Design and Maintenance

The design of the garden was prepared by EnergyScapes, Inc., www.energyscapes.com. Construction of the education wing included grading and installation of drain pipes. The planting of the garden began in 2007. Caring for Creation (an Outreach working group), along with other volunteers, provided all of the labor for lining the garden with weed-barrier paper and covering it with mulch, purchased the plants and seeds, planted and seeded according to the design, watered the new growth, weeded, and labeled plants.

Native plants, seeds and other resources were found at the following nurseries:

www.outbacknursery.com
www.landscapealternatives.com
www.glacialridgegrowers.com
www.prairienursery.com
www.prairieresto.com

Plymouth's Caring for Creation working group maintains the garden as a native and sustainable habitat. Maintenance includes: add and water new plants, thin and prune old plants, weed, and pick up trash. In the future, we hope to add pathways, a patio and benches. Plymouth's annual budget includes a line to support the garden's maintenance.

Photo Credits:

WILDFLOWERS © **Luckyrobj** | Dreamstime.com (Coneflowers)

MONARCH ON MILKWEED © **Rainbow77** | Dreamstime.com

SPARROW © **Izanoza** | Dreamstime.com

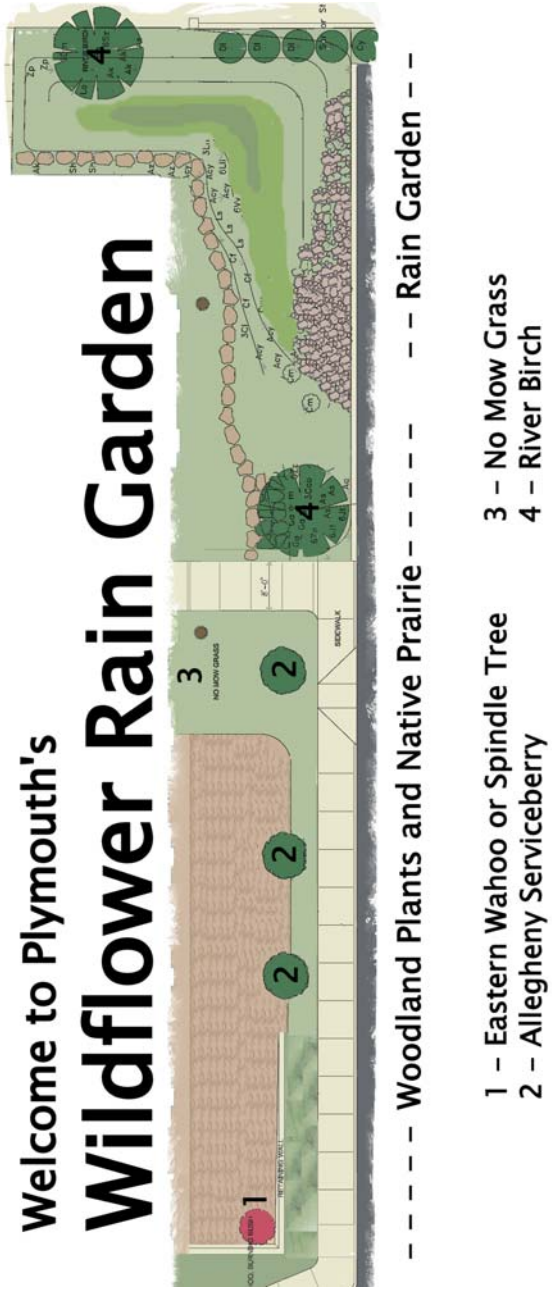
GRASS WITH ROOTS | US Dept. of Agriculture

BLACK-EYED SUSAN and PRAIRIE SMOKE
Courtesy of Prairie Restorations, Inc. www.prairieresto.com

BURNING BUSH 1 – Creative Commons by Zrim | via Flickr

ASTERS - Creative Commons by Mr.Mac2009 | via Flickr

Caring for Creation
at Plymouth



For additional information, visit
www.plymouth.org/about/caring_for_creation.php

Plymouth's Wildflower Rain Garden

CONEFLOWERS

Please stop by and enjoy the garden anytime, but please stay on the woodchip paths, which are marked with stones. We ask that you resist the urge to pull weeds since some of the wildflowers can easily be mistaken for weeds.

Over the years Plymouth's Wildflower Rain Garden will provide the corner of Nicollet and Franklin a wetland, prairie, and woodland oasis. Each year the plants will continue to grow, spread, and provide more shade, attracting more birds, butterflies, bees and animals. The garden will continue to provide a sustainable landscape for a healthier environment and earth as well as an area of year round interest and beauty for our congregation and neighbors.

Rain Garden

The rain garden is on the Nicollet side of Plymouth's Wildflower Rain Garden. It is designed with a depression to absorb rainwater that runs off of the parking lot, walkways, and the roof. Because the water flows into the ground and is filtered, rather than running directly into storm drains and eventually the Mississippi, the rain garden provides these benefits:

- Replenishes the ground water
- Reduces erosion
- Reduces water pollution
- Reduces flooding

Because of the garden and its benefits, the city of Minneapolis reduces Plymouth's storm water runoff bill by a significant amount, over $1,500 annually, allowing Plymouth's wildflower rain garden to pay for itself.

MONARCH ON MILKWEED

SPARROW

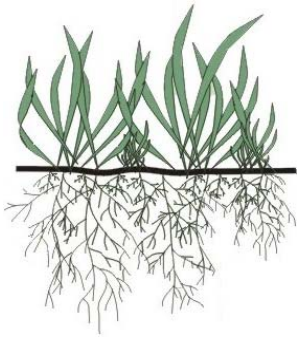
Plantings

Wildflower gardens such as Plymouth's are typically planted with species native to the region. Benefits of using plants native to the region include:

- Creates habitats for birds, butterflies, pollinating bees, and other animals.
- The extensive root systems increase rain water absorption and sequester carbon from the atmosphere.
- Requires no watering (once established)
- Requires no fertilizing or mowing
- Reduces pollution and maintenance costs

The rain garden section, the depressed area into which the water flows, is planted with a variety of wetland plants, such as swamp milkweed, cardinal flower, lobelia, black-eyed Susans, grasses, rushes and sedges. The remainder of the garden is planted with native prairie and woodland plants. These include flowering plants, such as asters, goldenrod, prairie smoke, and blazing star, several varieties of prairie grasses, an area of "no-mow" grass, 24 shrubs, 7 vines and 5 trees. Over 1,000 plants were planted individually and several areas were planted by seed.

Deep Roots



Native prairie plants tend to have extensive and deep root systems, which often penetrate 5 or more feet into the ground. Some go as deep as 16 feet. They are very drought resistant! These roots enhance soil quality and help the soil hold water like a sponge. In contrast, the roots of lawn turf are around 3" deep.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN, PRAIRIE SMOKE
WAHOO OR SPINDLE TREE, ASTERS

Last updated June 2009