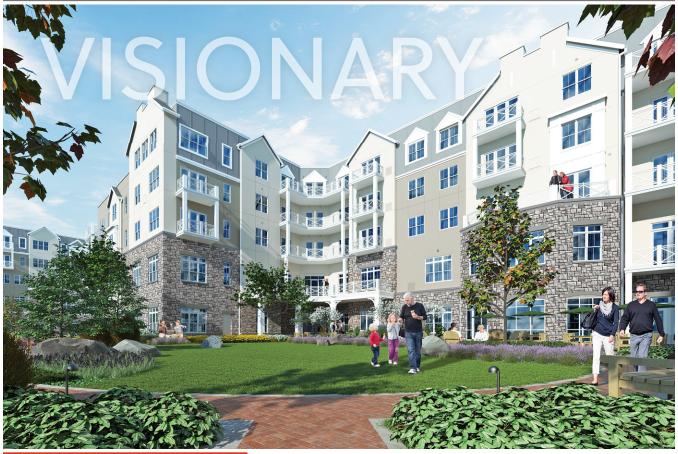
Gardener's Guide to the 2018

PHS philadelphia flower show



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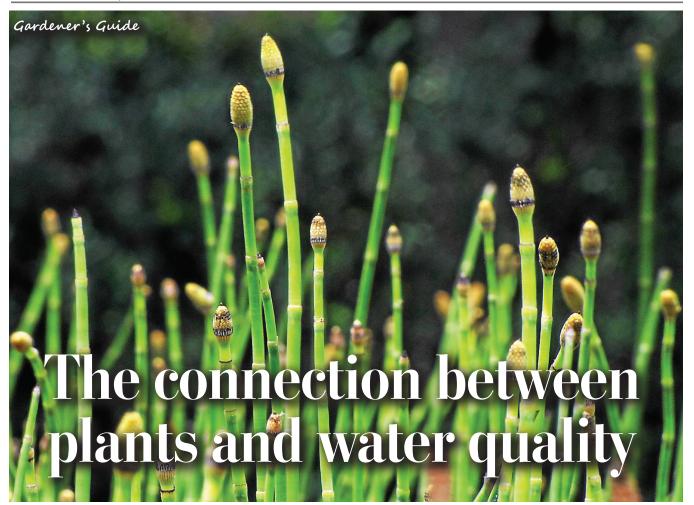


PHOTO COURTESY BLUERIDGEKITTIES/FLICKR/CREATIVECOMMONS

Scouring Rush (Equisetum hyemale) is known as one of the Suburban and Urban Heroes. Designated as an Ancient, for more than 350 million years it has spread down riverbanks. These rushes steady the sediment, and filter water runoff by storing pollutants in their tough stems. Visitors to the Windows on the Watershed exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show will see how these "heroes" impact the water cycle.



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Ron Dacanay Creative Services

adtaxi

Windows on the Watershed exhibit displays a 'day in the life'

By Donna Rovins

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Philadelphia Flower Show visitors will spend "a day in the life" of the Delaware River Watershed when they visit the Windows on the Watershed exhibit funded by the William Penn Foundation.

Adjacent to the rainforest exhibition, Windows on the Watershed is a 65-by-50-foot exhibition designed to showcase the Delaware River Watershed and to let visitors gain an understanding of how plants contribute to water quality.

Walking through the exhibition, visitors will see how plant



PHOTO COURTESY RACHEL JAMES/FLICKR/CREATIVECOMMONS The Three-lobed Coneflower (Rudbeckia triloba), or "Brown-Eyed Susan," is known as a Suburban Hero. A Beauty, hundreds of deep-gold flowers bloom throughout summer and autumn. Butterflies and bees feed on its nectar, and songbirds eat the seeds that form as flowers mature. Visitors to the Windows on the Watershed exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show will see how these "heroes" impact the water cycle.

systems cleanse and sustain the watershed, a web of waterways that flows through 14,000 square miles of mountains, wilderness, farmland, cities and coastal plains. Along the way, the water is filtered by plants, animals and the ground.

"Nature is a magnificent teacher. That's really the inspiration for the display," said Victoria Prizzia, creative director and curator for the exhibit and founder of Habithèque Inc., a Philadelphia-based interpretive planning and design studio that helped develop the water-centric exhibit.

"Visitors will gain a greater understanding that fresh water is a finite and essential resource that needs to be protected and can be restored through nature-based solutions," she added.

PHOTO COURTESY RACHEL JAMES/FLICKR/CREATIVECOMMONS The Sugar Maple (Acer saccharum) is known as a Wilderness Forest Hero. An Irrigator, it thrives in the cool, shady forests of the mountain wilderness. This tree draws water from deep in the earth and releases it into higher, drier layers, watering itself and all the plants around it. Visitors to the Windows on the Watershed exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show will see how these "heroes" impact the water cycle.

