



YOUR ULTIMATE *Rain Garden* RESOURCE



Reconnect
Oakville



Photo Credit: [TRCA](#)

Welcome to **Reconnect Oakville**

Words can hardly express how heartwarming it is to have you with us. While our paths may have not crossed for exactly the same motive, I am certain we are both here searching for something outside the ordinary. Whether you're drawn to rain gardens to save bees, prevent your basement flooding for less, plant more native greenery, conserve water, or simply create a healing oasis to enjoy from your balcony, you've come to the right place!

I've compiled everything you need to know about rain gardens and the resources to help you along the way. By the time you finish this brief guide, I hope you'll have a smile on your face, and feel that the Reconnection project just made your life just a little easier.

Visit [**ReconnectOakville.ca**](https://ReconnectOakville.ca) to learn about the many other ways you can get involved with nature and your community.


Sincerely,



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What is a Rain Garden?

... and why should I include it in my yard?

Rain gardens are beautiful native gardens that transform a small part of your yard to create a pathway for stormwater (or melted snow) allowing it to flow from your lawn, rooftop, and driveway back into the earth where it can help our environment to flourish!.

Installing a rain garden is like hiring a highly effective environmental engineer who works tirelessly around the clock. Why is it so effective, you ask? You can read all about why rain gardens work [right here](#). The facts are astounding!

The benefits of rain gardens:

- Address your yard's drainage challenges, prevent puddles (and mosquitoes!), and reduce basement flooding.
- Capture stormwater runoffs, significantly reducing the pressure on the stormwater infrastructure during heavy downpours. Various studies in the US have shown rain gardens can reduce runoffs by an impressive 50 to 98%!
- Absorb 30-40% more water than conventional lawns.
- Recharge groundwater supply, all while purifying the water.
- Remove up to 90% of chemicals, and up to 80% of sediments. They can also filter out metals like zinc, copper, and lead.



What is a **Rain Garden?**

... and why should I include it in my yard?

The benefits of rain gardens (Continued):

