



Hi folks! I'm Lily, the Pacific chorus frog, and I help the City of Eugene teach people about stormwater in our community. My wildlife friends in the streams and wetlands live in water. But we still need people to help keep stormwater from flooding our homes!

## Rain Gardens help collect stormwater

Did you know that when it rains in towns and cities, all the water that lands on roofs, streets and other impervious surfaces can cause trouble for Lily and her friends who live in local streams and rivers? Too much stormwater can cause floods and erosion and wash pollution into their watery homes. But people can help! The more rain water that you can keep in your own yard, the better it is for Lily and her friends!

### What's a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a miniature stormwater treatment system. It's a garden planted in a shallow depression, located in a place where rainwater runoff from a roof, driveway or other surface is directed. A rain garden slows the rush of stormwater and holds it for a short time allowing it to soak into the ground and get absorbed by nearby plants and trees. A rain garden mimics the way that natural forests, meadows and wetlands process rainwater.

Rain gardens are ideal for areas in your yard that seem to stay wet and soggy for a long time. Some soil types, like clay soils, don't work in this type of garden because they don't let water drain through.

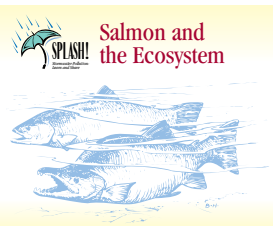
### What does a rain garden do?

- ◆ Holds storm runoff so it can replenish ground water, while protecting local waterways from flooding and erosion.
- ◆ Filters and breaks down pollution so it doesn't end up in our rivers and drinking water.
- ◆ Uses deep-rooted native plants and grasses which drink up stormwater and improve soil quality by breaking up the soil with their roots, allowing water and nutrients to seep deep into the ground.
- ◆ Provides a beautiful garden for people to enjoy and creates habitats for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects.



### Where can I find a rain garden?

- ◆ Alton Baker Park Water Wise Garden (Being built this year, see pages 4-5)
- ◆ Neighbors' yards
- ◆ Keep your eyes open. Do you see any others?
- ◆ If your yard has the right conditions for a rain garden, ask an adult if you can help them to build one in your yard!



**Teachers:** For more information about SPLASH! Stormwater Learn and Share, and Salmon and the Ecosystem, call 541-682-2739.

### Important words:

**Stormwater:** Water from rain and snow that is not absorbed into soil and can collect debris, chemicals, oil and other pollution on its way to streams and rivers.

**Impervious surfaces:** Areas that do not allow rain or snow-melt to soak into the soil. Some examples are roofs, streets and parking lots.

**Native plants:** Plants that grew naturally in an area before humans introduced plants from far away. Native plants in a garden require less maintenance because they are well-suited to the climate and natural conditions.

### Learn more about rain gardens and how to make them:

Gardening for kids  
<http://www.kidsgardening.com/themes/raingarden.asp>

City of Eugene Rain Garden fact sheet  
[www.eugene-or.gov/happyrivers](http://www.eugene-or.gov/happyrivers)

Oregon Rain Garden Guide can be downloaded from <http://www.oeconline.org/our-work/rivers/stormwater>

Rain Gardens of West Michigan  
[www.raingardens.org](http://www.raingardens.org)