It's not a coincidence that the exhibition is adjacent to the rainforest exhibit, according to Prizzia.

"The rainforest is a distinct environment performing an endless cycle of water flow and filtration," Prizzia said in a summary, adding that Windows on the Watershed brings the ecological lessons of the rainforest to life, within the Delaware River Watershed's ecosystem.

"It is essentially the same process as in the rainforest. Water



PHOTO COURTESY DAVID HEISE/FLICKR/CREATIVECOMMONS Cinnamon Fern (Osmunda cinnamomea) is known as a Wilderness Forest Hero. A Stabilizer, it grows on moist, shady riverbanks, where its roots grab the soil and keep the waters from washing it away. Visitors to the Windows on the Watershed exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show will see how these "heroes" impact the water cycle.

flows independent of where we live, how we live and who lives there. There is one water in the world — it is all connected," she said.

"A watershed is an immersive environment. It's in the air, above us, below us, underground and in the pipes. We approached this exhibition in the same way," Prizzia explained.

As visitors walk along a path through the exhibit, they will view photographs taken by Nick D'Amico — 14-by-6-foot photographs that capture a day in the life of the Delaware River Watershed from sunrise in the mountains to sunset along the coastal plains.

"These extraordinary images are on a large scale so that it seems you are almost standing and looking out a window," Prizzia added.

Another part of the exhibit is Inventory: Rain & the River, featuring a sculptural installation by Stacy Levy that Prizzia said will "submerge" visitors in a watery world. Inventory: Rain & the River is composed of hundreds of vertical transparent tubes filled with color.

"It creates this canopy above you that will feel very watery," she added. "Is it the river? Is it rain?"

All along the path there are plant "heroscapes," examples of plants and trees that play significant roles in helping to keep rivers and streams healthy while supporting the biological needs of different species.

Throughout the exhibition is signage that explains the

special aspects of each area and the heroes that are there.

"Depending on where you live in the watershed, you can see if you have these plants and learn what they do," Prizzia added.

Members of the Alliance of Watershed Education will be available to answer questions. There will also be a takeaway from the exhibit for gardeners.

"Visitors will walk away with some information to apply in terms of the techniques they can use and things to look for in the products they buy or things to avoid — practical things to know," Prizzia said.

The Windows on the Watershed exhibition was made possible through a major grant from the William Penn Foundation. In addition to the exhibition, a Water Summit March 7 will bring environmental and industry experts together to talk about freshwater issues and solutions. Registration is at TheFlowerShow.com

"The sustainability of our drinking water is tied to the health of our rivers and streams, and the health there is tied to the life and preservation of the ecosystem that makes up the rivers and streams," Prizzia added.









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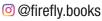
Meet Emily **March 7** at **3:00 pm** in the Gardener's Studio for her demonstration "Grow Your Herb Garden For Free," followed by a book signing of *Grow What You Love* at the PHS store. Free tote bags will be handed out during the book signing to those who have a copy of the book (while quantities last). Books will be available throughout the show in the PHS store.







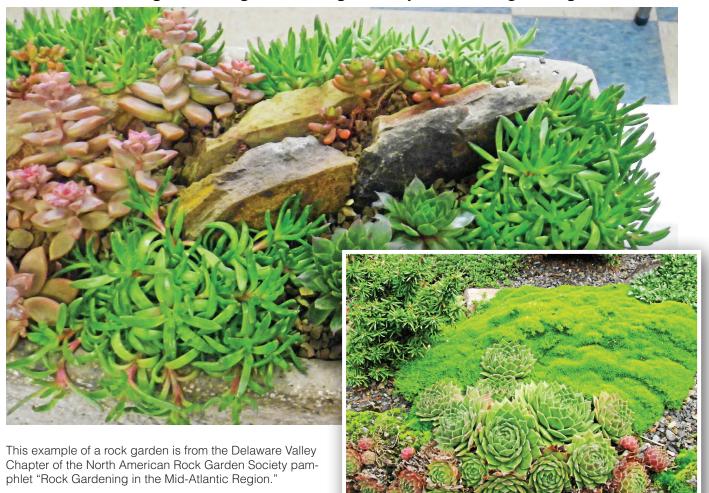




Gardener's Guide

Mighty minis

Rock gardening offers big beauty in small package



By Brian Bingaman

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"I think that the whole rock garden movement's been going strong since at least the '50s. You can fabricate them in your garage," said PHS Meadowbrook Farm Associate Director Bernard Pettit.

Thanks to being contracted by the North American Rock Garden Society, Meadowbrook has been active this winter forcing the early blooming of rock garden perennials for the 2018 Philadelphia Flower Show. Pettit made it sound easy to do, noting that Lewisia, for example, can flower under snow This example of a trough garden suggesting a miniature landscape is from the Delaware Valley Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society pamphlet "Rock Gardening in the Mid-Atlantic Region."

cover.

"I love this class. The forcing time is rather small. If anything, we're forced to cool them off a little. In nature, it may be March when these things flower anyway," Pettit said.

