

Green Building Workshop Series Eco-City Alexandria Initiative

Workshop 3 **Green Landscaping** For You and the Chesapeake Bay

> May 7, 2011 9:00 am - 12:30 pm **Cora Kelly School**









Our Speakers Today

- •Claudia Hamblin-Katnik, Ph.D., Watershed Program Administrator, Office of Environmental Quality, City of Alexandria
- •Lauren Wheeler, LEED AP, M.A., Landscape Design, ISA Certified Arborist
- •Kristen Buhls, Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension
- •Sandra Leibowitz, LEED AP, Principal, Sustainable Design Consulting, LLC





Workshop Overview

- 1. Background of Eco-City Alexandria Program
- 2. Challenges to the Chesapeake Bay
- 3. Designing your landscape to save water and energy and protect the Bay
- 4. How to construct rain gardens in Alexandria
- 5. Using native plants in your garden
- 6. Local information and resources
- 7. Q&A with presenters







Green Building Workshop Series

Next Workshops, Save the Dates NOW!

Green + Historic Properties = The Best of Both - **June 4**, **2011**Renewable Energy Systems and Green Power - **September 24**, **2011**Green Operations for Retail, Restaurants, and Small Offices - **TBD**Workshop series funded by EECBG.







Eco-City Alexandria Eco-City Charter Principles

- Land Use and Open Space
 - Water Resources
 - Air Quality
 - Transportation
 - Energy
 - Building Green
 - Solid Waste
 - Environmental Health
- Emerging Threats & Climate Change
 - Implementation
- Environmental Action Plan







Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Projects

- Energy Conservation (Green Building Phase II)
 - Energy Audits and Energy Efficiency Retrofits for City Buildings
 - Green Fleet
 - Green Jobs Training
 - Green Loans
 - LED Traffic Signals/LED Street Lights
 - Renewable Energy Installation at City Facility







Challenges to the Chesapeake Bay

Claudia Hamblin-Katnik, Ph.D
Watershed Program Administrator
Office of Environmental Quality
City of Alexandria

What is a Watershed?

A watershed is the total land area that drains water into a given river, lake, estuary or other body of water. A watershed can be quite large (e.g., the Chesapeake Bay watershed) or small (e.g., the watershed of a local stream). More than 64,000 square miles of land drain into the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers.

Why Study Watersheds?

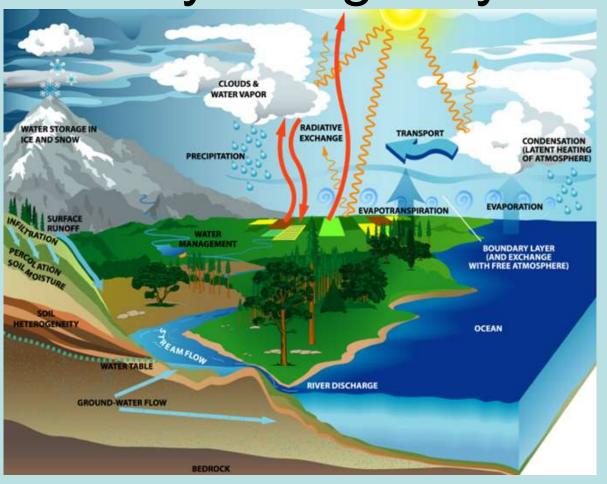
Water is the unifying force of all life

The land over which it flows contributes to the health of all who consume or live in water.

Waterways connect the lives and actions of people, animals

Freshwater terrestrial watersheds feed oceans, which then seed clouds to refresh terrestrial waterways. Water is a cycle.

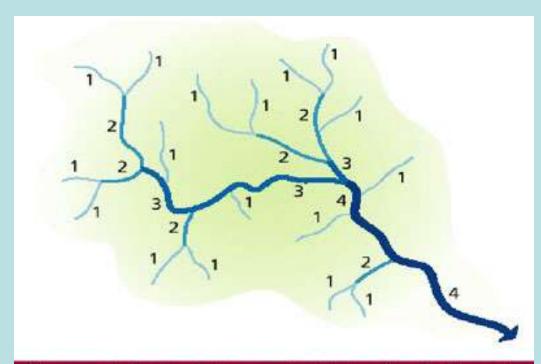
The Hydrologic Cycle



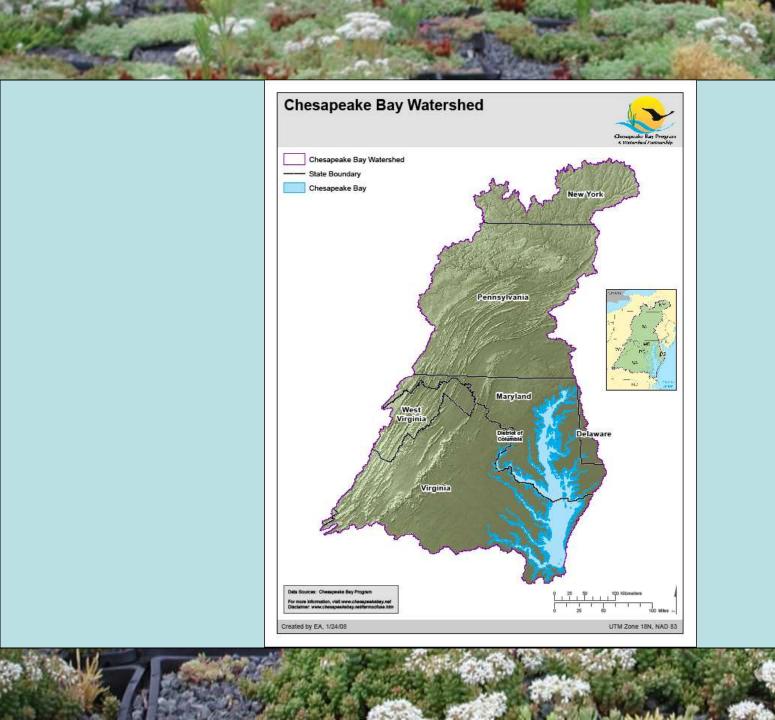


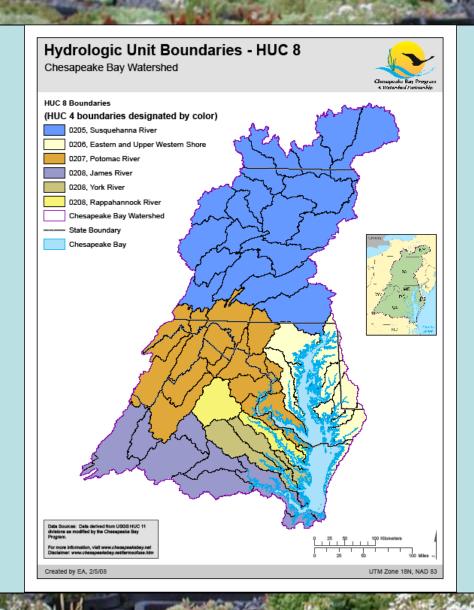
Stream Ordering System

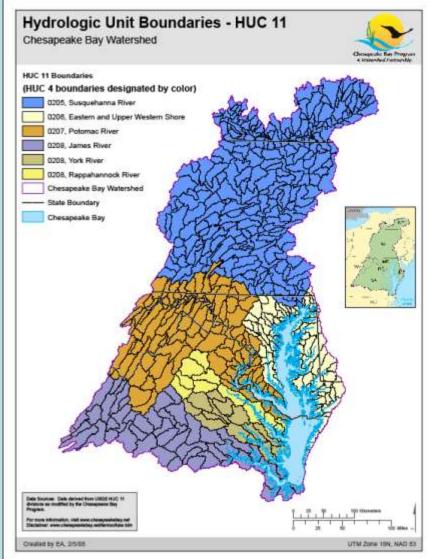
- We can define where we are at in the longitudinal drainage network by determining stream orders
- □ The rules for stream ordering are fairly simple:
 - Headwater streams are order 1
 - Stream order increases by 1 when two stream of the same order come together.

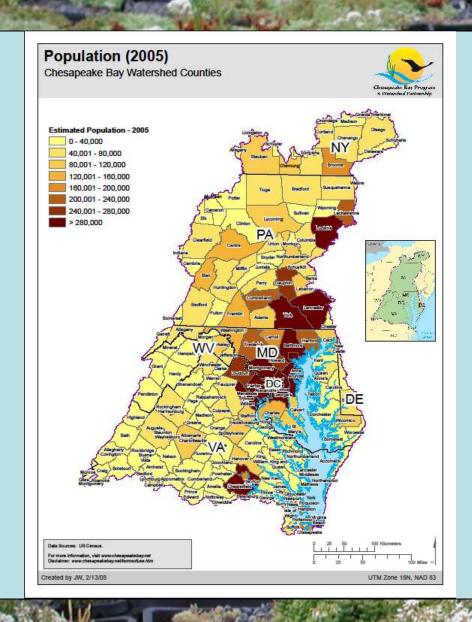


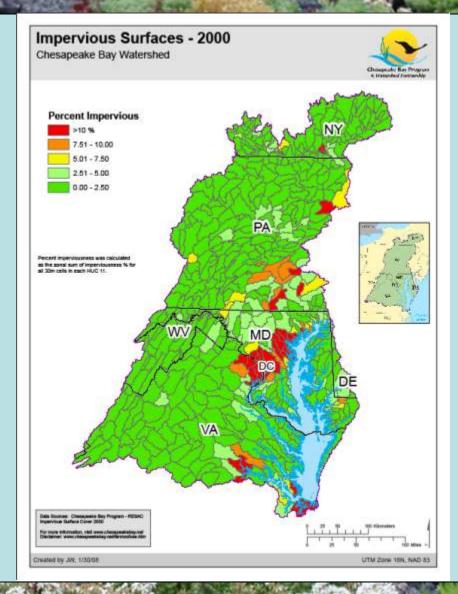
Stream ordering in a drainage network classifies the hierarchy of channels in a watershed.





