

How to Install a Rain Garden

(Source: calwildgardens.com)

Where to build Rain Gardens

Always direct water collection a minimum of 3-10' from any patio or building foundation. Placing your rain garden long ways across the top of a slope will allow the maximum rainwater infiltration into your yard.

OVERFLOW

Dependent on your soil's drainage abilities, overflow or outlet pipes that connect to drains may be necessary to prevent overland flow in major rain events.

CONNECT YOUR GUTTERS

Run a large width (i.e. 3") pipe from your rain gutter downspout to the start of a narrow gravel-filled trench or dry streambed

MAKE YOUR 'POND'

Dig out an absorption 'pond' (aka underground reservoir) a minimum of 1-2' deep. And fill the bottom with 6" deep of gravel. Dig the pond long ways across the top of a slight slope if possible

SIZE

Dig them any size! Every little bit helps. Here's some suggested ones:

- 2 x 3.5' is a decent starter size
- 5' x 12' is shown in design plan

DEPTH

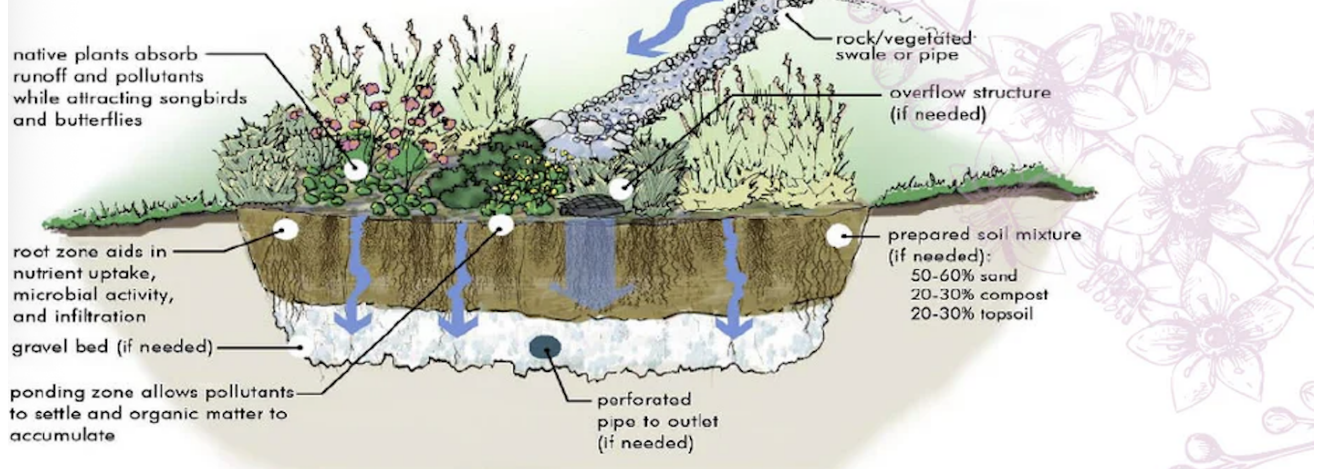
A Minimum 18" depth is important to allow enough room for a thick gravel layer & soil depth for the new plants that go above it.

BUILD A GARDEN ON TOP

Fill area with soil at least 12-18" and plant with flood adapted plants. Edge with rocks if desired.

residential rain garden

(keep 10 feet away from most structures)



Recommended California Natives to Plant around your Rain Garden:

California Hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa* ssp. *holciformis*)
Blue Wild Rye (*Elymus glaucus*)
Native Fescues (*Festuca* spp.)
Deer Grass (*Muhlenbergia patens*)
Common Rush (*Juncus patens*)
Soft Rush (*Juncus effuses*)
Meadow Sedge (*Carex pansa*)
Red Larkspur (*Delphinium nudicaule*)
Scarlet Monkeyflower (*Erythranthe cardinalis*)
Western Vervain (*Verbena lasiostachys*)
Western Columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*)
Narrowleaf Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*)
Yellow-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*)
Self Heal (*Prunella vulgaris*)
Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum californicum*)
Horsetail (*Equisetum telmateia* ssp. *braunii*)
Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*)
Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*)
Narrowleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*)
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*)
Native Irises
California poppy (direct seed)

[More recommendations \(by location\) from www.californialandscapedesign.org:](http://www.californialandscapedesign.org)

FOR THE BOTTOM OF THE SWALE:

- Yerba Mansa (*Anemopsis californica*)
- Santa Barbara Sedge (*Carex barbarea*)
- California Field Sedge (*Carex praegracilis*) - good near inflows for erosion control
- Salt Grass (*Distichlis spicata*)
- Rosemallow (*Hibiscus lasiocarpus* /syn. *H. californica*)
- Pacific Silverweed (*Salicornia* sp.)
- Native *Juncus* sp.

FOR THE SIDES OF THE SWALE:

- Blue Hibiscus (*Alyogyne huegelii*) - upper sides
- Seep Monkey Flower (*Mimulus guttatus*) - mid point or higher as long as roots access moist areas
- Mangle Dulce (*Maytenus phyllanthoides*)
- Native *Scirpus* sp. - where it doesn't get covered in water prolonged periods
- Fairy Lily (*Zephyranthes candida*) - mid or high without lots of standing water

ANYWHERE IN THE SWALE:

- Tall Sedge (*Carex appressa*)
- Foothill/Berkeley Sedge (*Carex tumilicola*)
- Giant Chain Fern (*Woodwardia fimbriata*)