

## GOALS AND PURPOSES OF RAIN GARDENS:

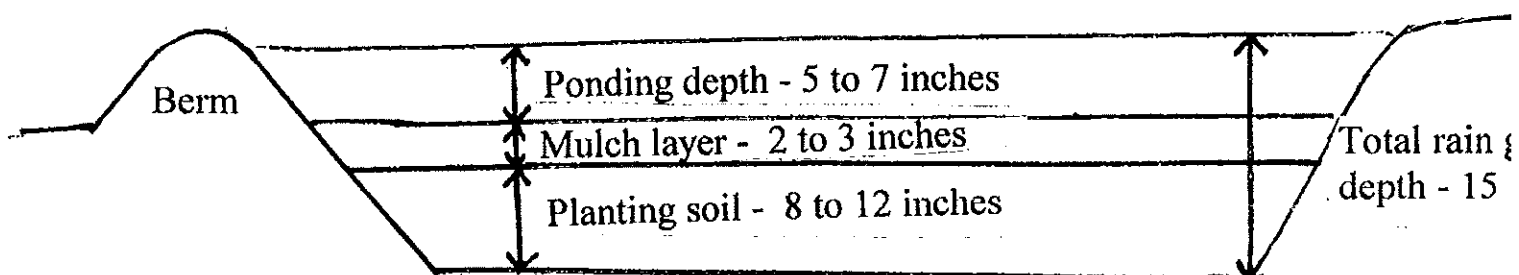
- Absorb rainwater flowing from roofs, lawns, and any impervious surfaces (driveways, patios, walkways) on the property
- Improve water quality by filtering sediments, pollutants and nutrients from the runoff
- Replenish groundwater by increasing rainwater infiltration
- Slow down runoff and reduce flooding, which protects structures and the landscape
- Provide natural habitat for butterflies, beneficial insects and songbirds

A typical rain garden consists of a shallow depression that serves as a planting bed and uses native plants, loose soil, mulch and sometimes stone. These elements collect, absorb and clean runoff from down spouts, roof drains, pipes, swales or curb openings. The captured runoff temporarily ponds and slowly filters into the soil over a 24- to 48-hour time period, which is not long enough for mosquitoes to reproduce. Runoff that infiltrates the rain garden is runoff **not** entering the storm drains and **not** flowing into the Chesapeake Bay.

Rain gardens are best located in partial to full sun; down hill from down spouts, driveways or impervious surfaces; at least 10 feet from the house; and 25 feet away from septic drain fields or buried tanks. They do not need fertilizers, pesticides, and additional water other than what nature provides after the first year unless there is a severe drought.

## INSTALLING A RAIN GARDEN:

- Map the flow of storm water on your property
- Select a garden site that will interrupt the flow of water
- Determine the soil type: sandy, loamy or clay. If clay soil, you may need to amend the soil with rain garden planting soil
- Select the shape best suited to the site: crescent, kidney, or long and narrow
- Determine the garden size based runoff in area, soil type, and amount of impervious surface. For detailed calculations refer to "Rain Gardens Across Maryland" at internet address listed below
- Remove all grass and grass roots in the garden area
- Remove soil to a depth of 12- to 18 inches and create a level ponding area. Form a berm using any extra soil. Allow 5 to 7 inches ponding depth, 8 to 12 inches planting soil and 2 to 3 inches of mulch



- Install landscape cloth under all rock areas to keep rocks from sinking into the soil
  - Select plants that can tolerate wet feet and are suitable for your light conditions - sunny or semi-shade
  - Install plants, mulch the garden and water plants to settle them into the soil
  - ENJOY your new garden
- More detailed information can be found at:

[http://www.rainscaping.org/\\_ccLib/attachments/pages/Rain+Gardens+Across+MD\\_screen.pdf](http://www.rainscaping.org/_ccLib/attachments/pages/Rain+Gardens+Across+MD_screen.pdf)

Acknowledgement: Worcester County Department of Development Review and Permitting

