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	good for clay, good butterfly plant
	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> 'White Swan'	White Swan Purple Cone Flower	White	2.5-3'	June-Aug.	12-18" o.c.		C	CPC or HT	pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	good for clay, more compact and full than straight species, good butterfly plant
	<i>Eupatorium dubium</i> 'Little Joe'	Joe Pye Weed--Little Joe	Dusky Pink	4-5'	Aug.-Sept.	24" o.c.		C	HT	#2 pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	good for clay, good butterfly plant
	<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	Joe Pye Weed	Dusky Pink	5-6'	July-Aug	24" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	shorter version of following straight species
	<i>Liatis spicata</i>	Blazing Star	Pink/Purple	3-5'	July	10" o.c.		N	WT	plug	Sn, P	M, Ms	really tall and dramatic, draws beneficial insects
	<i>Liatis spicata</i> 'Kobold'	Kobold Blazing Star	Pink/Purple	2'	July	12-18" o.c.		C	CPC or HT	pot	Sn, P	M, Ms	a clumper, flower spike can get quite tall, needs facer plant in front, nice color for that time of season, can take clay
	<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Horsemint	White-Pink	18-30"	July-Aug	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	fills the void of blooming native plants in June, good for clay, but can look a little leggy--needs a facer
	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	White Beardtongue	White	3-4'	June	18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	good plant for late season color, can be aggressive (use with someone who is not much of a weeder and doesn't like space between plants)
	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	Obedient Plant	Pink	2-3'	Sept-Oct	18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	good native groundcover under drier parts of the garden, can spread into lawn (make sure OK with owner)
	<i>Potentilla simplex</i>	Common cinquefoil	Yellow	6-12"	May-June	18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P	D, M	spread, aggressive in the right soils
	<i>Ranunculus hispidus</i>	Swamp Buttercup	Yellow	1'	May	18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P	M, Ms, W	

<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	Yellow	1-3'	July-Oct	12" o.c.	N	WT	plug gal. or #1	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	short-lived, but aggressively self sows, not especially neat, and can look tired when it is done--best used with native lover, good for clay	
<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i> 'Goldstrum'	Goldstrum Black-eyed Susan	Golden Yellow	2'	July-Sept.	18" o.c.	C	CPC or HT	pot	Sn, P	D, M, Ms	long-blooming, but people either love it or hate it, can spread fast if it's happy, good for clay	
Sun / Part Sun / Shade												
<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	Canada Anemone	White	12"-20"	May-July	18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms	groundcover, spreads quickly & fills in (can be aggressive--good for someone who doesn't want to weed), resents long periods of drought
<i>Carex stipata</i>	Common Fox Sedge	Green	24"	May	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms	provides nice texture if massed
<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	Brown Fox Sedge	n/a	2-3'	June-Oct.	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms, W	good workhorse for all settings, provides nice texture if massed
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild Strawberry	White	6-12"	May-June	18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms	edible, great groundcover for spreading in between plants that are spaced far, can spread into adjoining lawn (check with owner), nice fall color
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild Geranium	Lavendar	12"-24"	May-June	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms	neat native that clumps, stays small and keeps leaves throughout season, nice fall color
<i>Iris virginica</i>	Blue Flag Iris	Lt. Blue/Lavender	2-3'	May-June	12-18" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W	great clean and neat foliage, nice flower, really tough--an excellent workhorse
<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	Blue Lobelia	blue purple	30"	July-Sept	12" o.c.	Y	N	WT	plug gal. or #1	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms	longer lived than sister cardinal flower, nice blue at end of the season, neat for native, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Sensitive Fern	n/a	12-24"	n/a	12" o.c.	Y	N	HT	pot	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms, W	a short, neat fern for the sun, as long as not too dry, great combined with iris
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Culver's Root	White	4-6'	July-August	12-18" o.c.	N	WT	plug	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms	nice bloom late in summer, can be aggressive if happy	