What is rock gardening?

According to Pettit, it was originally known in the 19th century as trough gardening because the plants were cultivated



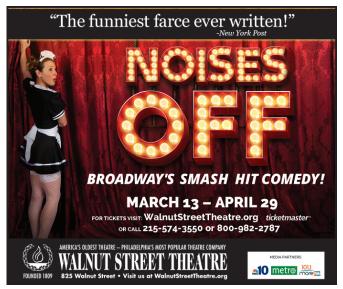
An example of a larger-scale rock garden. This photo appears in the Delaware Valley Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society pamphlet "Rock Gardening in the Mid-Atlantic Region."

in hand-hewn, stone farm troughs.

The North American Rock Garden Society's website describes it as "the study and cultivation of wildflowers that grow well among rocks."

"Rock gardening comes out of a love of plants growing in high alpine places. Usually rock gardening is something people find after they've done general gardening for a while.

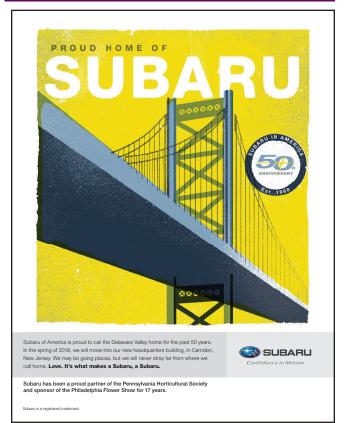
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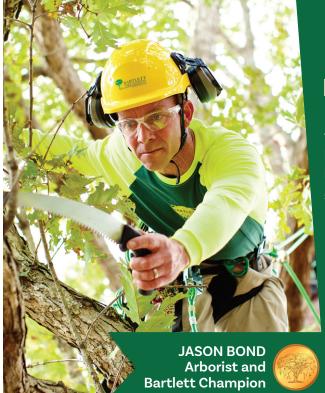
TIPS FOR BEGINNERS INTERESTED IN ROCK GARDENING

Start with one type of plant. When you introduce other kinds to your planter, "the plants have to go with each other in rock gardening; otherwise, you lose the sense of scale," said Betty Mackey, a past program director and previous chairwoman of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society.

- 2 Circular or rectangular stone or cement planters work, as long as there's a hole for drainage.
- Select rocks that go with your plants. For example, dianthus likes being around lime-based stone.
- Don't use too many different kinds of rocks because their pH levels need to be compatible with your plants.
- 5 Like the Japanese bonsai, you don't let the plants grow too quickly. You need gritty, sandy or rocky soil that drains well.







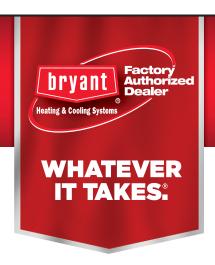
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Gardener's Guide

Hold the H2O

Cacti, succulents can flourish without being watered

By Gary Puleo

gpuleo@21st-centurymedia.com @MustangMan48 on Twitter

The theme of the 2018 Philadelphia Flower Show may be "Wonders of Water," but over at the Philadelphia Cactus and Succulent Society exhibit, they're asking everyone to hold the H2O please.

"The theme of our exhibit this year is 'When in doubt, give 'em draught.' We will explain to people that cacti and succulents will survive much better without being watered," said Paul Wesolowski, a longtime Society member and exhibit chairman who has been creating displays for the Flower Show for more than 20 years.

"Because we're a plant society, we're trying to educate people, so what changes about our exhibits will be the educa-



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Paul Wesolowski is pictured at a previous Philadelphia Flower Show exhibit by the Philadelphia Cactus and Succulent Society.

tional message. Every year we try to teach people something different about the plants or about how they care for them. We've noticed in talking to people and growing the plants ourselves that the biggest problem people have is overwatering their cacti."

In the proper soil or in the right container, cacti and succulents are largely self-sufficient, Wesolowski said.

"Cacti grow from the Arctic Circle to the southern tip of South America. They grow on the desert floor; they grow on the mountain tops; they grow in the rain forest. You can plant them in your garden and just let them get watered by the rain. They can get covered by snow, and that's fine. Some you can plant in a lava rock and then just let it sit there on your deck or front step and let nature take care of it. They can survive much better being neglected and not being watered on a regular schedule. More often than not, if you give them too much water, they will rot and die, and you will wish you had held back. People say, 'Oh, it looks so sad. It looks so thirsty, and I feel so sorry for it.' Always err on the side of not watering and your plants will be much happier," Wesolowski noted.

Did you know a cactus plant can go a full year without water?

"In certain circumstances, if they're not in the blazing hot sun, that's true," allowed Wesolowski, who admitted he favors

cacti over some other succulent varieties.

"I prefer cacti for various reasons, and there are some that aren't much to look at but produce spectacular flowers when they're in bloom. Some get beautiful flowers that can be 10 inches across," he noted.

