

Spring 2015

April 2015

Native Plants & Landscaping

Go native to protect Barnegat Bay

Protection of the Bay begins at home. Living in close proximity to the Bay makes us all stewards of the Bay. Making good choices with your landscape design, plants, trees, shrubs, and lawn maintenance are a great place to start and can have real impact. One solution is to use alternative ground covers and cool and warm season grasses, but if you love your turf here are some things you can do to make your lawn more ecofriendly.

Landscape Design & Lawns

Grass, Turf, sod, lawn; call it what you like, but grassy areas are simple and low cost filters you can have, if properly maintained. This is literally your "home turf".

Grading – Lawns should be graded with only minimal slopes to allow water to move away from structures and the Bay, but still remain on the property to reduce runoff and provide for more detention time.

Maintenance: Lawn maintenance is important! The Rutgers Cooperative Extension recommends cutting your lawn to 2-3 inches high and leaving the grass

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Pet Waste Disposal

Be a Responsible Pet Owner

Dog waste disposal poses a dilemma to the environmentally friendly pet owner. Scientists have discovered that dog poop is a major cause of water pollution, and that such pollution poses a significant hazard to human health. In fact, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says pet waste is a significant cause of water body contamination in areas where there are high concentrations of dogs. Leaving the waste on the ground or on our beaches is hazardous, as it may carry E. coli, salmonella, or giardia. The rain can wash it into rivers, streams, and oceans. Beaches and rivers have been closed to the public due to such contamination.

So we need to PICK UP!!

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clippings (Grasscycling) on the lawn for a natural fertilization. Taller grass shades the soil, cools the roots and prevents weeds, which gives you a healthier lawn.

Watering - Water your lawn during the early morning or evening when less evaporation occurs. Rutgers says: Water effectively, not often. Wet soil to a depth of 4-6 inches.

Fertilizers - If it can be avoided, **please** do. Test your soil, see what, if anything, your lawn needs. If not, use a product that includes slow release nitrogen. Time your application to avoid placement prior to a heavy rainfall. Do not use unsafe fertilizers and always clean product from walkways, driveways, pavers, etc.

Stone – While stone or pea gravel is a distant 2nd to turf, stoned areas do provide a natural conduit for rainfall collection and allows the collected rainfall to seep into the soil. However, stones do not provide for any treatment of the rainfall or runoff.

Pavers & Hardscaping – AVOID pavers, hardscaping and other impervious surfaces which prevent rainfall from entering the soil and results in runoff.

Homemade Weed Control - Options in weed control continues to be an ongoing discussion in terms of safety and efficacy. The MEC is participating in a series of low impact weed control experiments including using soap and vinegar and using kitchen quality sea salt. Anyone interested in participating please contact a member of the MEC immediately for details, as the first weeds are about to pop RIGHT NOW

Rain barrels – Install a rain barrel under your roof leaders to collect and store rainwater. Use this for watering plants and gardens.

Plants, trees, and shrubs - Go native! Choose plants that are native to the barrier island. There is a wide array of plants, flowers, and shrubs that are low maintenance, perennial, and pleasing to the eye.

(Please see MEC website for suggestions.)

Avoid invasive species such as – Japanese maple, butterfly bush, burning bush, english ivy, etc. All of these are invasive species and either crowd out or compete with native plants. Use low maintenance plants and shrubs, and water only as necessary.

Use smart, eco-friendly maintenance practices in your lawn upkeep. And remember; **we are all Stewards of the Bay!**

Rain Gardens

Beautiful and Functional

Rain gardens are specifically designed to manage stormwater runoff, mainly from rooftops, but also from driveways, lawns, roads, and parking lots. Rain gardens look like regular perennial gardens, but they are much more. During a storm, a rain garden fills with water, and the water slowly filters into the ground rather than running into storm sewers. Compared to a patch of lawn, a rain garden allows about 30% more water to soak into the ground. Therefore, by capturing stormwater, rain gardens help to reduce nonpoint source pollution (i.e.: road sediment/salt, fertilizers, pesticides, bacteria from pet waste, eroded soil, grass clippings, litter, etc.) and help to protect local waterways. Rain gardens also add beauty to neighborhoods and provide wildlife habitat.



“The shore is an ancient world, for as long as there has been an earth and sea there has been this place of meeting of land and water.”

-Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENT

MANTOLOKING BOROUGH
APRIL 25, 2015 10:00 – 1:00
Earth Day – Litter Clean up.

SPECIAL EVENT

MANTOLOKING YACHT CLUB
MAY 12, 6:30 PM
Dune It Right. Presentation on dune plants and planting techniques by Dr. Louise Wootton

SPECIAL EVENT

2015 Household Hazardous Waste Disposal
April 17, 2015 11:00am – 6:00pm
Lakewood Public Works Yard
Pre-Registration Required 732-367-0802

ReClam the Bay and Shellfish Restoration Program

ReClam the Bay is a volunteer-led nonprofit organization dedicated to providing hands-on education for all ages regarding the environmental benefits of shellfish filtering, feeding and the resulting cleaning of the waters of Barnegat Bay. The goal of this group is to involve the general public in shellfish-oriented stewardship activities so that residents can better understand that water quality and habitat protection are everyone's responsibility, and that healthy shellfish populations help restore and maintain estuarine water quality.

For more information go to:
<http://reclamthebay.org> or
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/barnegatbay/reclam.htm>

CONSIDER COMPOSTING!!

Did you know that Americans dispose of 4.5 lbs of trash per person per day? And, 53% of what we discard is compostable! It all ends up in a landfills which are almost at capacity. And, if you put garbage into your disposal, where do you think that ends up? It eventually gets deposited into our ocean!

As we approach Spring, why not think about building a compost pile? Everyday items in your kitchen such as coffee grounds & filters and vegetable peels, toilet paper and paper towel rolls and paper towels, cardboard and newspaper make up a significant amount of your daily waste!



There are tremendous benefits to composting. When applied to a garden, a nutrient-rich compost can hold six times its weight in water, which reduces the amount of water usage; it loosens the soil for better drainage and protects soil from erosion and compaction.

There is great satisfaction to be had when you realize that in a few months, your garbage can end up looking like rich, crumbly brown soil which can be used inside your gardens instead of in landfills as trash! Teaching children how to compost at an early age can benefit the environment in the future!

For more information about composting, please contact emack1115@aol.com. Useful materials on how to properly make your own backyard pile will be sent. Also, there are numerous articles on the internet!