

The Barn Nursery's Commitment to Sustainable Landscaping

March 2010



Sustainable Landscape Practices

THE BARN NURSERY &
LANDSCAPE CENTER

Native Plants & Sustainable Plantings

We understand the importance that native plants have in the natural environment as well as the manmade one. Our 40 years of landscape experience in Northern Illinois means we have the experience and appreciation to create lovely and sustainable landscapes. Some of the ways we achieve this includes using locally grown plants, native plants, and hardy hybrids. By sourcing many of these materials from our own nursery in Harvard, IL we have the ability to personally oversee plant quality and the confidence that it will thrive in our local environment.

Natives we like include the following:	
Trees	Shrubs
Acer rubrum – Red Maple	Cornus racemosa – Gray Dogwood
Amelanchier canadensis – Shadblow Seviceberry	Hamamelis virginiana – Common Witch Hazel
Celtis occidentalis - Hackberry	Hydrangea arborescens – Annabelle Hydrangea
Cercis canadensis – Eastern Redbud	Hypericum kalmianum – Kalm St Johns Wort
Cornus alternifolia – Pagoda Dogwood	Rhus typhina – Staghorn Sumac
Crataegus crus-galli – Cockspur Hawthorn	Viburnum dentatum – Arrowwood Viburnum
Gymnocladus dioicus – Kentucky Coffeetree	
Quercus bicolor – Swamp White Oak	

We also carry a variety of native perennials including

Liatris pycnostachya – Prairie Blazing Star Silphium laciniatum – Compass Plant
Geranium maculatum – Wild Geranium Echinacea pallida – Coneflower

Organic Usage

In our landscape practice, we used approximately 50% organic fertilizer on our lawns and plantings in 2009. In 2010, we plan on increasing that number to 75% and hopefully to 100% by 2011 as the technology and cost comes in line with synthetic applications. We are also testing an organic weed spraying chemical this season that will hopefully replace the quantities of Round Up and other chemicals we are currently using.

In our garden center, we carry a full line of organic products including pots from recycled materials and organic pesticides and fertilizers.

Composting

The Barn Nursery recycles as much landscape material as possible in house. Leaves, grass clippings, small branches and sod removed are composted at our location and reused on future projects as a highly rich and organic matter for new plantings. Branch material is chipped up to be used as commercial grade mulch.

Recycled Landscaping

When approaching a site sometimes the best way to enhance an existing landscape is to re-use what is already on site, but in the proper locations. This allows us to use far less carbon emissions per job and can save the client money. By reusing the existing soil on site and transplanting certain trees, shrubs, and perennials the homeowner can save on the cost of all these materials and we can cut down our carbon emissions by not having to send a truck to pick up and deliver the material.



Native plants along a lake

Water Management Practices

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Rain Water Harvesting

In the past, the goal of water management in landscape was to catch as much water as possible from gutters, sump pumps, driveways and lawns and direct it all into storm sewers, wetlands or wherever it could drain the quickest. The downfall was the increased water pollution of our streams and lakes and elimination of future sources of ground water aquifers. The Barn's goal is to eliminate drainage issues with the least impact to our natural surroundings. Tools for this are the creation of rain gardens, bioswales, and the use of rain barrels and cisterns. These practices will retain the water on your property and allow it to naturally cycle back into the soil or be used it to irrigate your plant material when needed.

Rain Garden and Bioswale Plants include...

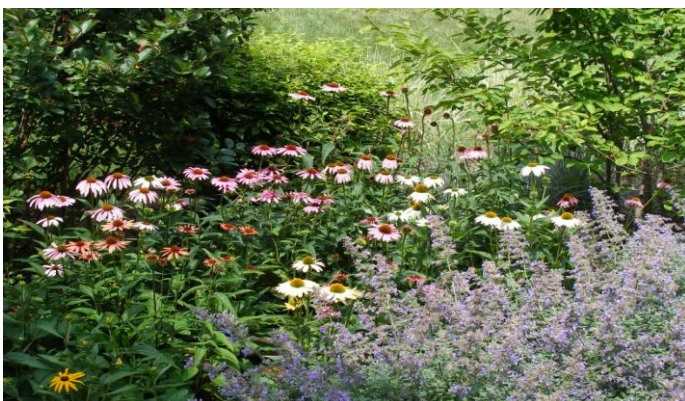
Aquilegia canadensis – Wild Columbine	Hemerocallis - Daylilies
Carex vulpinoidea – Fox Sedge	Panicum - Switch Grass
Iris virginica-shrevei – Wild Blue Flag Iris	Leucanthemum - Shasta Daisies
Geranium maculatum – Wild Geranium	Phlox - Garden Phlox
Liatris pycnostachya – Gayfeather	Eupatorium - Joe Pye Weed
Lobelia siphilitica – Great Blue Lobelia	
Tradescantia ohiensis - Spiderwort	

What is a rain garden?