Expect to see plenty of euphorbia and agave succulents at the club's exhibit this year.

"We like to have a huge variety of around 100 or 130 separate plants so that people can get really get a feel for the variety within these plant families. There are maybe 10,000 species of cacti and succulents ... 2,000 cacti and maybe 8,000 succulents," Wesolowski explained. "Some of them won't be appropriate for the exhibit because they're too big or too small or not pretty."

Many will recognize the agave plant as the bearer of an essential ingredient in margaritas.

"People in the know will realize the blue agave is where tequila comes from," Wesolowski said. "The problem with the agave plant is they flower and then they die, but they create little babies around them prior to dying."

Although the volunteers work hard to collect show plants that will hopefully flower while in the Flower Show spotlight, "every year it's pretty much guaranteed I'll have flowers that will open the day after the show closes," Wesolowski said, laughing. "But if you grow enough plants, by coincidence you will have some that will open during the show."

The fact that succulents don't require much nurturing may

account for their ongoing popularity, Wesolowski said.

"They've always been popular with me, but they have been catching on more in popular culture. It may be that people are busy and may forget to water them and yet they'll still be alive. There are some growers who are passionate about growing them, but it's easier to see them in a frog or a top hat container because that's how people like to buy them. The growers just assume that you will find out on your own how to take care of it. The species you tend to see in these situations are the ones that are easiest to grow."

Wesolowski warned that the "flowering" cacti that you find at places like Home Depot and Lowe's are frequently not flowering at all.

"That's been trending for years, and cactus growers have been trying to stop it for years," he said. "There is a grower in California who uses a hot glue gun to put a pretty dried flower that may have been spray painted on the plant and people love it. People think the plant has been blooming for years, but they don't realize it's a dead flower that's been glued onto the cactus plant."

With 100 members from Southeast Pennsylvania, the Poconos, Delaware and New Jersey, the Philadelphia Cactus and Succulent Society is celebrating its 75th year in 2018 and is one of the oldest cactus and succulent organizations in the country, Wesolowski said. Members meet monthly in Roxborough. For more information, visit philacactus.org.





By Ann Cornell

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Gardening can quite literally require you to get down and dirty. If you were asked to visualize tending to a garden, you would probably see yourself kneeling over a plot of land in your yard — tilling the ground, burying seeds in the soil. Although "a bit of earth" might seem essential to cultivating

delicious fruits and vegetables or other eye-pleasing plants, this element in your imagination isn't quite so indispensable in reality.

Hydroponic plants — which, as the name suggests, are moored in water — have been seeing a current surge in popularity. Lifestyle websites including Apartment Therapy and Rodale's Organic Life tout the benefits and ease of nurturing houseplants and herbs with little more than light, a vase and

nutrient-rich water.

This year, the Philadelphia Flower Show will feature a hydroponics exhibit by Chris Devito for Burke Brothers, a landscape design and build firm. The Philadelphia Flower Show will also offer a workshop where attendees can also create their own hydroponic window sill display.

The term "hydroponics" was coined in 1937 by University of California's Dr. William Frederick Gericke, who stunned doubters by growing 25-foot tomato vines with hydroponic gardening, according to reports in Epic Gardening and Time magazine. However, the actual technique has existed for thousands of years, according to the Epic Gardening website, utilized by ancient cultures in Mexico, China and in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

In addition to tomatoes, other hydroponic plants can include potatoes, strawberries, mint, lettuce, cabbage, green beans, English ivy, philodendron, begonia and geranium, according to the websites Garden and Greenhouse and Apartment Therapy.

Follow these steps to create your hydroponic houseplant collection, according to Apartment Therapy:

"• Pick a plant that you know will root in water ... and cut off a section just below the leaf, where the plant's natural



rooting hormone is active.

"• Place the plant segment in a glass container with water. Choose a vessel with a thinner neck that will support the stem of the plant. Because the new plant will receive all of its nutrients from the water, the type of water is key here. Use bottled spring or well water rather than tap water, which is often stripped of nutrients thanks to filtration and chlorination.

"• Rooting typically begins after 2 weeks. When the water runs low, top it off with some more bottled water."

The advantages to hydroponics are numerous, but the biggest plus is water conservation, Epic Gardening states.

"When growing plants in soil, a grower has to be very experienced to know how much water to give his plants. Too much and the plant's roots are not able to get enough oxygen. Too little and the plant can dry out and die," according to the website.

"First, the water reservoir can be constantly oxygenated, making sure that the plant's roots obtain the optimum level of oxygen. Additionally, ... the fact that the plant's root system no longer has soil surrounding it, blocking oxygen uptake by the roots.

"Second, hydroponics uses much less water than soil farming because it can be recirculated. In traditional farming, water is poured over the ground and seeps into the soil. Only a small fraction of the water actually gets used by the plant. Hydroponics allows for the unused water to be recycled back into

the reservoir, ready for use in the future," according to Epic Gardening.