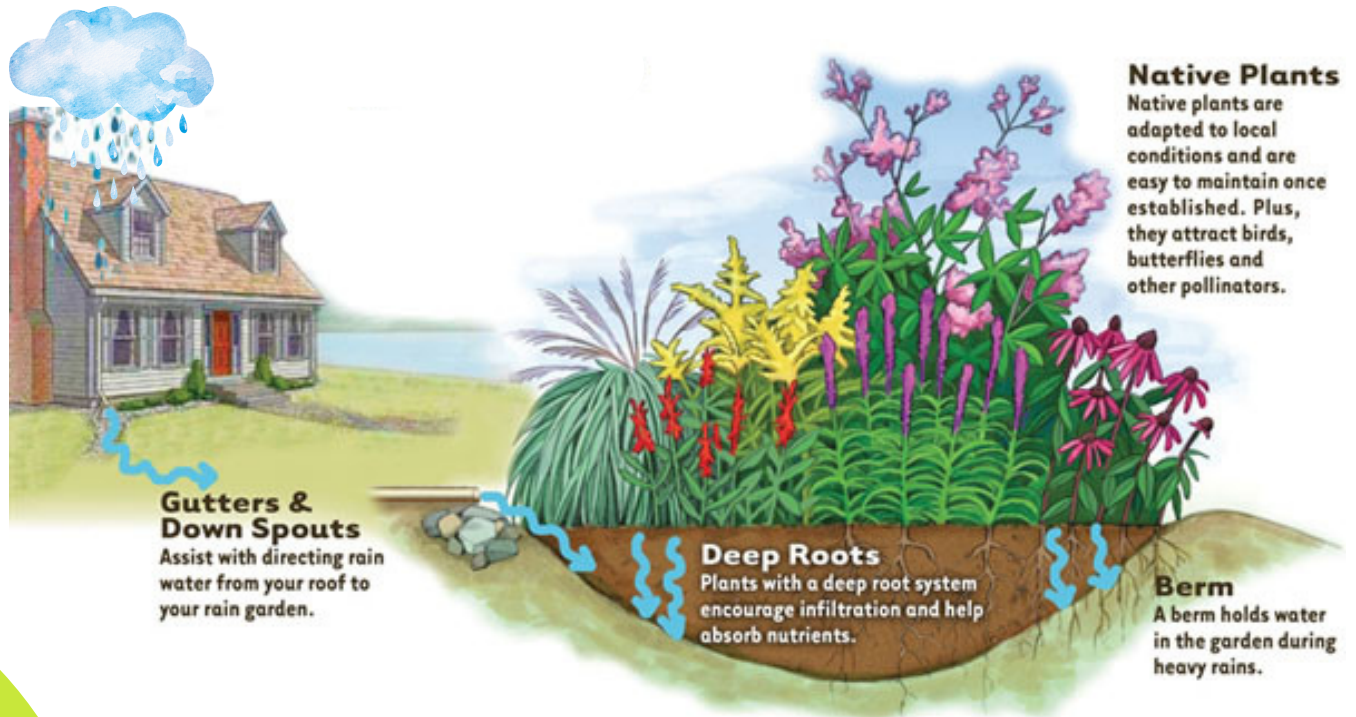
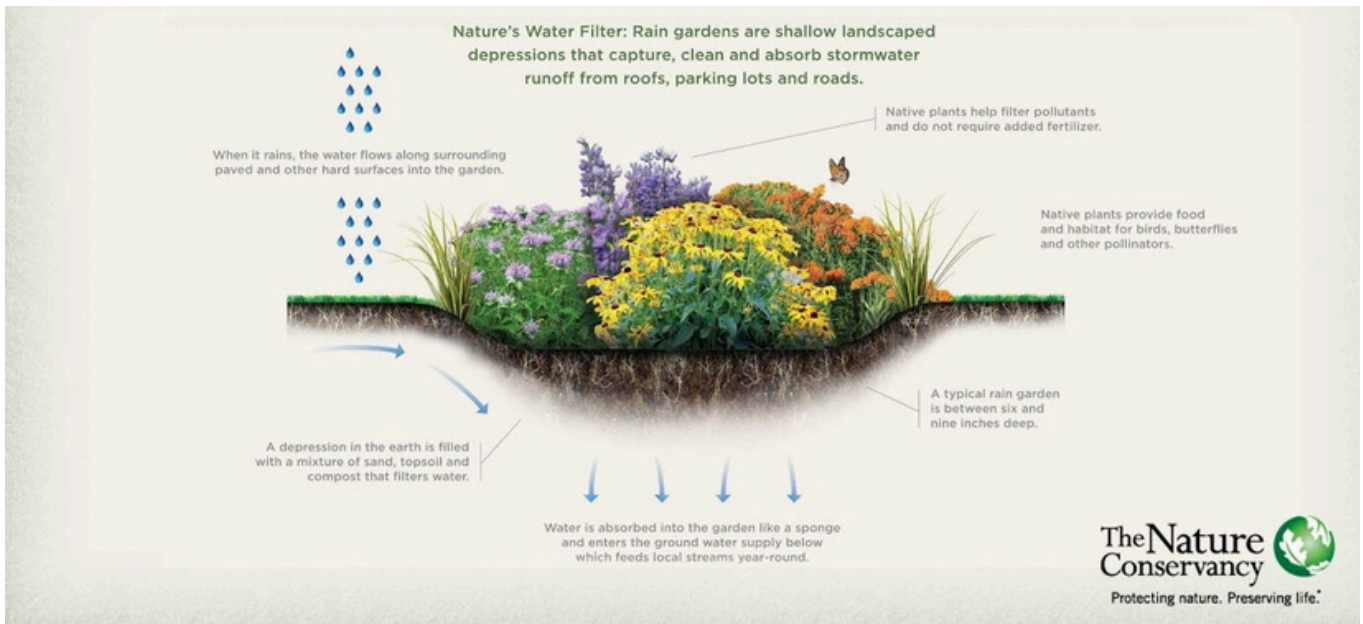
- When paired with a rain barrel, it can save you some money on your water bill by providing water for your greenery.
- Offer great benefits to the local ecosystem, especially in urban areas. They act like mini-oases for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects, such as dragonflies that help control mosquitoes.
- Provide many additional social benefits, as reported in several studies, including creating health-promoting spaces, improving aesthetics, reducing noise, enhancing air quality, sequestering carbon, and helping to reduce urban heat island effects.
- Are water efficient once established - only requiring irrigation during prolonged droughts.

