

WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
PO Box 94, St. Mary's City, MD 20686

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the St. Mary's River,

Well it's that time of year again. The black walnuts and locusts are already losing their leaves, the fawns' white spots are quickly fading to brown, and the geese are flying at the rising of the moon. Bedroom windows are open to the cool evening air and the tranquillizing call of katydids.

And of course, all this means that RiverFest is right around the corner. RiverFest 2008 will take place on Saturday, September 27th from 10:00 am until 5:00 pm on the State House lawn and waterfront at Historic St. Mary's City. HSMC has graciously offered to partner with us on the event this year, and will open its doors to the grounds and museum for free on that day.

Of course, as in past years, RiverFest will be a free, family friendly event with Skipjack rides, kayaking, clowns, pumpkin painting, music, food and drink. This year we're proud to have Senator Bernie Fowler, long time champion of the Patuxent River and the environment, lead us in a "wade-in" the St. Mary's River at the waterfront. Wear your white sneakers!

I hope that you'll all round up your family and friends and join us as we once again celebrate the St. Mary's River at RiverFest 2008.

See you there!!

Joe Anderson



Joe Anderson

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *RiverFest—Save the date!*
10 AM to 5 PM, Sept. 27 at
Historic St. Mary's City
- *Join the SMRWA discussion group!* Check us out at
www.SMRWA.org
- *WRAS Program Updates—go to*
www.StMarysRiver.org

WATERSHED ASSOCIATION MOVES TO NEW HEADQUARTERS - DONATIONS SOUGHT

The St. Mary's River Watershed Association has begun the process of furnishing its new headquarters, located in Suite 10 of the Bank Square Building at 46940 South Shangri La Drive, Lexington Park.

"Once we get an office phone and Internet, we'll be expanding personnel and expanding volunteer opportunities. We're hoping to receive donations for most of the necessary furnishings so that we can save our monies for educational outreach and programs." said Association Executive Director Bob Lewis.

The headquarters hours are by appointment through the end of September and then Tuesday and Friday from 10 AM until 4 PM. Anyone wishing to volunteer can phone ahead and/or drop in to be assigned work. 301-863-3517

Items needed:

- Computer desk and chair
- Desktop lamp and floor lamp
- Two desk chairs, 15 folding chairs
- Two 8-foot folding tables
- Conference table
- Counter-height refrigerator
- Small countertop microwave
- Book cases, storage cabinets
- Laser printer (color or b/w)
- Wireless network
- Compact carpet vacuum

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Reduce Your Footprint with Rain Gardens

By Sonja Kubik



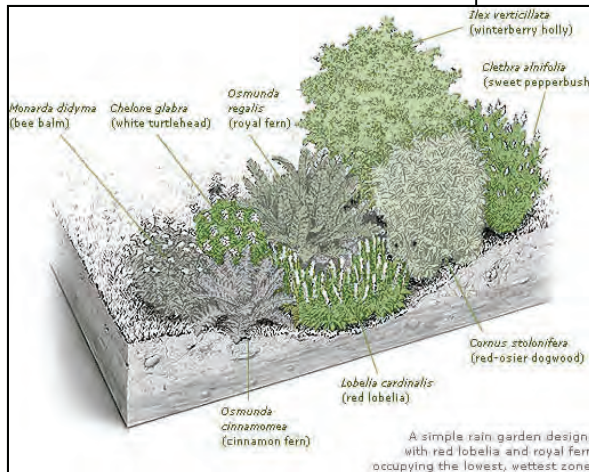
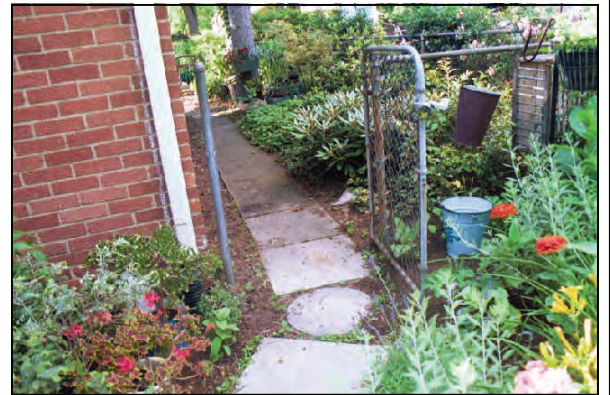
Seeking an attractive solution to reduce storm water runoff from your property? You should be! According to government studies, runoff causes 70% of the pollution in our waterways. As rain travels along roofs and roads it gathers an assortment of ugly baggage, like chemical fertilizers, pesticides, oil, and grease. After a quick trip through the storm sewers, the

Building a rain garden begins with choosing a suitable location. Since the idea of a rain garden is to collect run-off, find a place where this goal can be maximized. Look for an area downhill from paved surfaces, or one where you can easily re-direct a downspout to. You still want water flowing away from your house (nobody likes a soggy basement) so choose a spot at least 15 feet away from your home. As a final note, rain gardens work best in sunny or partially sunny locations; i.e. not under a large tree.

runoff and the pollutants enter our waterways and wreak havoc. However, there's a way to use storm water runoff for a more beautiful purpose: rain gardens! The soil and root systems of the rain garden trap the pollutants, allowing only clean water to filter through to groundwater supplies.