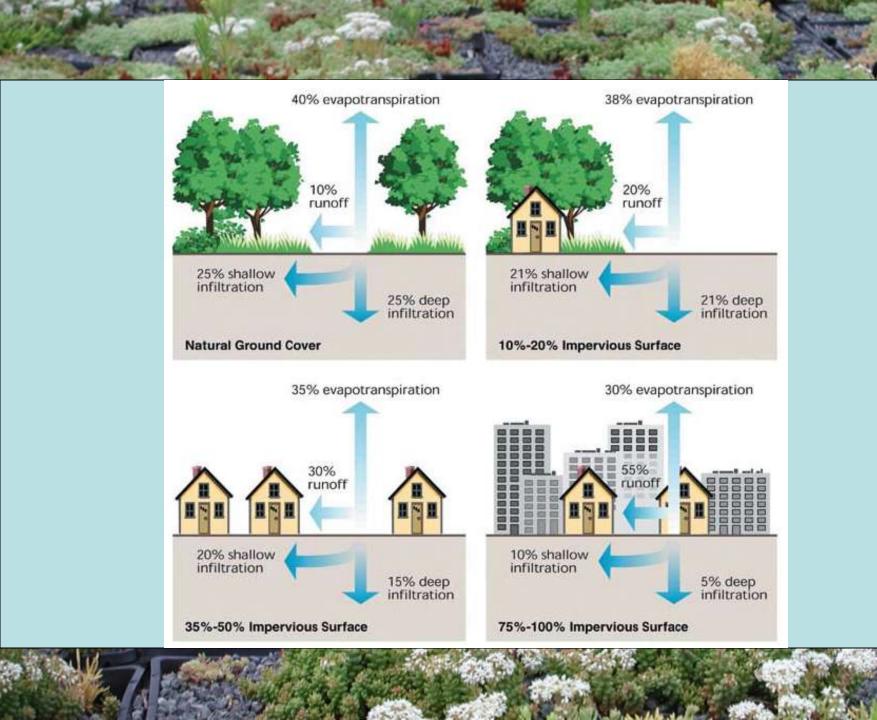


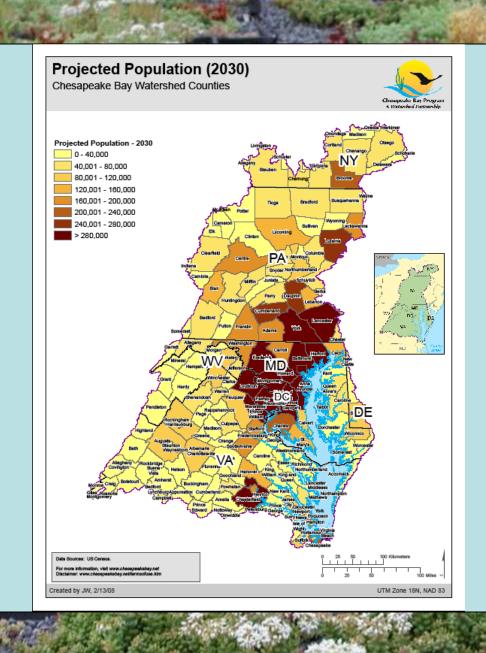




Too much Information? – Brains being sucked out? Just you wait!



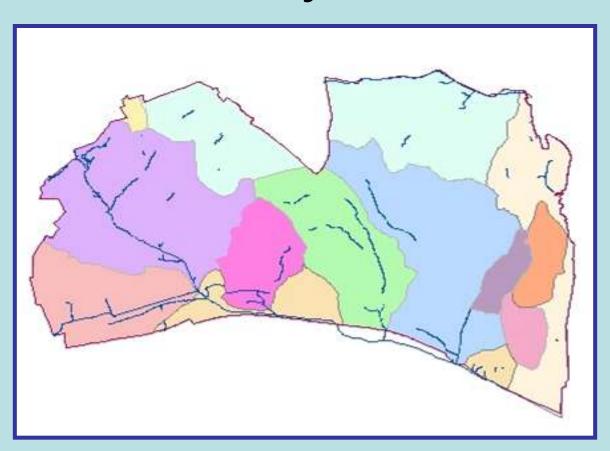




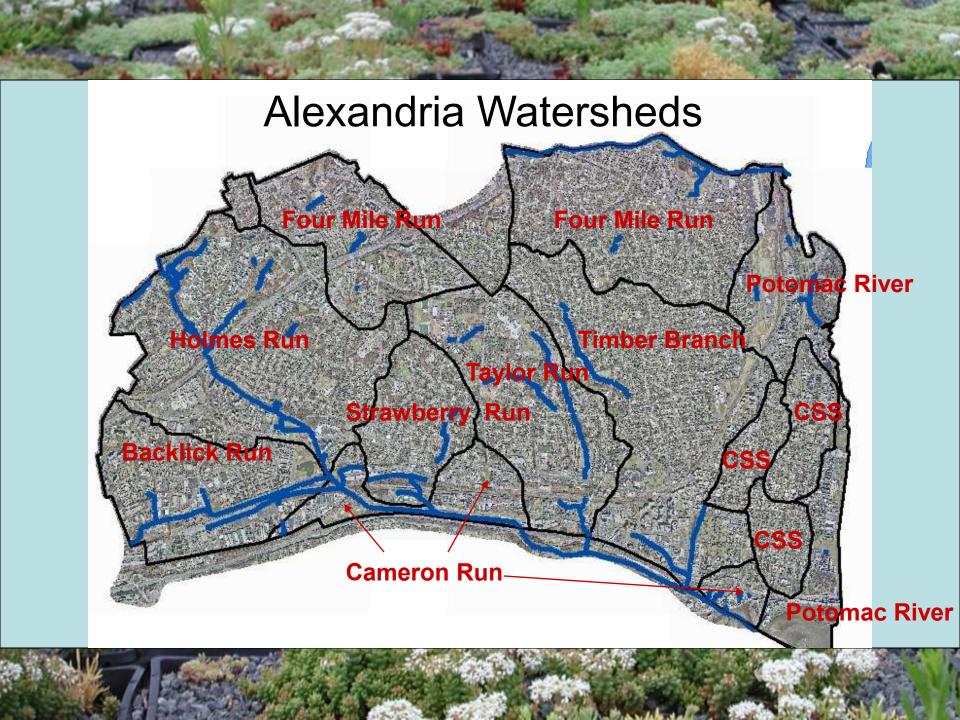
I didn't know that!

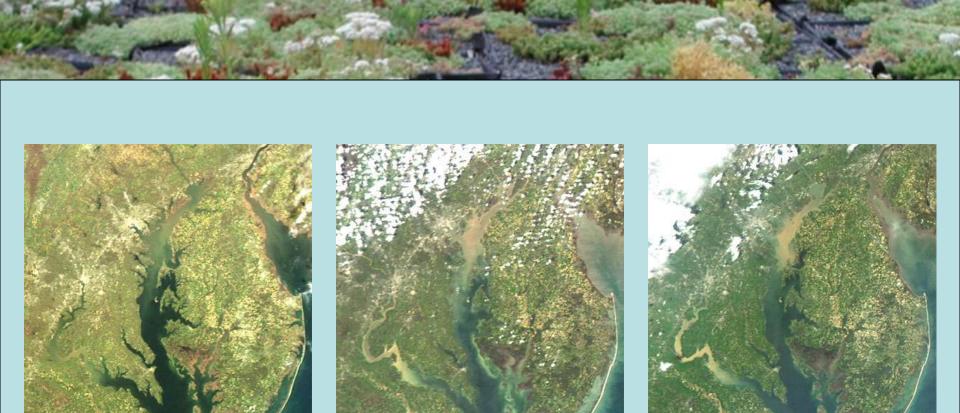


City of Alexandria



- •Home to >140,000 people
- Area = 15.75 mi2
- 30 ft. above sea level
- ~25 miles of streams drain to the Potomac
- 12 watersheds
- 41% of the City is covered with impervious surface
 185 miles of storm sewer







April 17, 2011

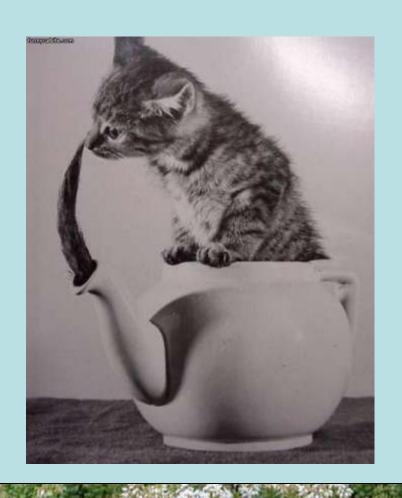
mage is Available at laryland DNR's April 24, 2011

Image courtesy of IS Rapid Response Project at NASA/GSFC

April 14, 2011

Image is Available at Maryland DNR's

So What Does This Mean?

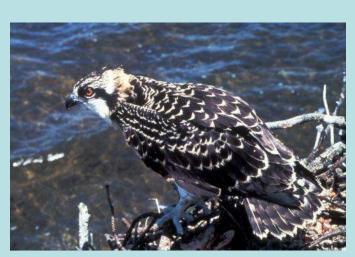


It Means... ■ Nutrient Enrichment □ Algal blooms ☐ Biomass die-off □ Decreased Oxygen ☐ Increased Sediment (suspended solids) □ Turbidity □Low light penetration □Lower photosynthesis □Lower Oxygen ■ Toxins □ Genetic mutations Death













And the Point Is?







Our Urban Area is over 41% Impervious



Behind Victory Center

We are All in the Same Boat

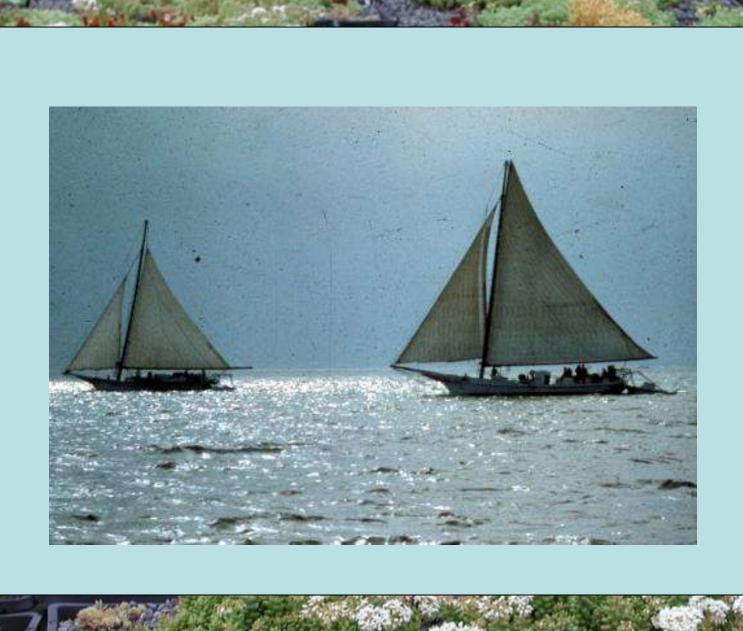




Reduce your footprint

- Change your outlook value Sustainability
- Decrease impervious surface
- Improve your soil
- Landscape with native plants
- Use less water, reuse water
- Reduce the use of fertilizer
- Demand less snow response

Take personal actions to reduce volume and velocity of stormwater







Green Landscaping For You and the Chesapeake Bay

Lauren Wheeler, M.A. Landscape Design Natural Resources Design, Inc.