A Rain Garden is not a swamp or a wet area. A well designed rain garden looks like a perennial garden and can include some of the most popular garden plants. These strategically placed plants will filter toxins out of the water, and then return it to the ground water aquifer the way nature intended.

Irrigation Practices

Did you know that almost 100% of the water we use to maintain our plants at our retail center is naturally rain harvested and therefore does not deplete our natural aquifers? These systems are also set up with rain sensors that help control the frequency of the irrigation system. We are working with our clients to install rain sensors and soil sensors on irrigation systems to minimize waste at home. By using native and hardy plants in our landscape designs we are creating an ecosystem that can flourish in our environment without excessive water needs.



Rain garden using water from runoff from roof

Rain Gardens & Bioswales:

A Rain garden is a depression in the land that holds water runoff from roofs and other hardscape surfaces on the property. These areas are then planted with plant material that can handle a moist or dry location. These gardens can vary in size and usually hold water for no more than a couple of hours after a storm.

Rain Barrels & Cisterns:

These are manmade underground or above ground plastic water storage units. These units can be used to irrigate gardens, lawns, or bioswales.

Rain barrels are above ground units that can be connected together to collect water runoff from the roof of a home. They are usually used to irrigate gardens and planters.

Cisterns are underground units that collect roof water and other water runoff from the property. These units are significantly larger than rain barrels and are usually used to irrigate lawns and bioswales.

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Landscape Lighting & Energy consumption

Landscape lighting is a wonderful way to accent your home and landscape at night. What is rarely considered though is the impact on the client's energy bill. But at the Barn we are always looking into new and advanced ways to save the client money and help conserve energy. One way to do this is by installing a 24 volt landscape lighting system. These systems use less wire and voltage per fixture, thus reducing your energy bill and installation bill. We are also staying on top of all the new developments in technology. LED lighting systems are one form of new technology that will be out within the next couple of years that we are keeping our eyes on. LED systems promise to reduce your energy bill significantly. We will keep you updated.



Professional lighting job in Lake Forest, IL

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



Reduce: Groundcover

A great way to reduce maintenance costs is to plant your beds with solid groundcover. Studies have shown that the costs of planting beds with groundcover will be recouped in 3 years by avoiding the costs of mulch and the labor associated with spreading it and weeding.

Reuse: Mulch

Our standard "Premium Shredded Hardwood Bark" is 90% Bark which breaks down slower than wood and holds its color better. The negative is that it comes from saw mills way down south or up north on barges along the Mississippi River. Then it is processed by machines and trucked all the way to our yard. The freight is expensive and not energy conscious. Because of this we offer "green" local recycled mulch through our landscape division. It will be approx. 50% wood and 50% bark. It will not be quite as rich in color and will break down slightly quicker, but it is recycled from the waste we are creating right here in Chicago and cuts the shipping by over 75%.

Recycle: Pots, Paper, and Cardboard

In our offices we collect all of our paper and cardboard waste and deliver it to a local non-profit organization which receives financial benefits from our waste. Also, our garden center accepts plastic landscape pots year round, at no charge that we will recycle for you.

Permeable Pavers: An Environmental Option

Permeable pavers provide a solid ground surface while at the same time allowing water to filter through the surface and reach the underlying soils. Permeable pavers create a self-draining system; the voids in the surface of the paving allow water to drain through and into the soil beneath.

Benefits of using permeable pavers include their ability to allow rainwater to soak back into the soil, therefore maximizing groundwater recharge and minimizing the runoff of pollutants into our natural waterways. It can also decrease overall project costs by reducing or eliminating the need for drainage and retention/detention systems.

How you can make a difference...

- Make thoughtful plant selections; our #1 key to sustainable landscaping. Properly placed plants require less water, fertilizer, insecticide/fungicide, and time. Let us help!
- Help us to reduce our carbon footprint by signing up you and a neighbor for maintenance or landscaping to be completed at the same time and receive a 10% discount on BOTH jobs. Less gas and travel for us means less cost for you!!!
- Return your plastic landscape pots to our retail garden center to be recycled.
- Ask about native plantings to beautify your property and cut down on your watering.
- Rethink your lawn maintenance including, design, chemical usage and time: More landscape beds, less lawn, less work, Happy Earth!
- Purchase a rain barrel at our retail garden center to help conserve and reuse water.
- Request for one of our landscape professionals to survey your property for a water management assessment.

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