Many of us feel overwhelmed by the lived and projected impacts of extreme weather conditions and biodiversity loss. It's easy to feel helpless. But here we are, discovering one simple yet effective solution to mitigate many issues at once.



How Do Rain Gardens Work?

Here are some diagrams to explain:



Things to consider Before Creating Your Rain Garden

- Rain gardens in clayey soil are a challenge, but not an impossible mission. Check this wonderful [resource](#) that helps you calculate the space and cost of your rain garden based on different factors, including soil type.
- Rain gardens should not be installed on steep slopes.
- They also should not be located in areas with high groundwater tables. If you live in an urban area or a bit further from rivers and lakes, you can generally assume that the groundwater table is low enough to make a rain garden feasible.
- Always ensure there is a safe distance (at least 3 meters) from your home's foundation, underground infrastructure, and tree roots, and not more than 9 meters away from the downspout. It is a good idea to consult your local [conservation authority](#) for more detailed guidance.
- Proper design is key, so be sure to review the resources I've compiled below.. A well-designed garden wil drain its water within 6 hrs to 3 days.

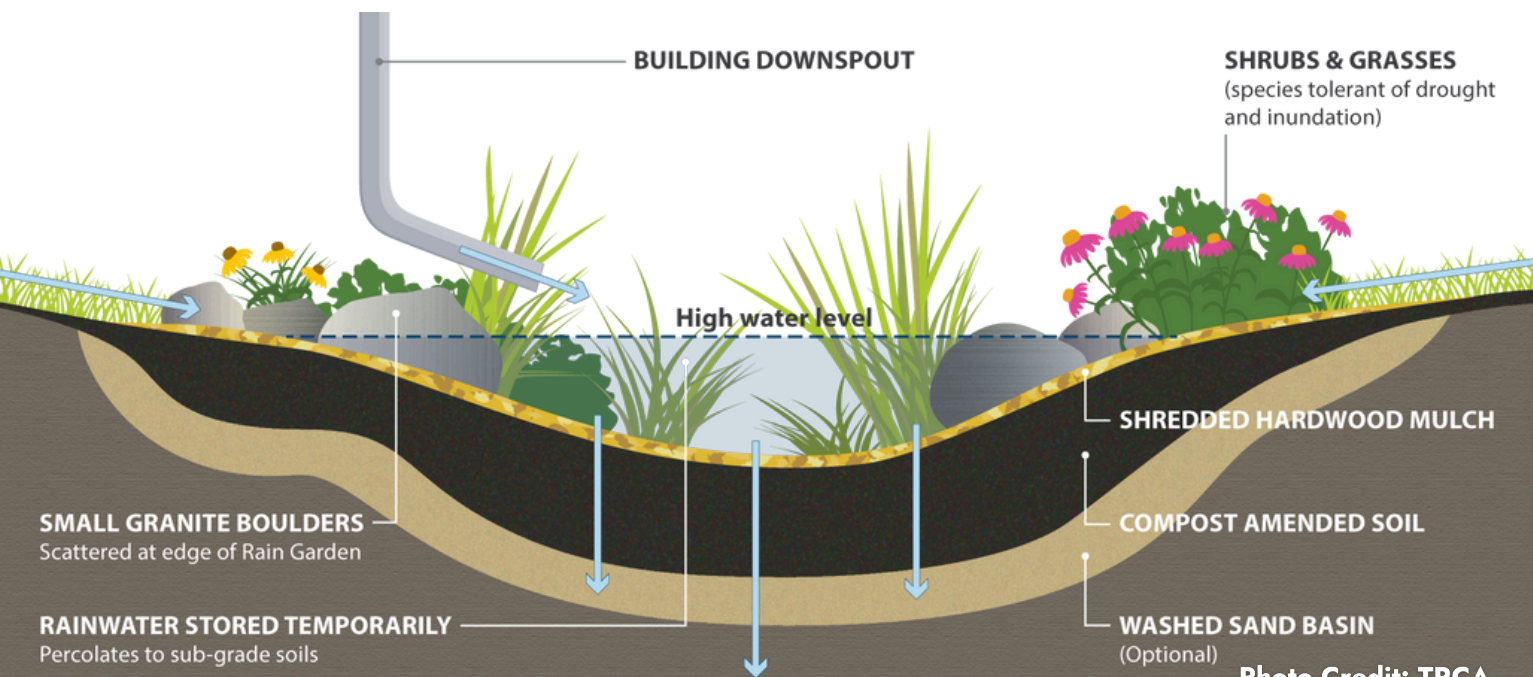


Photo Credit: [TRCA](#)

How to Get Started

