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TOP PLANTS for RAIN, WATER & SHORELINE GARDENS & *THOSE TO AVOID*



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES OUTREACH

Selecting the right plant for the growing conditions is just as important when planning your rain gardens, shoreline plantings and water gardens. There are many more native plant possibilities but I selected for a variety of bloom times, pollinator appeal and those that are less aggressive.

THE GOOD - AT LEAST A FEW

A rain garden is designed to capture, absorb and clean rainwater runoff from roofs and hard surfaces. It's more than a group of native plants. Proper soil preparation and garden design are also critical to success.

Use this helpful publication when designing your Rain Garden

- [Rain Gardens: A Guide for Homeowners and Landscapers](#)

BENEFITS OF A RAIN GARDEN

- Adds beauty to your landscape
- Keeps water where it falls
 - Captures, absorbs and cleans rainwater before directing it into the ground
 - Recharges our groundwater, instead of the storm sewers
 - A properly designed and installed rain garden can collect as much as 30% more runoff than a patch of lawn
 - **Other things you can do to help**
- Reduces the risk of basement backups
- Helps prevent water pollution - improving water quality
- Supports and attracts pollinators and songbirds

For more information on rain gardens, check out these webinars:

- [How to Plan Your Rain Garden](#)
 - [Download handout](#)
- [Selecting Rain Garden Plants](#)
 - [Download handout](#)
- [Planting Your Rain Garden](#) (May 13th)
- Rain Garden Maintenance (July 28th)

Aquatic Invasive Species Outreach

Wisconsin's aquatic invasive species (AIS) program focuses on preventing the introduction of new invasive species to Wisconsin, containing the spread of invasives that are already in the state, and managing established populations when possible. In close cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Extension Lakes program, UW-Madison Division of Extension education efforts focus on working with resource professionals and citizens statewide to teach boaters, anglers and other water users the steps they should take to prevent transporting aquatic invasives to new waters. Efforts also address other potential mechanisms of introduction, including aquarium pet release and water gardening.

Invasive Species ID and Impacts

Report an Invasive Finding



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**AQUATIC INVASIVE
SPECIES OUTREACH**

SHORELINE PLANTINGS

"A shoreline garden, filled with native grasses, wildflowers, trees and shrubs will help protect your shoreline from erosion, take less time and money for maintenance, protect the lake from contamination and deter Canada Geese!...

Please be aware that any work below the ordinary high water mark, such as erosion control measures and planting native aquatics, require a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. In addition, every county in Wisconsin has adopted and enforces shoreland zoning ordinances for the protection of our waterbodies...

Before starting any project, please contact your county zoning department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to find out if you will need a permit.

For more information about the WI DNR regulations please call 262-574-2136 or see their website at www.dnr.state.wi.us

From: ***A Homeowners Guide to Shoreline Gardens***

Here are a few helpful resources:

- ***Healthy Lakes & Rivers 350ft2 Native Planting Companion Guide***
- ***More Shoreline Plants***

MARSH MARIGOLD

Caltha palustris

- 1-2' tall
- Space 6-12"
- Moist to wet soil
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms March - April
- Pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 7
- Rain garden, wet shoreline edge, water garden marginal plant

GOLDEN ALEXANDER

Zizia aurea

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sand soil - moist to dry
- Full sun to shade
- Blooms May - June
- Pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- Rain garden, wet and dry shoreline edge

WILD GERANIUM

Geranium maculatum

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Loam, sand soil
- Part sun to shade
- Blooms May - June
- Pollinators
- Zones 3 to 8
- Rain garden, dry shoreline edge



About Melinda

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including *Can't Miss Small Space Gardening*, the *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, and *Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy*. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on over 115 TV and radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series, including the latest *Food Gardening for Everyone* DVD set. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine, writes the twice monthly "Gardeners' Questions" newspaper column and a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website, melindamyers.com

BLUE FLAG IRIS

Iris versicolor

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sand soil - wet
- Full to part sun
- Blooms June - July
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators
- Zones 3 to 6
- Rain garden, moist to wet shoreline edge, water garden
- Provides shoreline stabilization and habitat for an array of wildlife

FOXGLOVE OR SMOOTH PENSTEMON

Penstemon digitalis

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sand soil
 - * Tolerates clay better than other penstemons
- Full to part sun
- Blooms June - July for a month or longer
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- Rain garden, shoreline edge

