

# 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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