Also, hydroponic gardening "is a more efficient way to provide food and water to your plants. Plants don't use soil — they use the food and water that are in the soil. Soil's function is to supply plants nutrients and to anchor the plants' roots," according to the website, Hydrofarm.

As another bonus, Hydrofarm points out — no weeding!



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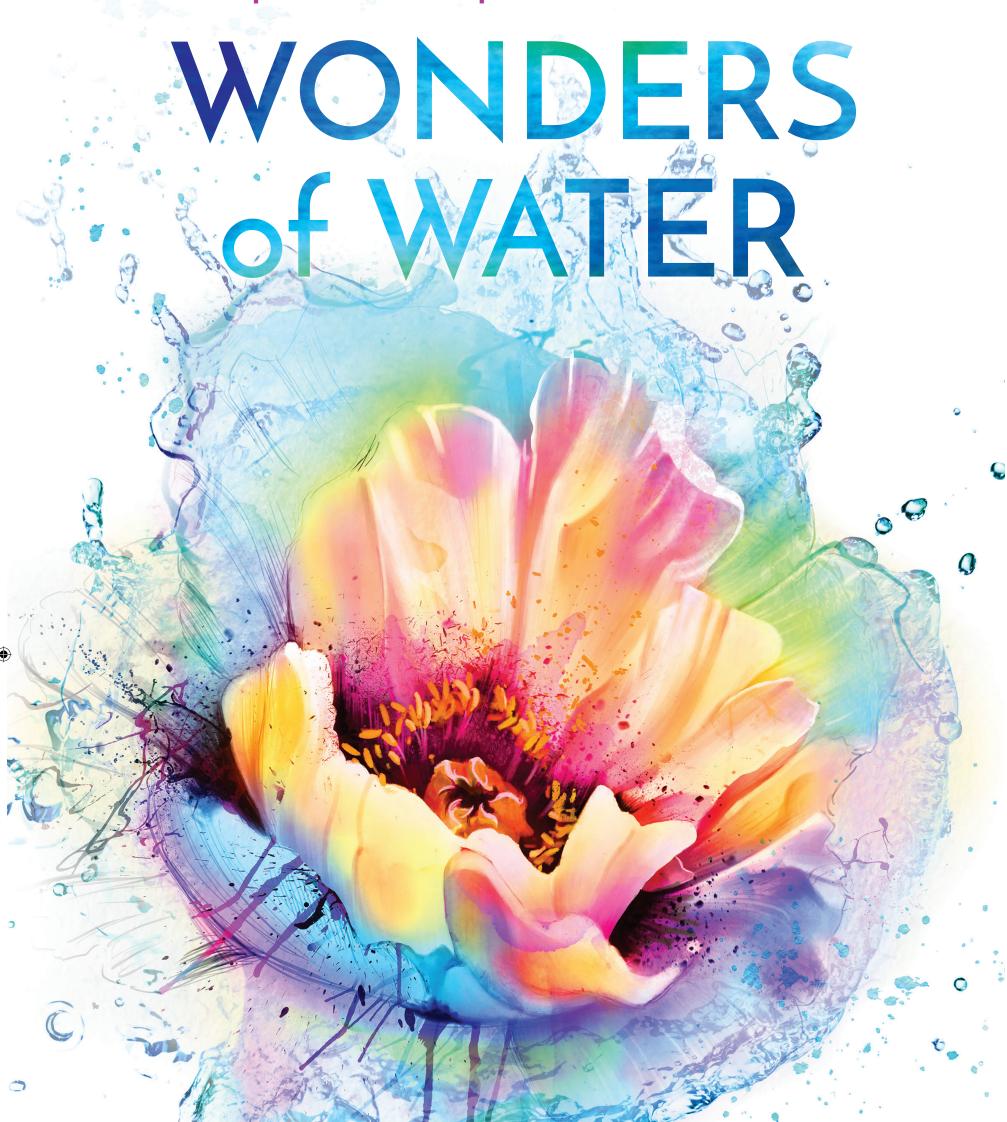
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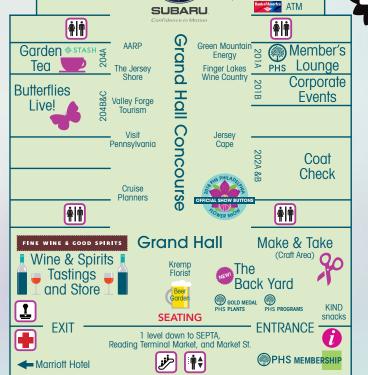
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Gardener's Guide

Ponds can add interest, charm to gardens, yards



Ponds can add beauty to your garden and yard.

By Linda Stein

lstein@21st-centurymedia.com @lsteinreporter on Twitter

Imagine whiling away a scorching and humid summer day near your backyard pond and listening to water burble from the fountain.