Objectives

To provide sustainable design options for our homes that are beautiful and ecologically sound



- What is Conservation Landscaping?
- CCLC 8 Principles
- Sustainable Solutions
 - Water
 - Native Plants
 - Soil
 - Wildlife Habitat



Conservation Landscaping

Respects resources

- Water
- Soil
- Existing plant communities
- Native plants
- Wildlife habitat



Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council's 8 Essential Elements of Conservation Landscape



A conservation landscape

- 1. Benefits the environment and to function well for human use.
 - Does your landscape provide dual functions for the environment and humans?
- 2. Removes invasive plants and prevent their spread.
 - Does your home landscape have any invasive plants in it? If so, do you have a reasonable invasive management plan?
- 3. Uses native plants appropriate for the site.
 - What percentage of your garden's plants are native? Are they native to the Mid-Atlantic region?
- 4. Conserves water and promotes good water quality.
 - How do you manage stormwater on your property? Are your downspouts disconnected? Do you have a cistern? A rain garden? Infiltration areas?

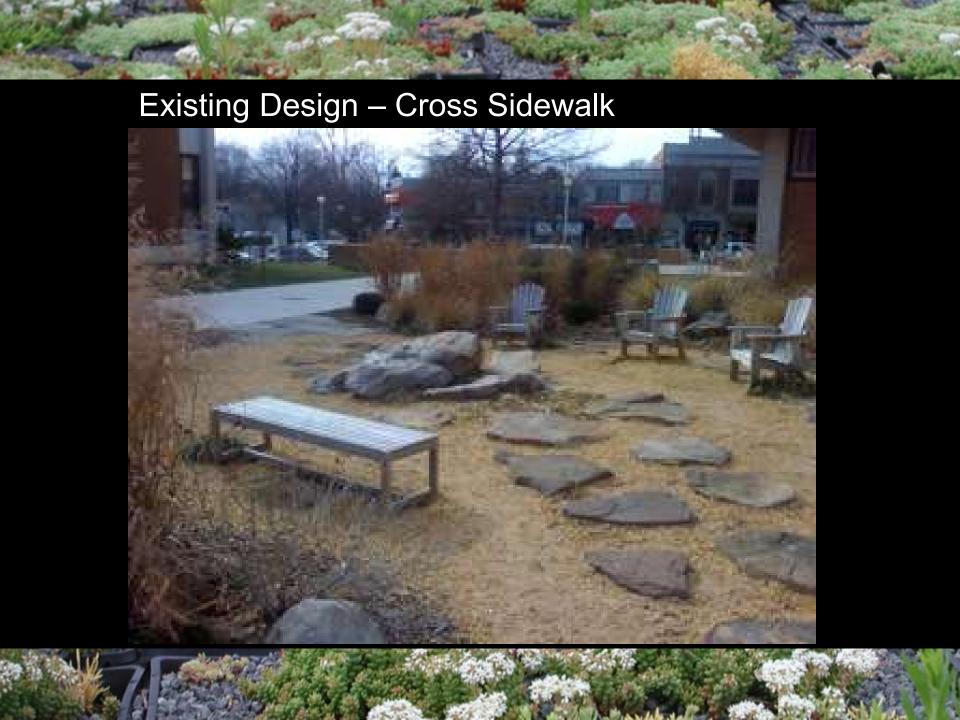
- 5. Provides wildlife habitat.
 - Do you have sources of food (native plants), shelter, nesting sites, water?
- 6. Promotes good air quality and is not a source of air pollution.
 - How much lawn do you have? Do you mow it with a gas mower? How can you improve air quality in your landscape?
- 7. Promotes healthy soils, compost on site, amend disturbed soils.
 - Do you compost your yard waste? How do you actively improve your soils?
- 8. Works with nature to be more sustainable with less input.
 - One a scale from 1-10 how sustainable is your garden? Do you take advantage of "free" resources - water, native plants, soils?

1. A conservation landscape: is designed to benefit the environment and to function well for human use;



Chevy Chase Community Center











2. Remove invasive plants & prevent their spread.



Invasive Plants in the Landscape "The Hit List"



- English Ivy
- Burning Bush
 - Barberry
 - Nandina
- Japanese Maple
 - Miscanthus
 - Pennisetum

(no native plants... so what?)

3. Use Native Plants Appropriate for the site



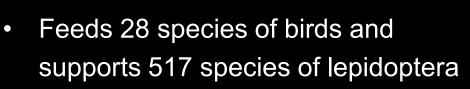
Plant communities

- plants grow together with symbiotic relationships









Tree Canopy White Oak



Groundcovers

- Erosion control
- Minimizes maintenance



4. conserves water and promotes good water quality;