There is no better time to start a rain garden than today. There are plenty of resources available online, many specifically designed for Southern Ontario! I've already done the research for you and compiled a list of resources, tailored to whatever level of detail you're looking for.



Resources

- [TRCA Guide](#): The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has crafted this handy guide just for you! It's packed with useful info and a four-step method for creating and maintaining your very own DIY rain garden.
- [CVC Resource](#): Credit Valley Conservation has taken things up a notch by adding to the TRCA guide with a detailed fact sheet, an extended plant list, and a guide to native plant nurseries.
- [Landscape Ontario](#): If you're a visual learner, Landscape Ontario has got you covered with a fantastic series of videos. These are great for seeing design, construction, and maintenance in action, with a real-life case study, and hands-on visuals to help you every step of the way.
- [The Modern Rain Garden](#): Here's a resource from Michael Albanese, who lives in Hamilton. Michael has dedicated the past ten years of his life to studying and implementing rain gardens. He wrote this book to empower readers to plan and execute their rain gardens with confidence.

How to Get Started

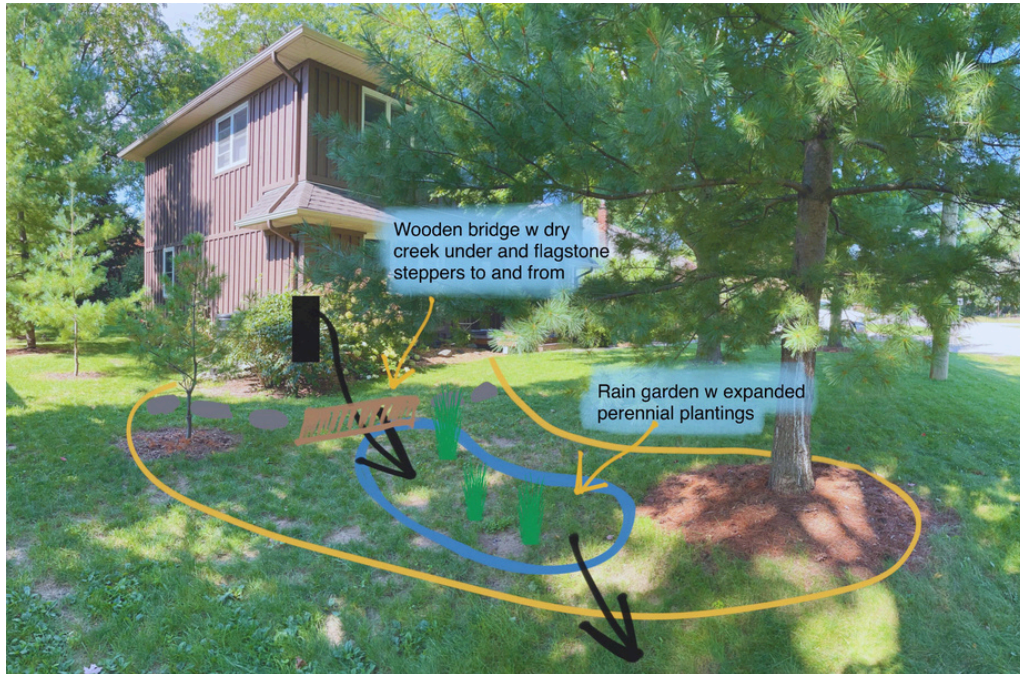
Resources (continued)