Plan the design of your garden, perhaps using a garden hose to lay out

Rain gardens are landscaped areas filled with native plantings designed to fill with a few inches of water during rainstorms.



They allow about 30% more water to soak into the ground than a normal patch of lawn. The water will take at most a day to soak in, so don't worry about creating an unintentional pond. And neither will the rain garden become a breeding ground for mosquitoes. It takes 7-12 days of standing water for mosquitoes to lay and hatch their eggs. In fact, rain gardens attract dragonflies, which eat mosquitoes!

your intended shape. Next, gather friends and family and start digging! Dig down 4-8 inches with gradually sloping sides. Keep the bottom level to prevent water from pooling in only one portion of the garden. Use the removed soil to build up around the three sides that will help contain the water.

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Rain Gardens - continued from previous page

Since you don't want a surge of water pounding your garden, use a flexible downspout to redirect runoff towards it. Or bury a corrugated drainage pipe in a trench and bring it within one to two feet of the garden. You will want the water to run over a grassy area for a little bit before it reaches the flowers. You may even want to place some rocks in the area where water enters your rain garden to help break up the flow.

When choosing native plants for your garden, look for ones that thrive in

moist and saturated soil, but that can also withstand the drier periods in between storms. Your local nursery will be able to provide this information.

Some additional considerations:

You will need to do some watering and weeding the first two years until the plants become established

If water pools for more than three days, try mixing compost into your soil and lowering the down slope side of your garden

Do not fertilize the garden! Not

only do chemical fertilizers hurt the environment, they will cause the native plants to grow too tall and fall over

For more details on building a rain garden, including advice on suitable dimensions and suggested layouts, see the how-to guide produced by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/ORG/WATER/WM/dsfm/shore/documents/rgmanual.pdf>



There's still time to sponsor! Get on board—call 301-862-3517 today!

GOLD SPONSORS

Historic St. Mary's City
 The Boeing Company
 St. Mary's County Arts Council
 St. Mary's College of Maryland
 Chesapeake Bay Trust
 Cherry Cove
 Glazed Pine—Live Work Play
 Computer Science Corporation
 Bailey's Catering & Party Rentals
 Creative Beginnings

SILVER SPONSORS

Communications Facilities
 Chesapeake Custom Embroidery
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 The Patuxent Partnership
 Eagan McAllister & Associates
 Maryland Bank & Trust
 Tri-County Abstract

BRONZE SPONSORS

Century 21 Realty—Karen Brooks & Lucy Barbour
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 St. Mary's River Yacht Club — Smartronix
 Taylor Gas Company — Tidewater Dental
 WLP Consulting — Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
 Good Earth Natural Foods Company — The Printing Press
 Imagine One Technology & Management, Ltd.

Sources:

- Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/>
- Rain Gardens of West Michigan. <http://www.raingardens.org/Index.php>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov>
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/>
- Master Gardeners: <http://www.mastergardener.umd.edu/>

I would like to become a member of the SMRWA

Annual Membership Options	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Limited Income	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate <i>suggested</i>	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____

Total: _____

Yes, I would like to become an active member/volunteer

Please make checks payable to:
 St. Mary's River Watershed
 Association and mail this form
 along with your check to the
 address below:

PO Box 94
 St. Mary's City, MD 20686

Name

Address

Email Address

Phone



OUR MISSION

To protect, improve, and promote the well-being of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.

We're on the web!
www.smrwa.org

DON'T MISS OUT!

Saturday, Sept. 27
 10 AM until 5 PM
 Historic St. Mary's City
FREE ADMISSION



RiverFest 2008
A Celebration of the St. Mary's River

- Live Music—Piney Point Playboys, Indian Summer, & Dance Hall Ghost
- Games, prizes, foods, & drinks
- Kayaking, seining, touch-tanks
- Great fun for every age: children's hour at noon with special entertainment by Magpie
- Exhibits, vendors, & demonstrations
- Free Skipjack rides (1st come, 1st served)