Storing and Reuse of Rainwater

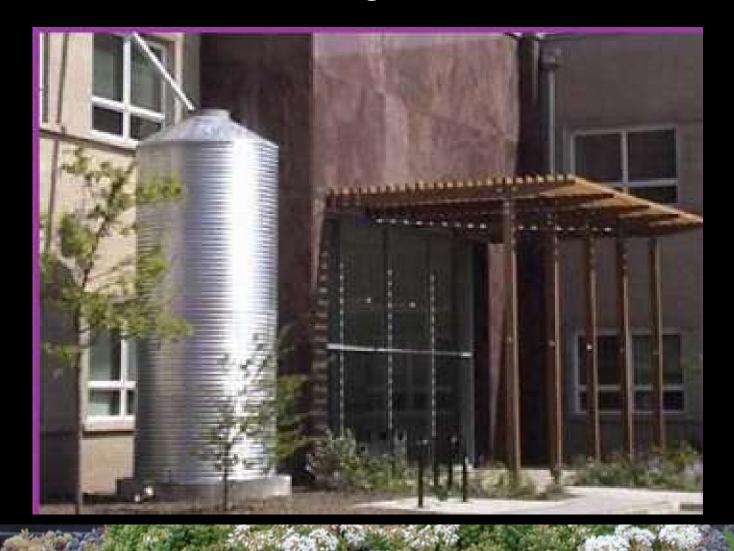
Rain barrels & cisterns

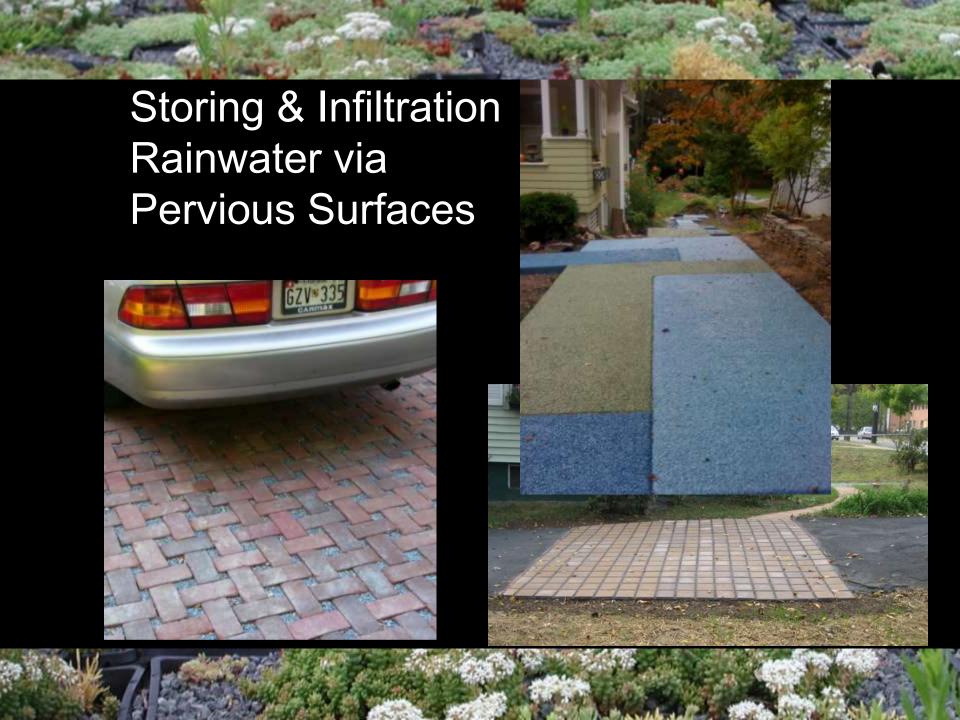


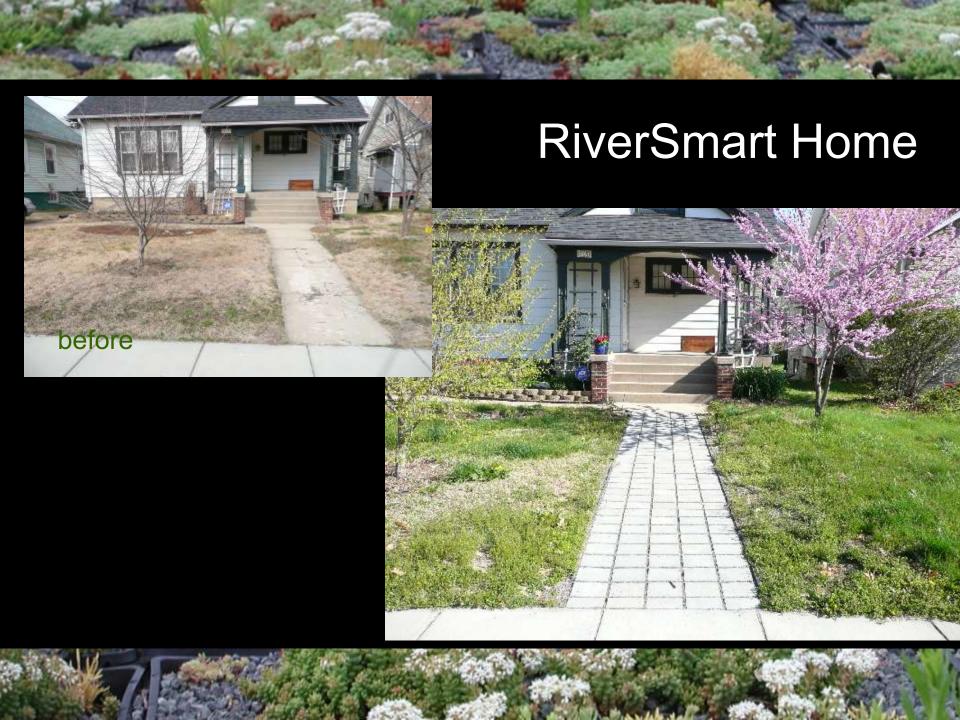




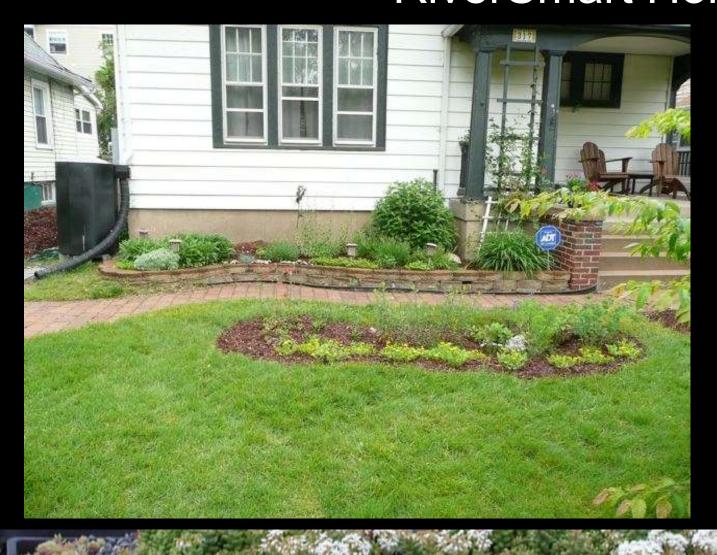
Rainwater Harvesting



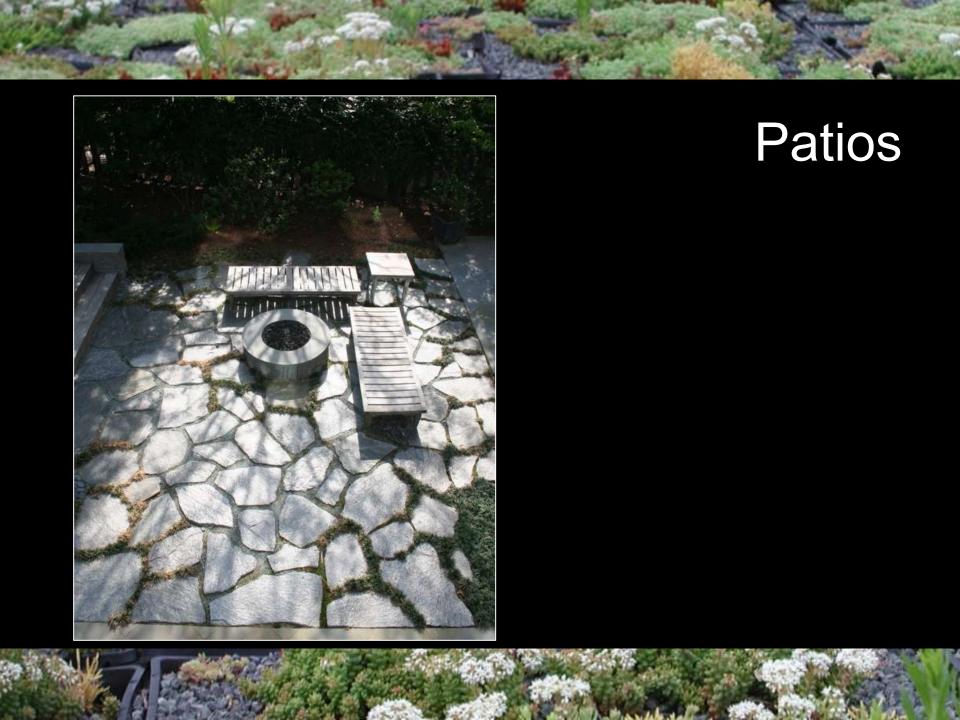


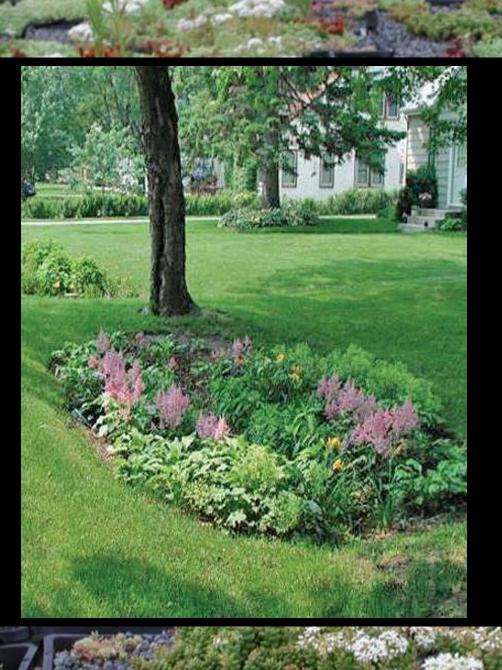


RiverSmart Home





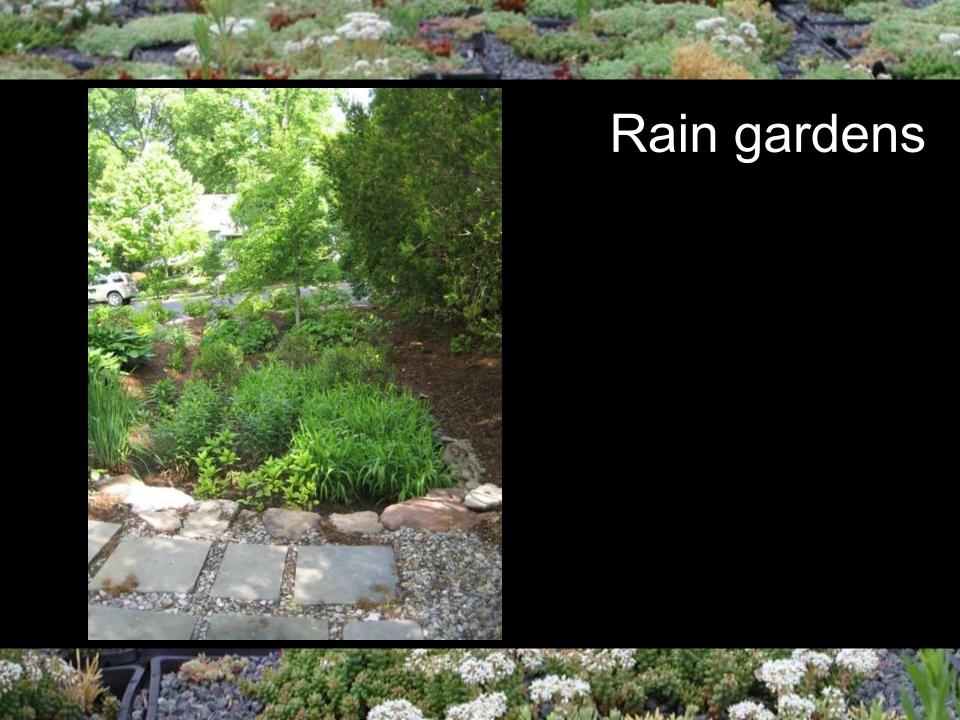




Rain Gardens

Rain gardens traditionally designed as a single isolated bed. Design it better to be integrated into the entire landscape.





Rain Garden is integrated into the design



5. Provide wildlife habitat.



Nineteen species of plants have co-evolved with hummingbirds including cardinal flower and columbine



Complexity over simplicity

Wildlife Needs:

- Water source
- Food
- Nesting sites
- Shelter



Mimic natural systems:

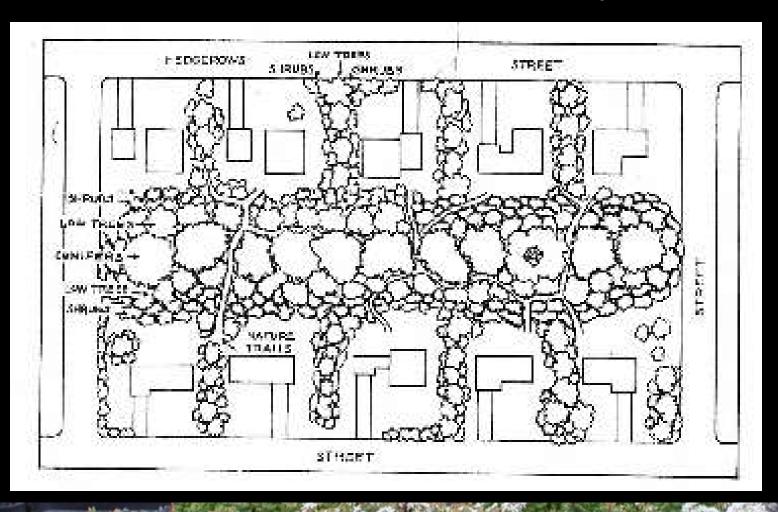
- Variety of berries, fruits, seeds
- Succession of food sources
- Migration and available food source intrinsically timed
- Fallen leaves provide insect habitat which in turn provides bird food during drought.