"Introducing water into a garden and landscape is a fantastic dynamic component," said Joe Blandy, a landscape designer and horticulturalist with Stoney Bank Nurseries in Glen Mills. "It can add a whole different element. The sound of water, the look of water, makes a human perceive coolness. It's a 95-degree day and you're near water, you feel cooler. The mental imagery translates to making one feel cooler on a hot summer day. We think it's a fantastic idea to incorporate water into landscapes.

The theme of this year's PHS Philadelphia Flower Show, Wonders of Water, will allow people to sample what it might be like to have a watery element in their own yards.

"I think we're going to see a lot of very interesting things," he said.

Blandy said he is excited about the Stoney Bank exhibit for the Flower Show, which will feature a pond, arbor wall and seating.

"Visitors will look through a water wall out at the exhibit," he said.

Those who are handy may want to put in their own backyard ponds, but it's more complicated than it might seem at first glance.

"A pond is not just a hole in the ground filled with water," said Blandy. "It's a complicated project to do correctly."

Things to consider include depth, filtration, plants, mechanics and the amount of sun the location gets.

"You can do it," said Blandy. "You just have to know what you're doing. It certainly isn't something that someone can put in and forget about."

Ponds take ongoing care and maintenance.

A pond that has shade will help to keep the water temperature lower and allow beneficial algae to grow.

"If it gets too hot, algae of a negative variety blooms," he said.

Most manmade ponds have a rubber membrane, although a





A cool pond adds interest to a backyard terrace.

A water feature enhances a patio.

concrete shell, like a swimming pool, can be used, "but that's a lot more expensive."

"Circulating and movement of water is very important," he said. "A still, stagnant pond opens the door to all kinds of issues. You definitely want movement of water."

For example, mosquitoes are "an issue many times." But if fish, such as koi, are included to eat the larvae and there is proper circulation, the insects are less likely to be a problem, he said.

"You definitely want movement of water," said Blandy. "If you just dig a hole in the ground and fill it, certainly you will have a mosquito fest. If a pond is properly designed, it's not a problem."

Ultraviolet light or newer copper filtration systems can be very effective. Bio-balls are another filtration component that

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encourages the growth of beneficial algae as water passes through the bio-balls. Aquatic plants filter and treat water naturally and release oxygen, he said.

Ponds can cost anywhere from a few thousand dollars to tens of thousands of dollars, depending on the size and complexity of the system, he said.





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Continued from Page 9

It's ... having an interesting garden in a small space. It's an artificial natural world," said Betty Mackey, a past program director and previous chairwoman of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society (DVNARGS). "You can have a miniature version of a

"You can have a miniature version of a large garden that evokes these wild places. The goal is a scene reflecting a larger scene of nature."

— Betty Mackey, past program director, Delaware Valley Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society

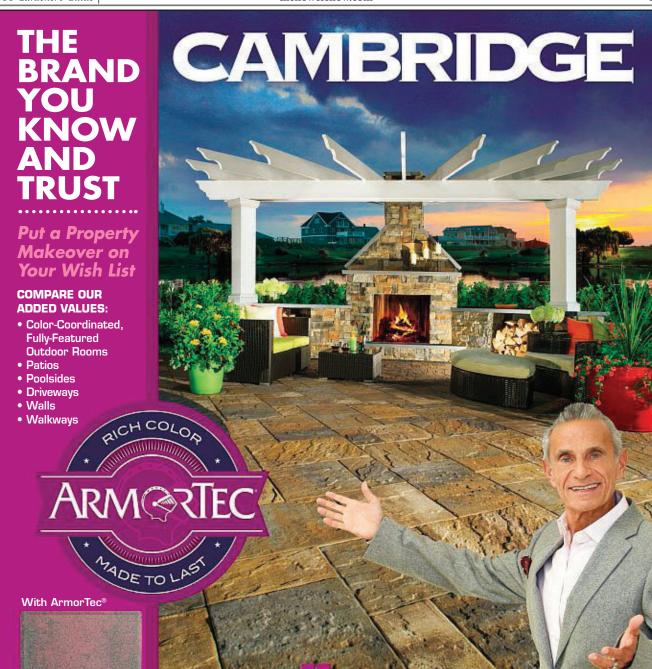
large garden that evokes these wild places. The goal is a scene reflecting a larger scene of nature. You don't want big geranium plants in with it because it spoils the illusion. It's attractive, but it's hard to get the scale right."

If you take a step back, your garden could resemble a landscape of miniature mountains and valleys.

For the Wonders of Water Flower Show theme, the DVNARGS display will show how to have an underground watering system, she said.

"It's simple science because once you get the essence, it's pretty general," said Mackey.

For more information, see the links at dvcnargs.org/info. html or consider attending a DVNARGS meeting (meeting information is on the website).



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Both Cambridge paving stones shown were installed in residential driveways in 2006 (Photos taken in January 2010).