SWAMP OR RED MILKWEED

Asclepias incarnata

- 3-5' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Clay, loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms June - July (fragrant)
- Birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 3 to 9
- Rain garden, shoreline edge

BUTTERFLY MILKWEED

Asclepias tuberosa

- 2-3' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms June - August
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Slow to emerge in spring, so mark the location to avoid accidentally digging up the plant
- Zones 3 to 10
- Rain garden, dry shoreline edge

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

Rudbeckia hirta

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms June - September
- Biennial that self-sows, acting like a perennial
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 10
- Rain garden, shoreline edge

CULVER'S ROOT

Veronicastrum virginicum

- 3-6' tall
- Space 18"
- Clay, loam, sand soil
- Full to part sun
- Blooms July - August
- Butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 3 to 8
- Rain garden, moist to wet shoreline edge

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Check often as more information and webinars continue to be added.

May 13th

[Planting Your Rain Garden](#)

May 16th

[Perennials for Challenging Growing Conditions](#)

June 3rd

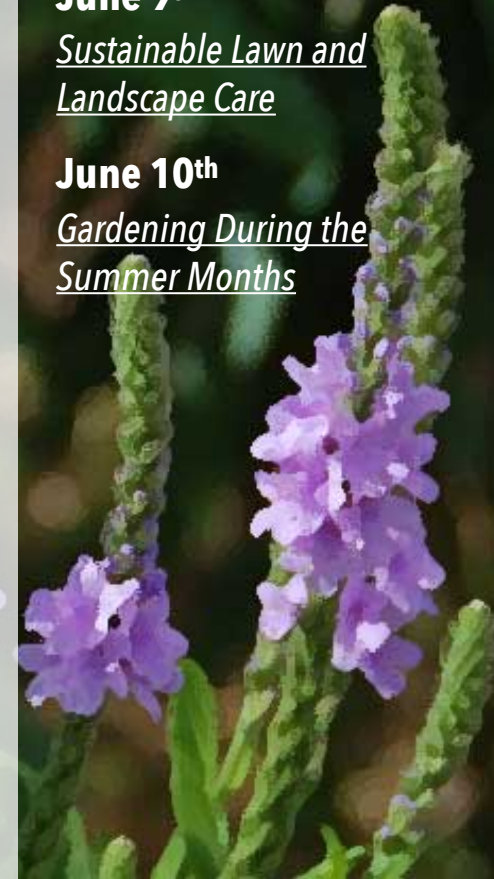
[Creative Container Gardening](#)

June 9th

[Sustainable Lawn and Landscape Care](#)

June 10th

[Gardening During the Summer Months](#)



CARDINAL FLOWER

Lobelia cardinalis

- 2-4' tall
- Space 6-12"
- Loam, sand soil - moist to wet
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - September
- Short lived, but self-seeds
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, host plant
- Zones 3 to 9
- **Rain garden, wet shoreline edge, water garden**

BLUE VERVAIN

Verbena hastata

- 3-6' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sand soil - moisture lover
- Full sun
- Blooms July - September - up to 2 months
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- **Rain garden, wet shoreline edge**

HOARY VERVAIN

Verbena stricta

- 2-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Loam, sand soil - dry
- Full sun
- Blooms July - September

- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- **Rain garden, dry shoreline edge**

GREAT BLUE LOBELIA

Lobelia siphilitica

- 1-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Forms colonies if properly sited, not overly aggressive
- Clay, loam, sand soil - easier than cardinal flower
- Full sun
- Blooms July - September
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9
- **Rain garden**

WHITE TURTLEHEAD

Chelone glabra

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Wet to moist soil
- Full to part sun
- Blooms July - September
- Butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Zones 3 to 8
- **Rain garden, moist to wet shoreline edge, water garden**

SHOWY GOLDENROD

Solidago speciosa

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms August - September
- Not as aggressive as some goldenrods
- Birds, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- **Rain garden, dry to medium shoreline edge**

PRAIRIE DROPSEED

Sporobolus heterolepsis

- 2-3' tall
- Space 2'
- Loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms August - September
- Fragrant flowers
- Seeds coated with ice look like gems in the garden
- Foliage turns gold
- Birds, pollinators
- Zones 3 to 8
- **Rain garden, dry to medium shoreline edge**