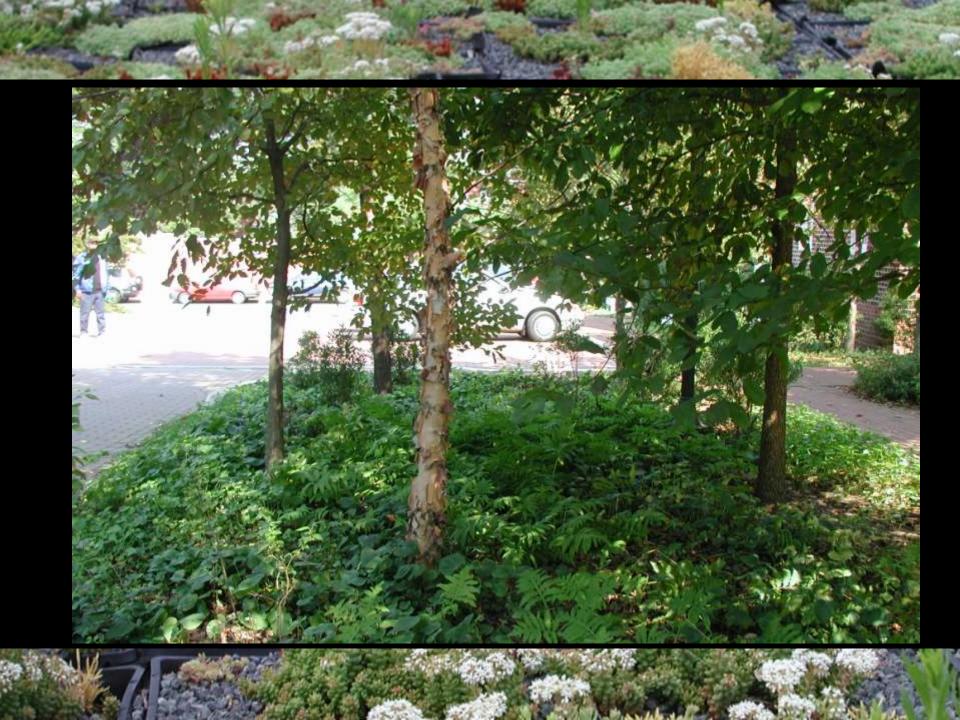


Suburban Greenways

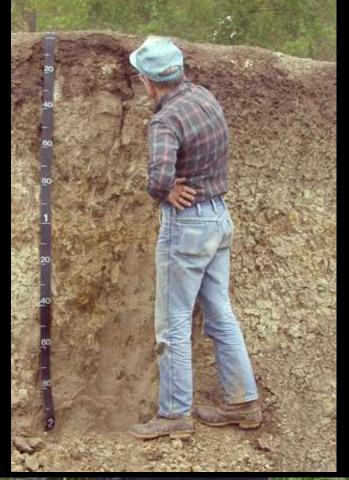


6. promotes good air quality and is not a source of air pollution





7. promotes healthy soils, compost on site, amend disturbed soils







Avoid Compaction



Poor construction practice



Tree preservation plan Mulch, protective fencing, plywood



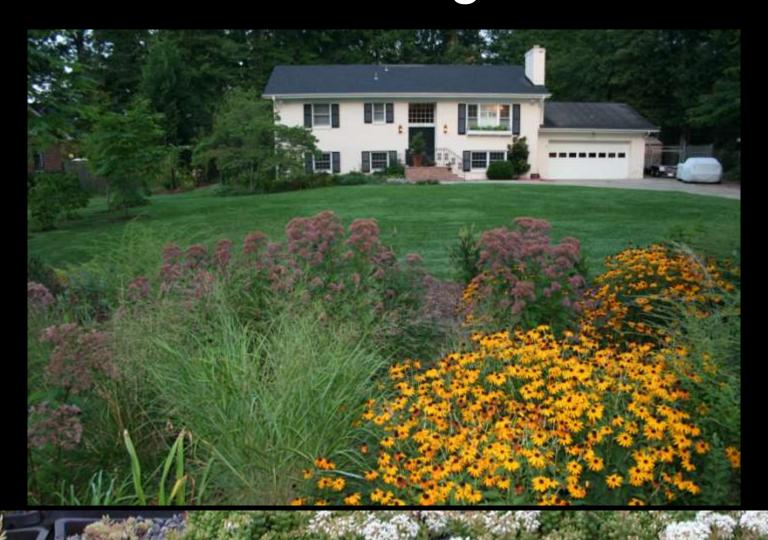




Front of House



Vegetated Swale



Natural Resources Design, Inc.

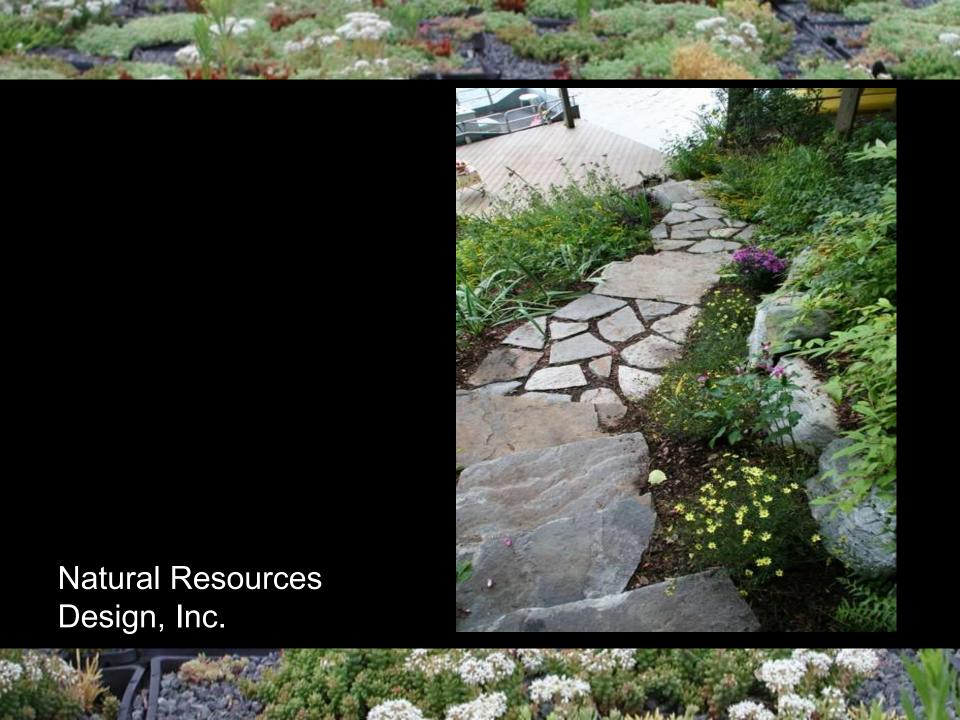


Before

Natural Resources Design, Inc



After





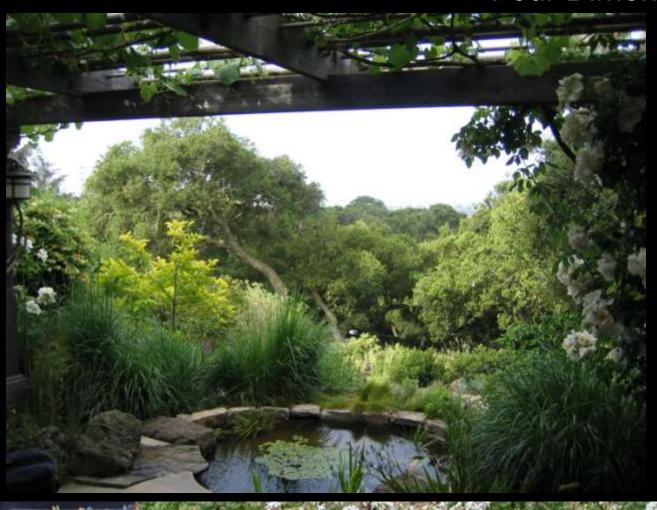


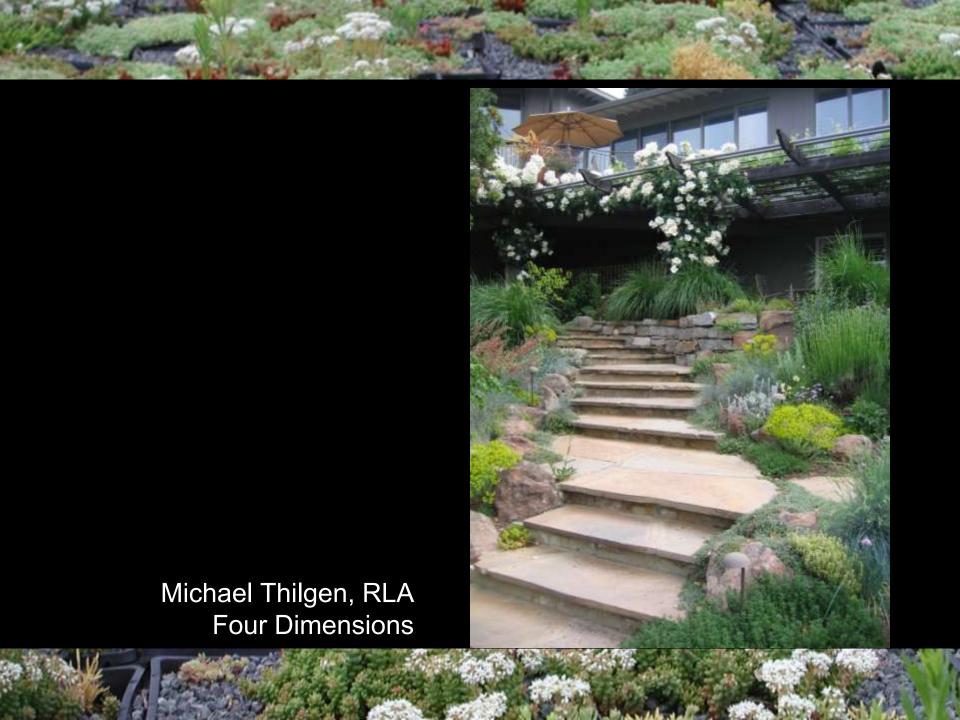
Urban garden

Impervious surfacesExtensive lawnNon-native plants

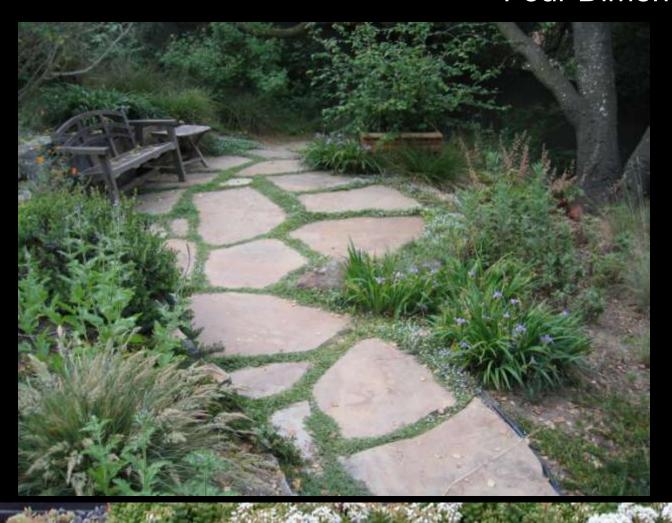


Michael Thilgen, RLA Four Dimensions





Michael Thilgen, RLA Four Dimensions





Your conservation landscape

- 1. Benefits the environment and to function well for human use.
 - Create beautiful gardens that also enhance the ecological value of your garden.
- 2. Removes invasive plants and prevent their spread.
 - Phase in the removal of all invasive plants on your property.
- 3. Uses native plants appropriate for the site.
 - Increase the percentage of native plants.
- 4. Conserves water and promotes good water quality.
 - Water is life; manage it as a valuable resource.
- 5. Provides wildlife habitat.
 - Plant native plants! Design shelter, nesting sites, water into your landscape.
- 6. Promotes good air quality and is not a source of air pollution.
 - Decrease lawn, increase biomass (plants).
- 7. Promotes healthy soils, compost on site, amend disturbed soils.
 - Compost
- 8. Works with nature to be more sustainable with less input.
 - How can you make your garden sustainable?