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PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW

More than just a show

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society president explains organization's year-round mission to improve communities

By Marian Dennis

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PHILADELPHIA >> Take a walk into this year's Philadelphia Flower Show and you'll know immediately that there's more to it than just its beautiful displays.

Each year, thousands of people look forward to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's annual Philadelphia Flower Show and with good reason. The show draws gardeners of all backgrounds to participate in and enjoy elaborate displays of plant and floral arrangements from some of the area's most inventive gardeners.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has a bigger objective in mind, however, and the Flower Show is one of the many ways it meets those objectives.

"Our mission is really two halves. First is connecting and engaging people in gardening as a personal passion, and the second is working with people of all backgrounds to improve communities and the world at large," said Matt Rader, president of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

And the Flower Show helps them do just that.

There are certainly no shortage of programs that are aimed at its mission. Throughout the year, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society engages in a variety of programs designed to help the Philadelphia area blossom into a haven for social equity and sustainability.

"Our community work has a number of faces. We're focused on working in neighborhoods across the city and improving environment and social equity. We have a broad based tree planting and stewardship program. About 4,000 people across the region are part of our tree revitalization program. They plant 2,000 street trees a year. They work with neighbors to make sure they're taken care of through Tree Tenders," said Rader.

Dig In This Spring with (



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Thursday, April 5 • 4 pm Enjoy family fun including a story, craft and scavenger hunt. Free for pre-school and elementary aged children and caregivers.

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Tour with a Twist

Thursday, April 19 • 6 pm Enjoy a tour of the Meadowbrook gardens and learn about varieties, growing tips and more in this program themed, "Magnolias and Merlot."





Great programs take place each Thursday starting April 5 at Meadowbrook Farm. For more information, fees, and to register, visit PHSonline.org/Thursday

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Gardener's Guide

Plants on the roof lower fossil fuel use, decrease water runoff

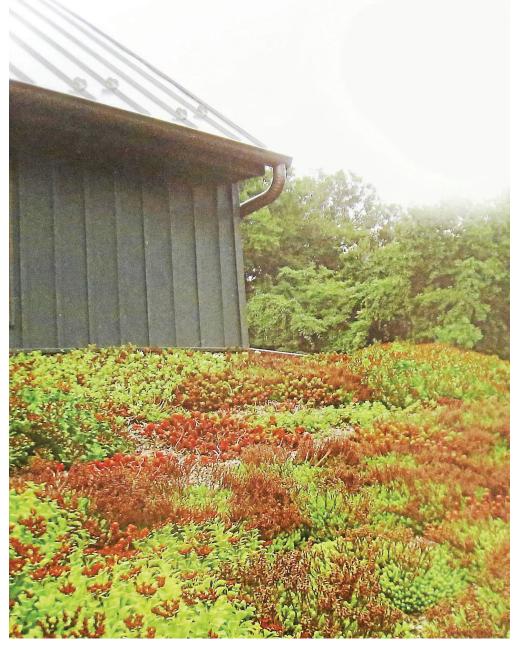


PHOTO BY JOE BLANDY

Stoney Bank Nursery President Joe Blandy shows his green roof in warmer weather.

By Chris Barber cbarber@1st-centurymedia.

This year, the Philadelphia Flower Show's theme is "Wonders of Water," and exhibitors have created a host of interesting and beautiful displays to explore that idea.

One of those exhibitors is Joe Blandy, president of Stoney Bank Nursery just outside of Concord.

He has enhanced the use of rainwater for several of his customers by installing green roofs.

Gone are the days when the vision of a green roof was a cave carved into a mountain in Norway with sheep grazing on the vegetation overtop.

Instead, in recent years, it has become an increasingly popular way to embrace the environment, cut down on the use of fossil fuels, moderate the effects of weather extremes and save money in the long run. In the United States, the public is in the early stages of embracing green roofs, while in places like Germany, France, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland, the support is more vigorous.

A green roof is usually an extension of an existing roof that is scientifically designed to hold growing plants while providing absorption of rain water with a sophisticated

drainage system.

Landscape architect Blandy is a proponent of green roofs, having constructed several, including one over the top of his office at the nursery on Stoney Bank Road.

He said his customers who have had the roofs constructed by his company in the greater Philadelphia area are overall environmentally conscious. With a layer of well-researched planting at the top of a dwelling, the owners get substantial insulation from the extreme heat of summer and the chilling cold of winter. That reduces the use of fossil fuels and electricity for controlling interior temperatures.

Additionally, when it rains, the plants absorb the water efficiently, to the point where there is not much runoff. And with planting on the roof, the vegetation absorbs carbon emitted from power and manufacturing plants which otherwise would

CHRIS BARBER — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

Joe Blandy displays one of the large items from Stoney Bank Nursery's display at this year's Philadelphia Flower Show.

be released into the air. In some areas, in fact, there is legislation that gives financial incentives for installing green roofs, Blandy said.

