

**Bedford Conservation Board
Bedford Rain Garden
2007 Special Project Award**

Rain Gardens are recognized by the NYS DEC as important contributors to a complete storm water management system. They get their name from the fact that rain falling on impervious surfaces, such as roofs, parking lots, driveways, etc., can, without detention, end up in local streams, lakes and drinking water reservoirs having accumulated toxins gathered during their run-off journey. Gardens, designed to capture this rain (can also be snow melt) prior to going into these water resources, can instead direct the water down into the ground, where biological actions of specially selected plants suited for partial short term immersion remove these toxins and recharge groundwater with clean water.

The Bedford Conservation Board became interested in building a rain garden in late 2005, after a member read an article about a similar project in Rhode Island. After much research, the hiring of a designer for the garden, and a lot of running around to numerous nurseries to reserve the plants, construction was started in mid-October of last year and finished two weeks later. Because the garden was on a slope, the construction of a retaining wall at one end was needed in order to build the depression needed to hold the excess water captured by the garden. Since Bedford also has an individual who acts as an unpaid consultant on stone wall construction, the two ideas were married into one project: building a demonstration stone wall and a demonstration rain garden, both open to the public to help in their construction.

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