Being a thoughtful and informed gardener plays an important role in restoration. What we do in our home landscapes mirrors our actions in the community landscape and is reflective of how we perceive our relationship to larger natural world.

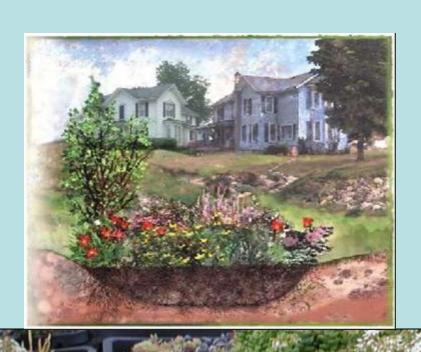
Leslie Jones Sauer





Rain Gardens

What is a Rain Garden?





- 1.) A garden that stores and filters rain water.
- 2.) A landscape tool to improve water quality and reduce runoff





Benefits

- Less lawn, less maintenance
- Habitat
- Catch and filter runoff reduce erosion
- Improve water quality
- Replenish groundwater supplies
- Aesthetically pleasing landscape feature
- Keeps water off sidewalks and driveway





Infiltration Testing

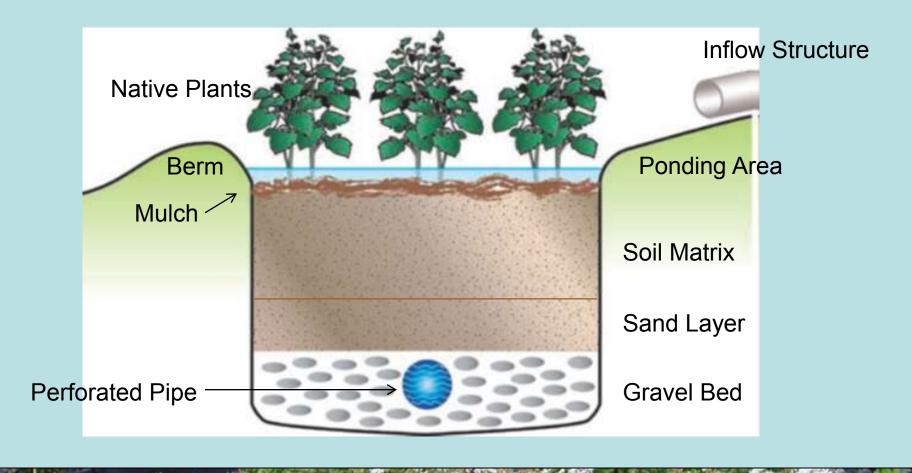


- Hole 12 inches deep
- Stake or ruler embedded in hole
- Saturate ground around hole, then add water to highest mark **NOTE TIME
- Monitor hole every 2 hours determining how long it takes to empty
- Divide water depth by how long it takes to drain. Ex: 8 in/10 hours = .8

Infiltration Rate

- If your infiltration rate is 1.0 or more, you have excellent drainage
- If the rate is between 0.5-0.9, the soil is well draining enough for a rain garden.
- If it is less than 0.5, then the soil is poor draining and you need an underdrain.

Underdrains





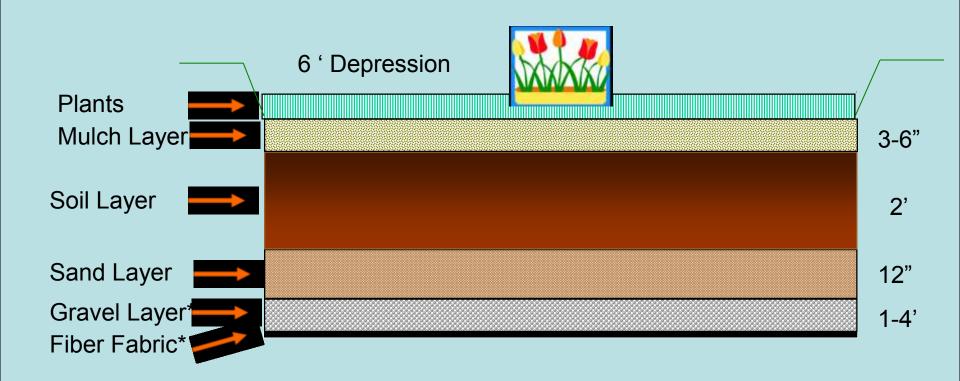
Design and Construction

- Things to consider:
 - Size (~150 ft²)
 - Drainage area (5-7%)
 - Amount and velocity of runoff
 - Topography
 - Soil type (may need deeper layers)
 - Light exposure
 - Call before you dig!



 $(B/A) \times 100 = Slope$

Basic Layers of a Rain Garden

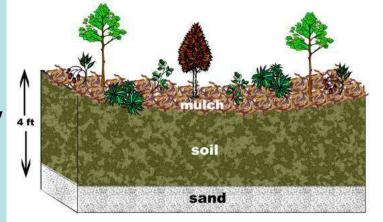


Ponding Area

- Water storage area
- 4-6 inch depression (allows for evaporation/infiltration)
- Dig down on angle to effectively catch water
- Excavated material can be used for a berm
- 3 day rule

Sand and Soil Layers

- Bottom sand layer (12")
- Good soil mix (2')
 - Compost or leaf mulch (20%)
 - Topsoil (30%)
 - Sandy soil mix (50%)
- Important to have little clay
- Water absorption and nutrients for plants

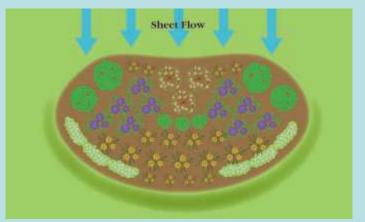


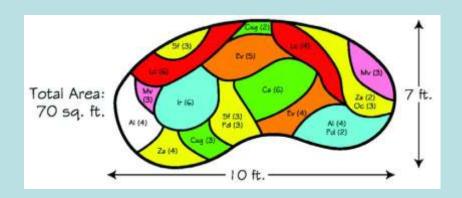
Mulch Layer

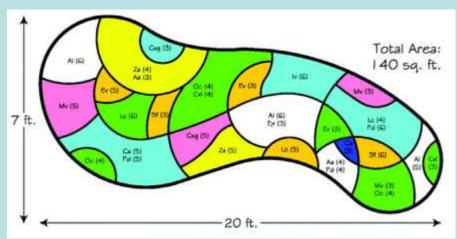
- Acts like sponge
- Filters chemicals
- Hardwood mulch
 - Resistant to washout
 - Larger surface area
- Sufficient Layer (3")



Plant Layout







Plants

- Time to get creative!
- Many choices perennials, trees, shrubs
- Plant natives
- Flood and drought tolerant
 - Native riparian species work well
 - More flood tolerant species toward middle
- Habitat value food and shelter
 - Butterflies, hummingbirds, frogs & toads, dragonflies, and songbirds



























Issues and Maintenance

- Like all gardens, rain gardens need to be maintained (mulch & plant replacement, pruning)
- Standing or stagnant water
- Mosquitoes (3 day rule)
- Wrong location
- Wrong plants

And a Word about Mosquitos

Eliminate sources of standing water

- Flower Pots,
 Watering cans, bird baths, pet dishes
- Gutters, Corrugated plastic drain pipes
- Low spots, sags in tarps

Use Larvicides (BT) or make a rain



Aquatic larval stages can be found in

Other Ways to Reduce Runoff

- □Porous Paver
- □Permeable Pavers
- **□**Porous Concrete
- □Porous Asphalt

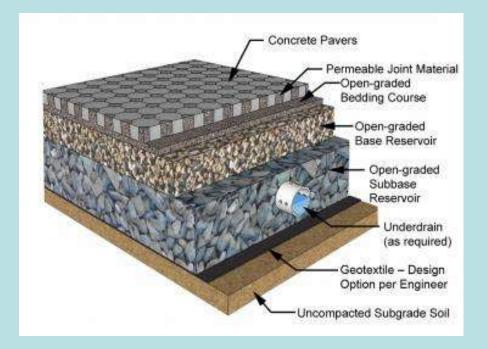


Permeable pavers

Interlocking pavers







Porous Concrete







Thanks for the opportunity to introduce you to Rain Gardens!

Claudia Hamblin-Katnik 703 746-4068

Claudia.Hamblin-Katnik@Alexandriava.gov



Eco-City Alexandria Workshop 3
Green Landscaping
For You and the Chesapeake Bay

Using Native Plants in the Landscape

Kirsten Conrad Buhls, Extension Agent Arlington County Office

Not all plants are created equal



 Unless we restore native plants to our suburban ecosystem the future of biodiversity in Alexandria is dim

What are invasive exotic non-native plants?

- Plants from other countries?
- All plants with aggressive growth habits?
- Plants with names you can't pronounce?

Exotic vs non-native vs indigenous vs native

What makes them aggressive?

- Production of many seeds
- Rapid germination and accelerated growth
- Allelopathic chemical toxins that impede other plant's growth
- Long-lived seeds creating a persistent seed bank
- Vegetative spread by creeping roots and stems

Are all exotic plants potentially invasive?

 Only 1 out of 100 exotics have the characteristics to make them invasive.

 Less than 10 percent of introduced plants have evolved into invasive pests.

How did they get introduced?

On purpose and by accident

- Use in gardening and landscaping (Bradford Pears)
- Erosion control (Kudzu)
- Forage/Wildlife Food (Autumn Olive)
- Imported indirectly (M-A-M)
- Aquatic introductions-Aquarium plantparrots feather

Official Approval?