Native? N=Native, C=Cultivar of a Native ("Nativar"), NFH=Not from around Here

Sun/Shade: Sn=sun, P=part sun,

Moisture: D=Dry, M=Medium, Ms=Moist, W=Wet

Shrubs and Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Color	Height	Time	Spacing	Resistant?	Native?	Source	Size	Shade	Mois-	Comments
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Red Bud	Pink	25'	May			N	WT	1 or 3 gallon (\$22 for 3 gallon)	Sn, P, Sh	D, M, Ms	great small native floodplaining tree, can be susceptible to wind damage can get big, but has great red winter stem color (trim 1/3 each year to promote best red color), best with groundcover underneath
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Red-twig Dogwood	White	5-8'	May-June	6' o.c.		N	WT	1 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	can get big, but has great chartreuse winter stem color, best with groundcover underneath
<i>Cornus sericea</i> 'Flaviramea'	Yellow-twig Dogwood	White	5-8'	May-June	4' o.c.		C	RF	3 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	needs acid soil (not clay!), makes it possible for companion female plant below to bloom and fruit
<i>Ilex verticillata</i> 'Jim Dandy'	Winterberry-Male	White	4-6'	June-July	3.5' o.c.		C	CPC	4 gallon	Sn	M, Ms, W	needs acid soil (not clay!), amazing winter berries (needs male above--1 male for every 5 females)
<i>Ilex verticillata</i> 'Nana Red Sprite'	Winterberry-Female	White	2-3'	June-July	2.5' o.c.		C	CPC	5 gallon	Sn	M, Ms, W	beautiful fall color, but susceptible to winter kill, need to prune off winter dead in spring
<i>Itea virginica</i> 'Henry's Garnet'	Sweetspire	White	4'	May-June	3' o.c.		C	CPC	6 gallon	Sn, P, Sh	M, Ms	beautiful fall color, but susceptible to winter kill, need to prune off winter dead in spring
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Blackgum	White	30'-60'	May-June	na		N	WT	1 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	long blooming flowers, good neat plant, may need hard pruning in a couple of years, good for clay, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i> 'Goldfinger'	Goldfinger Potentilla	Yellow	3-4'	June-July	36" o.c.	Y	C	CPC	7 gallon gal. or #1	Sn	D, M, Ms	good woody edge plant--not especially showy, but a 'workhorse' with good fall color, good for clay, salt tolerant
<i>Rhus aromatica</i> 'Gro Low'	Gro Low Fragrant Sumac	n/a	2-3'	n/a	3' o.c.	Y	C	CPC or HT	pot	Sn, P	D, M	takes a wide variety of conditions, a little loose in character, there are several cultivars out now worth exploring
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Elderberry	White	5-10'	June-July	5' o.c.	Y	N	WT	1 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	nice smaller alternative to straight native <i>Viburnum dentatum</i> , neat and round, beautiful blue berries
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i> 'Blue Muffin'	Blue Muffin Arrowwood Viburnum Chicago Lustre Arrowwood	White	3-4'	May-June	3' o.c.	Y	C	CPC	3 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	a little larger than the previous, a very hardy plant
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i> 'Chicago Lustre'	Viburnum	White	5-7'	June	4' o.c.	Y	C	CPC	3 gallon	Sn, P	D, M, Ms, W	straight native, so a large shrub
<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Nannyberry	White	5-7'	June	7' o.c.	Y	N	WT	1 gallon	Sn, P	M, Ms, W	

*WT = Can be obtained from any members of the **Michigan Native Plant Producers Association**: www.mnppa.org like **Wildtype Nursery**, 900 N. Every Rd. Mason MI, (near Lansing), (517) 244-1140, www.wildtypeplants.com, wildtype@msu.edu like **The Native Plant Nursery**, Ann Arbor, Michigan, (734) 677-3260, www.nativeplant.com. They sell their plants at the Ann Arbor Farmer's Market on Saturdays in May, June, July & September or **Hidden Savanna Nursery**, 18 N Van Kal Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49009, (269)352-3876, info@hiddensavanna.com, www.hiddensavanna.com

*CPC or HT = Can be obtained from any mainstream, quality nursery like: **retailer nurseries** like Plymouth, Lodi Farms, Fraleighs, Turners, English Gardens, Abbots Farms, Crimbold's, etc. or **wholesale nurseries** like Rushton Farms, Northfield Farms, Christensen's Plant Center, or Hortech.

Plants that we have had issues with in the past

Jun-10

This list is here to discuss the problems and issues with plants that, on the whole, did not work very well within the context of this program

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<i>Aesclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	Quite aggressive, but good for monarch habitat
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem	Some people who are truly into natives like it, but generally it is too tall and to spindly for most, is use it--mass it in a big area
<i>Campanula americana</i>	Tall Bellflower	Too spindly for most
<i>Chelone glabra</i>	Turtlehead	Very sensitive to varying moisture levels, tends to flop, has conservative soil type range--not good for general rain garden use
<i>Eupatirium perfoliatum</i>	Boneset	Can be quite aggressive--use with caution, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Sawtooth Sunflower	Very tall, if used needs to be in a big space
<i>Heuchera americana</i>	Alum Root	Not showy at all, but if massed is OK for texture
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Bee-balm	Gets an ugly fungus on it after it blooms
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	Beardstongue	Pretty when it blooms in June (a nice time to have blooms, since there is not a lot native blooming then), but needs to have neat
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow Coneflower	Very tall, if used needs to be in a big space, good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects
<i>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</i>	Blue-eyed grass	A little sensitive--can get 'mowed' down by other plants in its area
<i>Smilacena racemosa</i>	Solomon's Plume	Needs to be massed in a big area, and planted close together to work--otherwise looks spindly
<i>Smilacena stellata</i>	Starry-false Solomon's Seal	Would have like to have used it, but had lots of problems with propagation
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	Blue-stemmed goldenrod	Super aggressive--beware!
<i>Tradescantia ohioensis</i>	Spiderwort	Looks nice when it blooms (only in the daytime), but then totally flattens to the ground when it is done blooming in June
<i>Vernonia missurica</i>	Ironweed	Very tall and thin, if used needs to be in a big space
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden Alexanders	Clients found it too floppy and messy, but good for drawing beneficial (predatory) insects