Installing a green roof involves more than shoveling dirt on the top of the house and tossing on some grass seed.

First of all, he said, there are two kinds of green roofs: intensive and extensive.

Intensive green roofs are deep — 12 inches or more of soil

and plants. Extensive roofs have 2 to 6 inches of soil and, naturally, are lighter.

All of the roofs that Stoney Bank has installed are extensive on residential dwellings. Some companies, however, specialize in doing commercial buildings.

Blandy said he is well aware of the steps that are taken to build a green roof.

"The technology is fantastic," he said.

Obviously, the roof has to be strong enough to support the increased weight of the soil, building materials and rainwater it will harbor. A structural engineer can determine the strength of the under structure.

Additionally, a 10- to 12-degree slope is better for holding the material than a 45-degree slope.

Building the green roof involves bringing in layers similar

to preparing a lasagne on a much greater scale.

On the bottom is a waterproof layer that will protect the home from leaks

Just above that is what he called the protective felt layer. It is a root barrier that prevents plant roots from burrowing their way into the waterproof layer and causing leaks.

Next comes the drainage layer. Scientifically designed plastic material consisting of little pockets can catch the water and release it slowly into the soil in case of a fast and heavy rain.

On top of that is the soil.

The best kind is rather dry with not too much organic content so it will drain quickly into the system below. Blandy's green roof has the appearance of an almost desert setting.

The choice of the plants is up to the owner. He said he likes low growing perennials like sedum. Obviously, annuals would require a lot of repeated trips to the roof to replant every year, while the perennials repeat by themselves.

He has known people who choose flowering plants that reflect their tastes, while others prefer subtle tones of green and brown.

Blandy said a green roof doesn't come cheap.

"It costs about twice as much as a traditional roof," he said. Still, over time, it lasts longer than a regular roof and it saves on the costs of heating and cooling the home. It also has aesthetic benefits and attracts birds and butterflies Gardener's Guide

Take a Rain Check

Rain gardening spruces up your living space, keeps rivers, streams clean



SUBMITTED PHOTO

COLLECTION

An example of a downspout planter.

Get Pinned and support a good cause! Stop by a pin 2018 PHS PHILA station at the Show to collect them all! FOWER SHOW

By Brian Bingaman

bbingaman@21st-centurymedia.com @brianbingaman on Twitter

One of the "Wonders of Water" is that you can easily collect rain and melting snow to irrigate your garden spaces.

"Rain gardens are shallow, excavated landscaped gardens that are designed to absorb water from a rooftop, or a nearby impervious area, such as a patio or driveway, instead of allowing it to flow into a sewer system," said Glen Abrams, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's senior director of planning and sustainable communities.

"Rain gardens are one of the most cost effective ways to manage stormwater runoff, and they can be designed as a beautiful addition



to your existing landscape design," he said. "Rain gardens are becoming more popular because we have a better understanding now of the linkage between land and water — that is, how we design and use our land has a direct impact on water quality. They are especially appropriate for residential properties and are fairly simple to design and construct. Also many municipalities have regulatory obligations through the Clean Water Act to create programs to alleviate the negative impacts of stormwater runoff." A convenient place to learn more about rain gardens is the Philadelphia Flower Show, which will feature an exhibit of the Rain Check program from the Philadelphia Water Department, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Sustainable Business Network. You can also go to pwdraincheck.org or call 215-988-1698.

Rain Check helps save money on creating an attractive garden that also happens to help protect area waterways by slowing and filtering stormwater runoff.

Abrams said, "Every time it rains, stormwater runoff can collect pollutants, such as litter, oil, grease, pesticides, fertilizers, pet waste and sediment. Typically these pollutants are discharged directly into our rivers and streams without any treatment to mitigate their effects. However, stormwater management practices, such as rain gardens, can be designed to effectively manage the majority of rainfall and snow melt, preventing pollutants from entering our





waterways."
According to Zachary Popkin, the residential stormwater program manager for the horticultural society, apartment dwellers and row home residents can successfully keep a rain garden.
Once everything is in place, "it's the same maintenance as a standalone perennial garden," said Popkin.
Participants in the Rain Check program must first attend a

"Rain gardens are one of the most cost effective ways to manage stormwater runoff, and they can be designed as a beautiful addition to your existing landscape design."

education workshop on the

— Glen Abrams, senior director of planning and sustainable communities, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

fundamentals of stormwater before meeting with a contractor. That's when you'll find out how often you should water, choosing plants (You can't plant vegetables or fruit in a rain garden because stormwater carries debris not suitable for edible plants), spacing the plants and the answers to other questions that come to mind. Incentives for being a participant in the Rain Check program include free rain barrels; the PWD paying \$16 per square foot, up to a maximum of \$2,000; and getting introductions to contractors that can navigate the complicated stuff.











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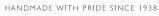


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Visit "Within Reach," Temple University's Philadelphia Flower Show exhibit.



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