- Public buildings
- Roadside right of ways
- Nursery sales





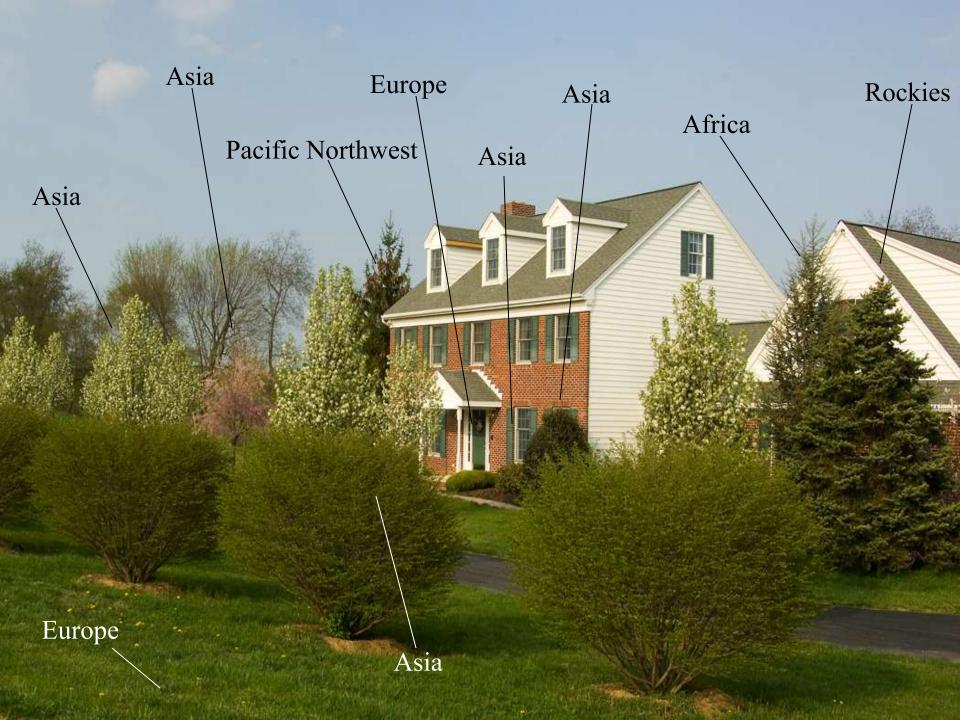
Why are they a problem?

- Create a monoculture
- Loss of "Sense of Place"
- Green blindness
- Invasive plants require enormous amounts of time, labor and money to control or eliminate.

What are some of the most problematic invasive exotics in Virginia?

- Honeysuckle sp.
- Autumn olive
- Privet
- Multiflora rose
- Oriental bittersweet
- Japanese stiltgrass
- Burning bush
- English ivy
- Kudzu
- Lesser Celandine
- Purple loosestrife

- Garlic mustard
- Japanese knotweed
- Bradford pear
- Japanese barberry
- Wisteria
- Mile-a-minute weed
- Mahonia
- Bamboo
- Climbing Euonymous
- Periwinkle
- Porcelainberry



Ground Covers and Forbs



Invasive Examples



Microstegium vimineum





English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)





Japanese Knotweed Polygonum cuspidatum





Periwinkle Vinca minor





St. John's Wort, Gaura, Monarda, several Echinacea, Salvias, Yarrow, Helianthis, but...

Thanks to: Master Gardener Joan Arsenault



Instead of English Ivy?





Yucca (Yucca Filamentosa)



Wild Geranium (Geranium maculatum)





Foamflower *Tiarella sp*



Native Groundcovers - Shade



FERNS! Asplenium Dryopteris Polystichum





Jack-in-the-pulpit

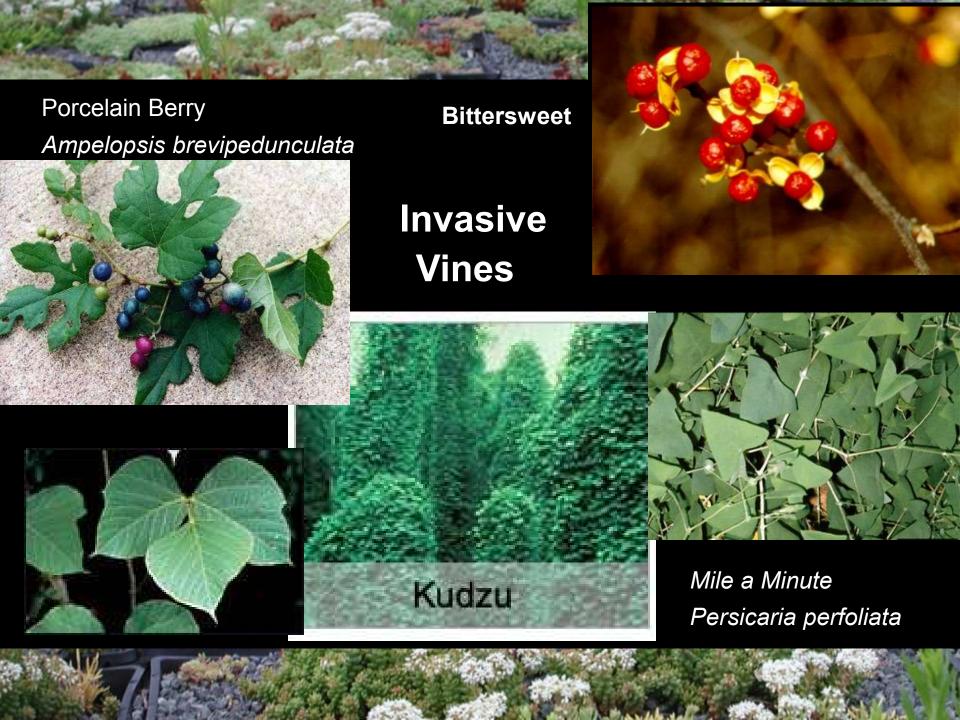
Mayapple
Podophyllum peltatum

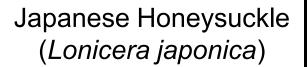


Coral Bells (Heuchera americana)

















Exotic Wisterias (Wisteria floribunda – Japanese) (Wisteria sinensis -Chinese)