INDIAN GRASS

Sorghastrum nutans

- 3-5'+ tall
- Space 1-2'
- Clay, loam, sand soil
- Drought resistant
- Full sun
- Blooms August - September
- Blue-green leaves turn gold in fall
- Birds
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9
- **Rain garden, shoreline edge**

SIDEOATS GRAMA

Bouteloua curtipendula

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms August - September
- Birds, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9
- **Rain garden, dry to medium shoreline edge**

FOX SEDGE

Carex vulpinoidea

- 1-3' tall
- Space 18"
- Clay, loam, sand soil - tolerates wet
- Full to part sun
- Blooms May - June
- Looks similar to prairie dropseed
- Bronze seed heads
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- Rain garden, moist to wet shoreline edge

BOTTLEBRUSH SEDGE

Carex comosa

- 2-4' tall
- Space 2'
- Clay, loam, sand soil
- Full sun
- Blooms May - June
- Nesting cover and food for various birds and waterfowl; food, shade and protection for frogs, salamanders and amphibians
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8
- Rain garden, moist to wet shoreline edge, water garden

JUST A FEW NATIVE WATER PLANTS

ARROWHEAD

Sagittaria latifolia

- 1-4' tall x 1-3'
- Can be weedy
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - September
- Birds, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 10
- Along shore or 6 to 12" of water
- Highly valued for wildlife (duck potato)

PICKEREL WEED

Pontederia cordata

- 2-4' tall x 1.5-2'
- Can spread rapidly
- Full sun
- Blooms June - October
- Butterflies, dragonflies & damselflies lay eggs on leaf stems
- Zones 3 to 10
- Stream and pond margins
- Seeds and young leaves edible
- Provides shoreline stabilization
- Helps buffer wave action and provides habitat for fish

WHITE WATER LILY

Nymphaea odorata

- Spreading
- Full sun
- Blooms summer - fragrant
- Birds, pollinators, moths, reptiles, small mammals
- Zones 4 to 11
- Provides fish cover, wildlife food, prevent erosion

MONKEY FLOWER

Mimulus ringen

- 1-3' tall x 1'
- Full sun to part shade
- Butterflies, pollinators, hummingbirds, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

CANADIAN PONDWEED

Elodea canadensis

- .25' x 1-3'
- Full sun
- Submerged or floater
- Helps control algae
- Buds drop to the ground, where they overwinter
- Zones 4 to 10

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INVASIVES TO AVOID

Invasive plants are those that leave our gardens and landscapes moving into natural areas. They crowd out native plants, disrupt the ecosystem and negatively impact our native insects, birds and wildlife.

Aggressive plants are the bullies in the garden. They take over, crowding out nearby more timid plants. They disrupt the design but stay within the landscape.

WHY IT MATTERS

Invasive and nuisance plants tend to start growing earlier and keep growing later in the season, giving them an advantage over our native plants. These plants reproduce easily and rapidly take over a disturbed area, crowding out native plants and disrupting the natural balance needed to support our pollinators and wildlife.

YELLOW IRIS

Iris pseudacorus

WATER HYACINTH

Eichhornia crassipes

WATER LETTUCE

Pistia stratiotes

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

Lythrum salicaria

Purple Loosestrife Brochure

FLOWERING RUSH

Butomus umbellatus

YELLOW FLOATING HEART

Nymphoides peltata

GOLDEN CREEPER

Thladiantha dubia

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Fallopia japonica or

Polygonum cuspidatum

Japanese Knotweed Brochure

POLICEMAN'S HELMET

Impatiens glandulifera

LESSER CELANDINE

Ranunculus ficaria or *Ficaria verna*

NON-NATIVE PHRAGMITES OR COMMON REED

Phragmites australis

BUTTERFLY DOCK

Petasites hybridus

INVASIVE ORGANISMS IN TRADE





Extension

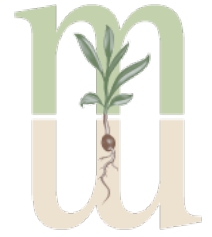
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AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES OUTREACH

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Melinda's Garden Moment nationally syndicated TV and Radio segments

[Birds & Blooms](#) magazine

Books

- [Midwest Gardener's Handbook](#)
- [Small Space Gardening](#)
- [Midwest Lawn Guides](#)
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