- [Halton Region Master Gardeners](#): Here are several, more detailed, resources put together for you from the Master Gardeners in Halton Region.
- Conservation Halton provides interactive learning experiences with their annual Spring Healthy Neighboursheds webinars and their Design Your Native Landscape in-person workshop. Click [here](#) to check out more details; they should update the website for 2025 soon.
- [Green Communities Canada Masterclass](#): For those who love to dive deep and perfect every detail, this is your go-to resource! Enjoy a FREE masterclass with assignments, six training modules, and six hours of video content that you can complete at your own pace.



How to Get Started

Check out some visual representation for rain gardens planning and implementation from our Hamilton neighbor, Michael Albanese.




Before


After



How to Get Started



Before



After

How to Get Started

Funding Opportunities

- Oakville Youth Climate Action Fund: If you're between 15 and 24 years old, here's a great opportunity! The fund offers between \$1,000 and \$5,000 for youth-led climate initiatives. If the group isn't a formal entity, a local partner can help disburse the funds.
- Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program: Conservation Halton has a financial incentive program that offers up to \$2,500 for projects that contribute to improving water and habitat quality. They'll require a visit to assess your property and will provide recommendations tailored to you!
- Halton Region's Downspout Disconnection Program: Halton region covers up to \$500 in materials and labour costs to redirect your downspout into your rain garden. This subsidy is not tied to making a rain garden, instead, its purpose is to avoid basement flooding due to connected downspouts overloading the wastewater system



How to Get Started

Funding Opportunities (continued)

The funding opportunities below encourage working in groups, which is something we love at Reconnect! I've gathered some options for you to explore. Be sure to check the specific requirements for each one to see which one best aligns with your goals. Let's come together and build community rain gardens!

- [OakvilleReady Community Climate Action Grant](#): The town of Oakville offers funding for rain gardens to groups of at least three community members from three different households.
- [Great Lakes Local Action Fund](#): Every body of water is replenished by a surrounding area known as a watershed, and Southern Ontario is part of Lake Ontario and Lake Huron's watersheds. That means this opportunity is for you! Along with municipalities and Conservation authorities, community-based organizations and Indigenous communities are eligible to apply for this fund!
- [EcoAction Community Funding Program](#): This year's focus is on Fresh Water! If you are not part of a community group, youth or seniors groups, or community-based associations, now is the time to join or create one to be eligible.





Thank you

This has been such a pleasure! Putting together all these resources for you truly brings me joy. Just knowing that a neighbor next door might feel a bit more excited and empowered made the whole neighborhood feel a bit warmer! It's incredible what community connection can do. Thank you for joining me on this journey, and for your enthusiasm about rain gardens.

I'd love to hear your thoughts and feedback on this guide, and I am excited to see pictures of your rain garden! Who knows, maybe we can feature you in our monthly community newsletter.

With gratitude,