Wisteria frutescens



Native Wisteria



cv. Amethyst Falls









Native Shrubs



Highbush/Lowbush Blueberry

American Winterberry





American Beautyberry



Native Shrubs

Arrowwood Viburnum

Pinxterbloom Azalea







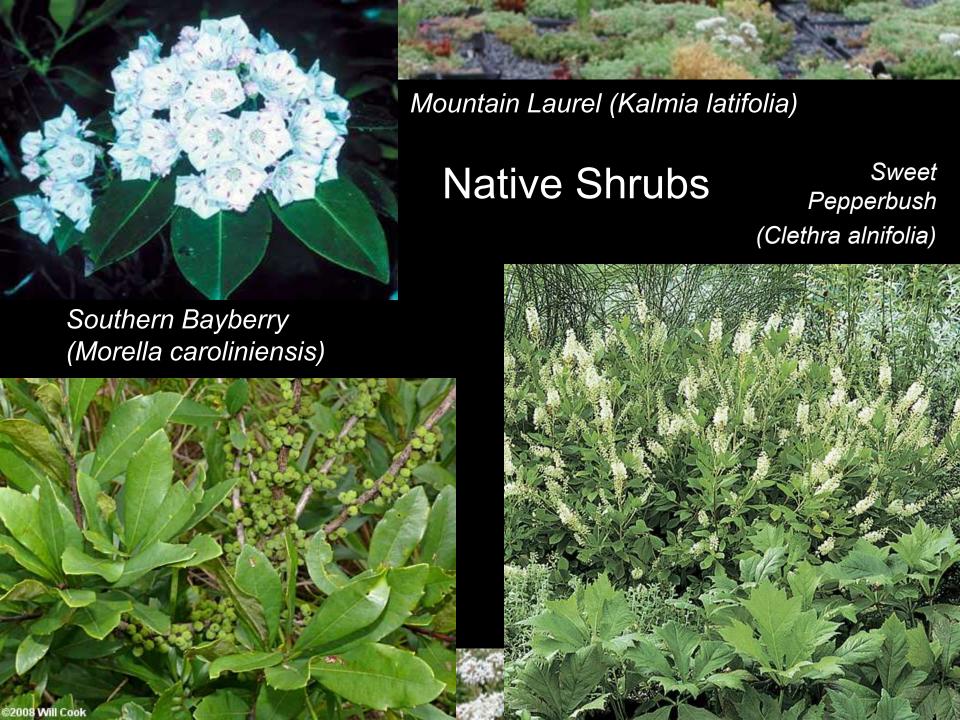
Red Chokeberry

Native Shrubs





Highbush Blueberry







Native Trees



Sweetbay Magnolia





American Plum

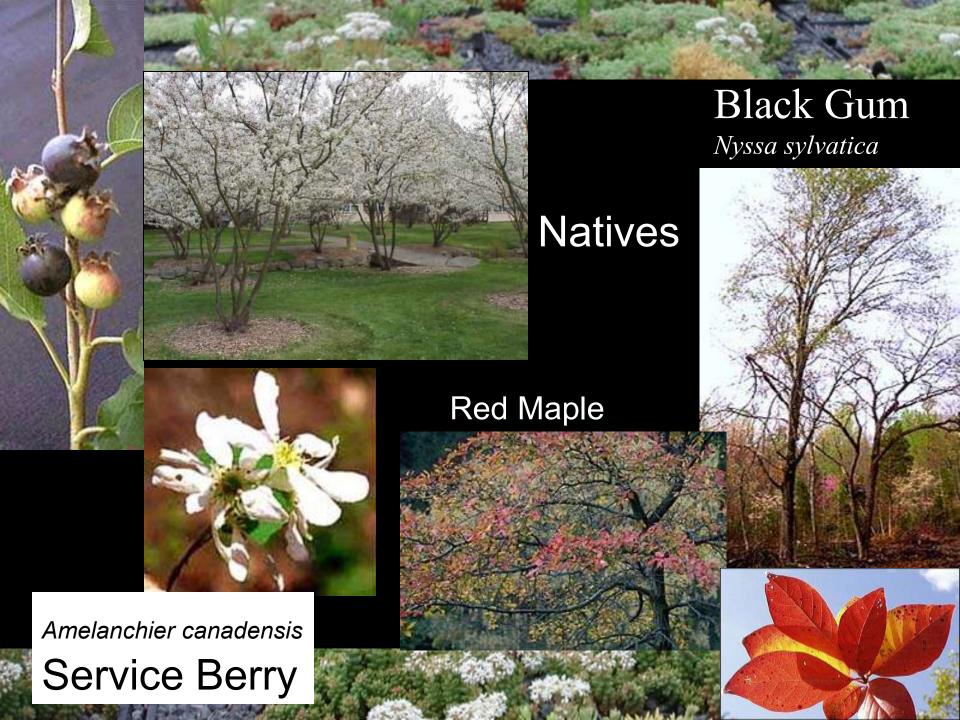


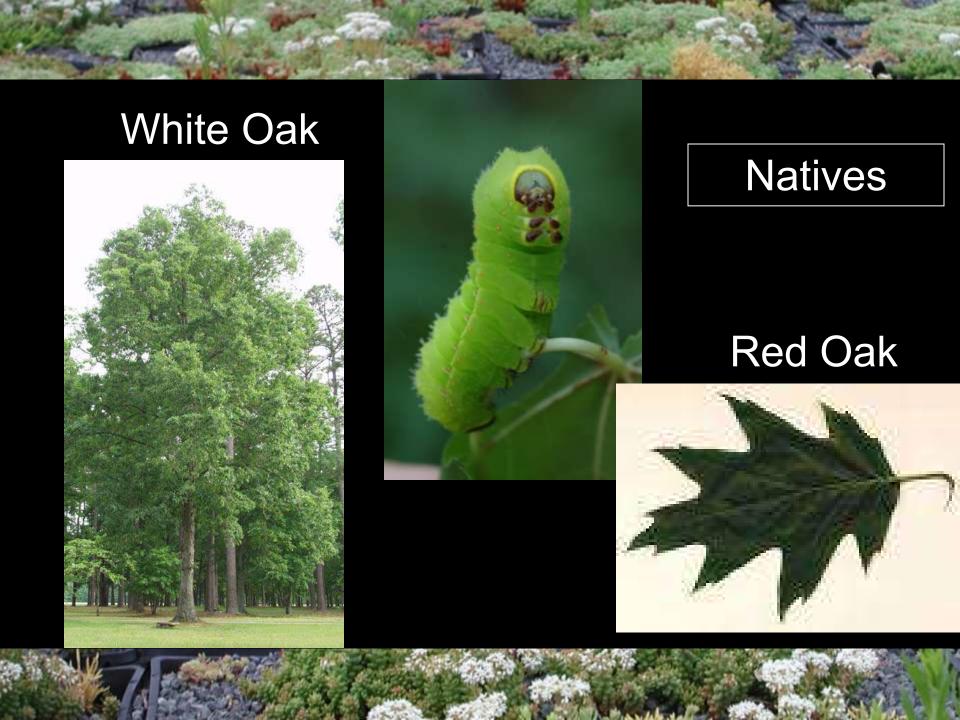




Phlox, various Asters, Liatris, blanket flower- Gaillardia, Coreopsis, Solidago, Panicum virgatum and, of course, Magnolia virginiana. There's also some Prairie Coneflower(Ratibida) The fine stuff behind the Liatris is Amsonia hubrichtii. Garden/photo: J. Arsenault









Native Trees

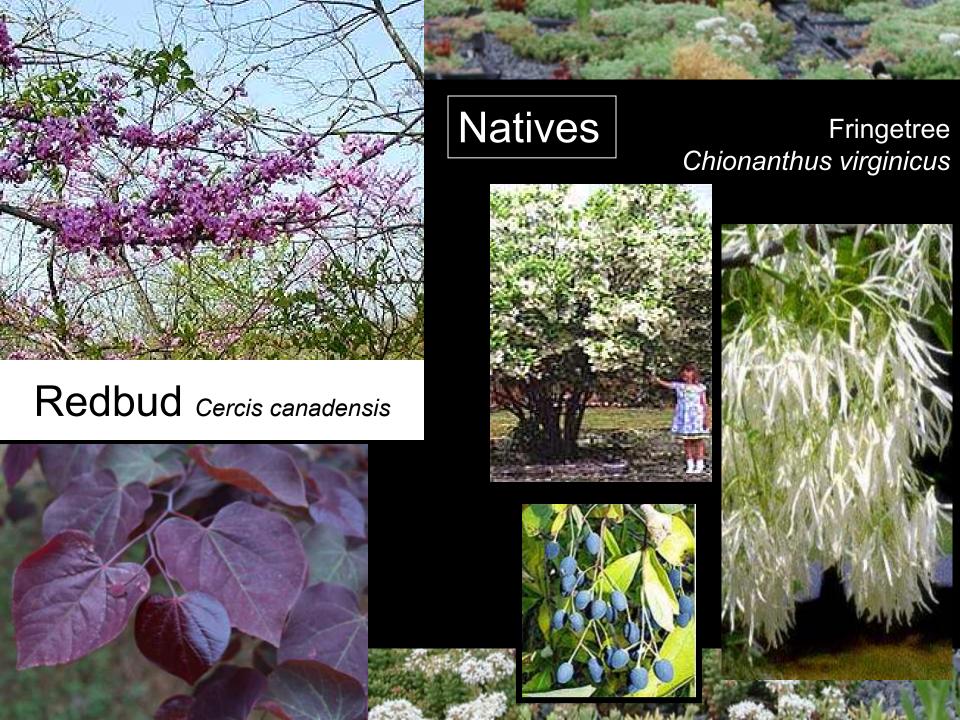


Flowering Dogwood

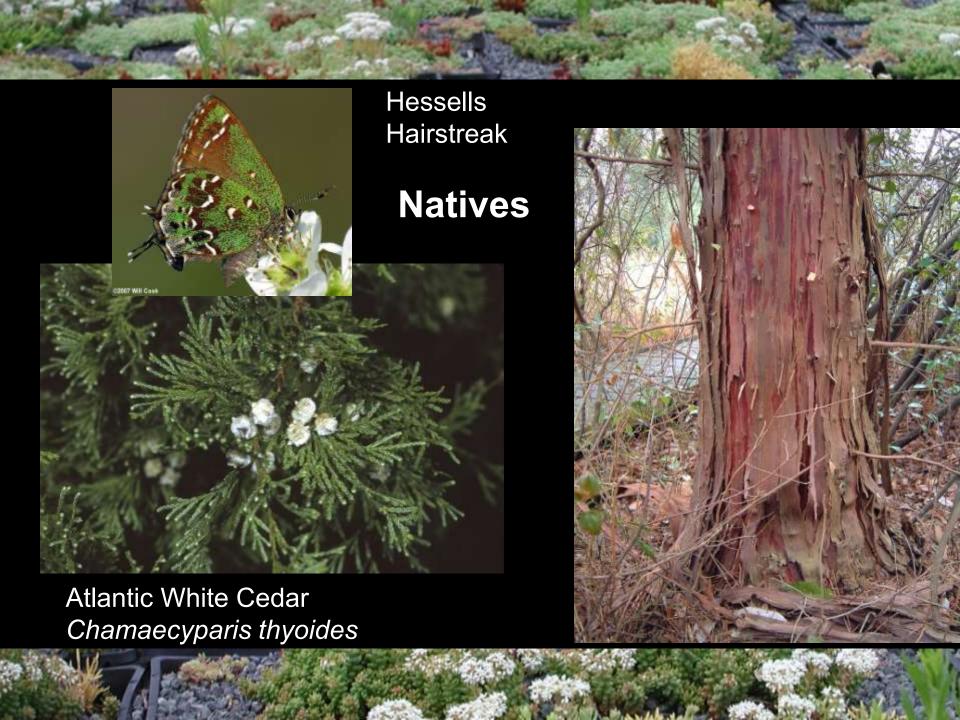




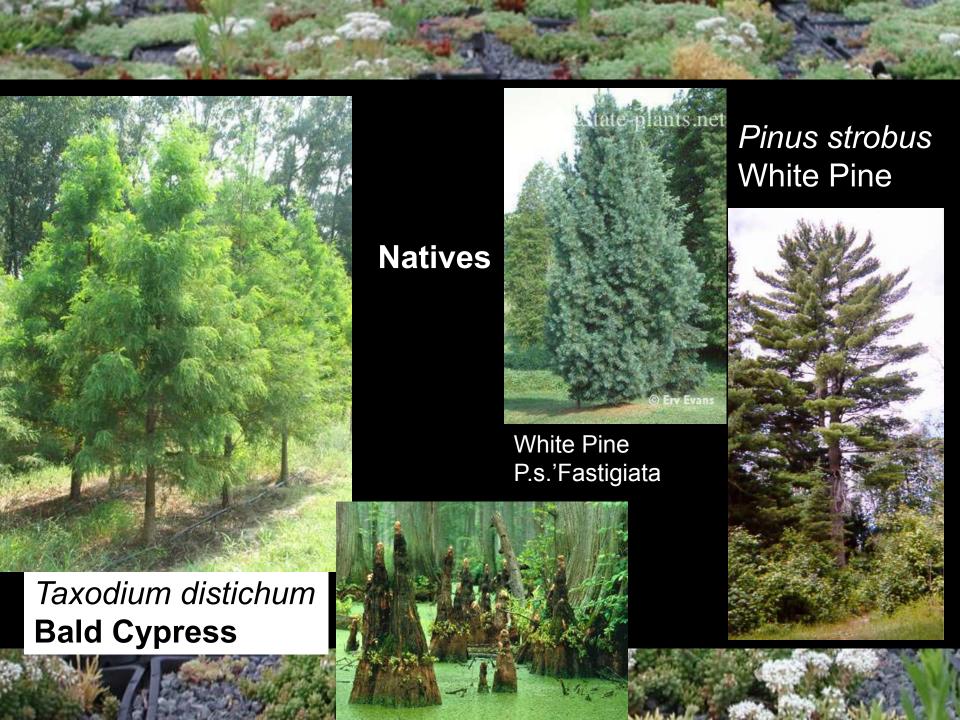
Iron wood, Blue Beech Carpinus caroliniana













Questions?

Kristen Buhls

Extension Agent

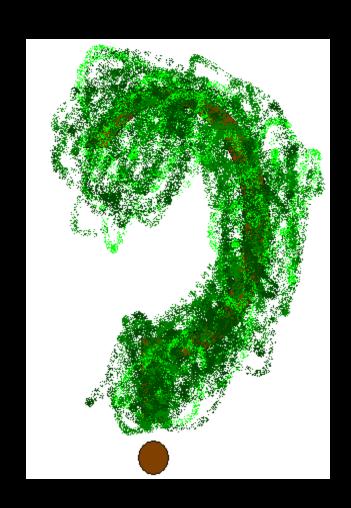
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Horticulture

Virginia Cooperative Extension

703-228-6523

kbuhls@vt.edu





Resources from Workshop 3: Green Landscaping for You and the Chesapeake Bay

Rain Gardens: Design and Construction

http://www.aacounty.org/DPW/Highways/Resources/Raingarden/RG_FAIRFAX% 20CO.pdf

Rain Gardens: A How to Manual for Homeowner

http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/documents/rgmanual.pdf

Native Plants for Wildlife Habitats and Conservation Landscaping http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake

Rain Gardens: Technical Guide

http://www.dof.virginia.gov/mgt/resources/pub-Rain-Garden-Tech-Guide_2008-05.pdf

FIND OUT MORE AT ALEXANDRIA'S GREEN BUILDING RESOURCE CENTER (http://www.alexandriava.gov/gbrc)







Helpful Websites for Workshop 3: Green Landscaping for You and the Chesapeake Bay

www.alexandriava.gov/Environment
www.alexandriava.gov/Planning
www.offices.ext.vt.edu/arlington
www.dcr.virginia.gov
www.deq.virginia.gov
www.alliancechesbay.org
www.cwp.org
www.lowimpactdevelopment.org
www.greenroofs.org
www.vnps.org
www.smartbuildingdirectory.org

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