

Some Successful Rain Garden Plants

Used in school (and other) rain gardens in Delta BC (Canada)

Trees

- Any and all, as space and sightlines allow - limb up as needed for sightlines
- Compact evergreen trees (Serbian spruce, for example) are especially useful for water management in smaller spaces
- "Meander" boulevard and median swales as needed, to create bulges of higher ground for trees

Shrubs

- Include generous numbers of evergreen shrubs for winter water management
- Mix large swaths of low shrubs or groundcovers with occasional tall shrubs, to avoid blocking sightlines or creating other safety issues

Azaleas

Berberis 'Rose Glow' (Rosy barberry) (thorns discourage unwanted foot traffic)

Berberis 'Concorde' (very low-growing and compact)

Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Filifera Aurea Nana' (Dwarf goldthread cypress)

Cornus alba (Red twig dogwood) ** and variegated hybrids *

Gaultheria shallon (Salal) **

Heathers

Hebes (suffer in hard winters, but usually come back)

Mahonia nervosa (Dull Oregon grape) **

Mahonia repens (Creeping Oregon grape) **

Physocarpus opulifolius 'Diablo' (Diablo eastern ninebark) *

Pieris japonica (many varieties)

Pinus mugo 'Pumilio' (Dwarf mugo pine)

Potentilla fruticosa (Shrubby cinquefoil) **

Rhododendrons

Ribes sanguineum (Red-flowering currant) **

Rosa nutkana (Nootka rose) ** ***

Roses - hybrid carpet roses are low-maintenance, not invasive (as Nootka can be)

Skimmia japonica (many varieties)

Spiraea davidii (David spiraea) ** *** (use only in spacious settings)

Spiraea hybrids (Goldmound, Goldflame, Little Princess) *

Symphoricarpos alba (Snowberry) **

Vaccinium ovatum (Evergreen huckleberry)

Viburnum davidii

Ground Covers

Ajuga reptans (Carpet bugle) *** (vigorous spreader, but easy to remove)
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi (Kinnikinnick) **
Bergenias
Dianthus spp. (Carnation) (prefer tidy low-growing varieties as ground covers)
Echeverias (Hens and chicks)
Euonymus fortunei (low-growing varieties eg 'Emerald 'n' Gold', 'Emerald Gaeity')
Fragaria chiloensis (Coastal strawberry) ** ***
Lithodora diffusa 'Grace Ward'
Mosses **
Oreganos *** (it's easier to control the spread of golden varieties)
Oxalis oregana (Redwood sorrel) ** ***
Rubus calycinoides 'Emerald Carpet' (Taiwan creeper) * ***
Saxifraga rosacea
Saxifraga umbrosa 'London Pride'
Sedums (golden-chartreuse variety called 'Angelina' is very striking)
Stachys lanata (Lamb's ears) ***

Perennials

- People, especially kids, love flowers, so always include at least some
- Allow for future additions by "owners" of garden, neighbours living adjacent - whatever they're willing to care for, as long as it's not an invasive

Alchemilla mollis (Lady's mantle)
Aster alpinus (Alpine aster) **
Astilbes
Bergenias
Coreopsis
Echinaceas
Euphorbias (choose ones that don't reproduce prolifically)
Geranium cultivars (ie true geraniums, not pelargoniums) *
Geranium sanguineum (Bloody cranesbill) *
Geum macrophyllum (Large-leaved avens) **
Heuchera 'Palace Purple' or other cultivars (Coral bells) *
Hemerocalis 'Stella d'Oro' or other cultivars (Daylily)
Lavandula angustifolia (English lavender)
Lavandula stoechas (Spanish lavender) (may die in hard winters, but self-seeds profusely)
Maianthemum dilatatum (False lily-of-the-valley) **
Rudbekias (Black-eyed Susans)
Salvias (Sage)
Sedum 'Autumn Joy' (Stonecrop)
Yarrows (many will self-seed abundantly; easy to weed when small)

Ferns

Adiantum pedatum (Maidenhair fern) **
Blechnum spicant (Deer fern) **
Phyllitis scolopendrium (Hart's tongue fern)
Polystichum munitum (Sword fern) **

Water or water-margin plants

- Alternate clusters of water-margin plants (especially evergreen ones) with small boulders, along the edges of rain garden ponding areas, in order to protect the erosion-prone waterline

Acorus gramineus 'Ogon' (Sweet flag)	<i>Evergreen</i>
Astilbes	
Bergenias	<i>Evergreen</i>
Caltha palustris 'Plena' (Yellow marsh marigold) *	
Carex 'Ice Dance' ***	<i>Evergreen</i>
Carex obnupta (Slough sedge) ** *** (best in large informal settings)	<i>Evergreen</i>
Iris douglasiana (Douglas iris) **	
Juncus effusus (Common rush) ** (best in large informal settings)	<i>Evergreen</i>
Juncus ensifolius (Swordleaf rush) **	
Lysichitum americanum (Yellow skunk cabbage) **	
Spiraea hybrids (Goldmound, Goldflame, Little Princess) *	<i>Deciduous, but strong winter Structure</i>

* Quasi-native (naturalized, hybridized, or native elsewhere in North America)

** Native

*** Can overwhelm neighbouring plants under some conditions; keep under close watch

List updated Sept 2017 by:

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