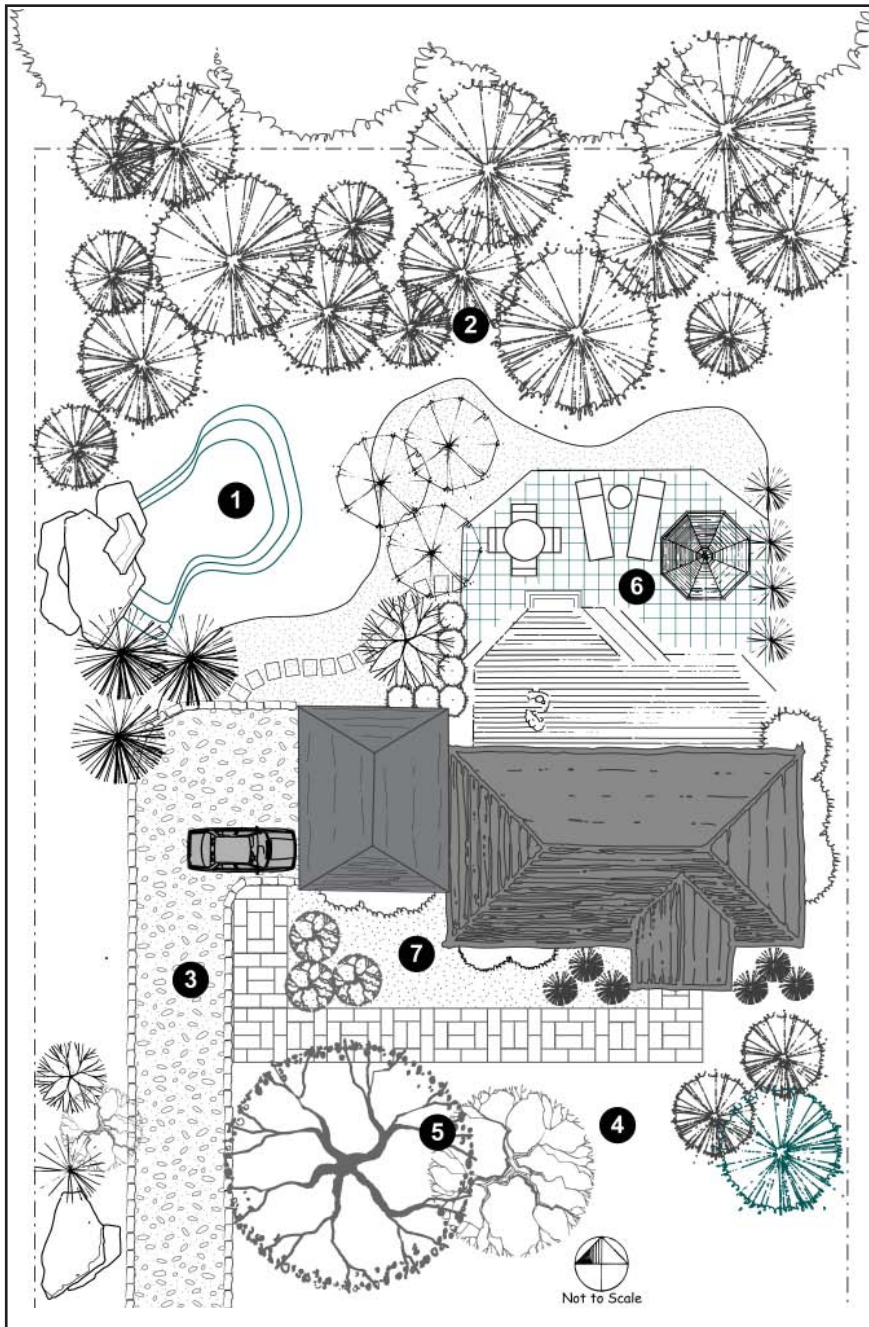


## Landscape Design Concepts

- 1 Stormwater detention basins can both support wildlife and protect water quality
- 2 Backyards can be planted to mimic adjacent natural areas to link open space areas and expand habitat to support and attract birds and beneficial wildlife
- 3 Driveways and walkways can be constructed with permeable materials such as stone, gravel or brick pavers that allow rain water to drain into the ground to reduce stormwater runoff and naturally irrigate yards
- 4 A combination of native evergreen and seasonally colorful trees and shrubs such as American holly, mountain laurel and scarlet oak can contribute to an inviting natural entrance
- 5 Planting canopy trees such as oak, red maple, sweet gum and black gum provides shade and natural cooling
- 6 Minimizing areas covered by lawns and using native, warm-season grasses and sedge species reduces the need for irrigation and the use of fertilizers, lime and pesticides that tend to adversely affect water quality
- 7 Using fire resistant, low-growing plants around home foundations and maintaining a "defensible space" between your home and the trees, bushes and shrubs in your yard reduces wildfire risks



# LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PINELANDS PLANTS

*Landscaping in New Jersey's Pinelands*



*An Introduction to the Use and Benefits of  
Native Pinelands Plants in Residential Landscaping*

*This brochure was made possible through a grant from  
the William Penn Foundation*

For more information please contact  
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P.O. Box 7, New Lisbon, NJ 08064  
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Or log on to  
[www.nj.gov/pinelands](http://www.nj.gov/pinelands)



*There are many unique and wonderful plants that are native to the Pinelands. Some can probably be found in your own backyard.*

The Pinelands is home to plant communities growing nowhere else on earth, and an increasing number of individual species can only be found here. That's because the Pinelands is a unique mixture of southern and northern species that found a haven here after the latest ice age and warming cycles of the past 10,000 years.

Using native plants in landscaping around your home helps to protect and preserve this special resource. In addition, native landscapes provide habitat for local and migratory animals. Landowners also benefit because native landscaping reduces the time and expense of mowing, watering, fertilizing and treating lawn and garden areas. The following 7 suggestions are intended to help you begin designing a native Pinelands landscape.

**Plan Your Landscape:** By understanding the nature of the land and its water demands, you'll save money on installation and maintenance. Consider existing plants. Good planning allows you to install your landscape in phases, which minimizes initial expenses.

**Use Lawn Wisely:** A lawn is the single largest consumer of water in a landscape. Limit lawn to areas where it provides functional benefits. Lawn alternatives include decks, patios, groundcovers, mulches, shrubs, native grasses, and wildflower meadows. Reducing lawn area also reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides.

**Use Native Plants:** Look for native plants at your nursery or consult your nursery professional or log onto [www.nj.gov/pinelands/infor/fact/native%20plants\\_links.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/pinelands/infor/fact/native%20plants_links.pdf) for a list of native plants. Consider exposure to the sun and choose the right plant for the right place in your yard.

**Improve the Soil:** Build up sandy soil with compost or other recycled organic material such as grass clippings, pine needles, or wood chip mulch. Soil improvement enhances water absorption and increases water-holding capacity. (*Note: It's always a good idea to test your soil to ensure that it is suited to the plants you intend to grow. Your County Agricultural Extension Service will help you to conduct these tests.*)

**Use Mulches:** Mulches limit weed growth and retain moisture. Mulched planting beds are an excellent replacement for lawn. Organic mulches are composted yard waste, pine needles or leaves. Avoid using sheet plastic in mulched planting areas.

**Irrigate Efficiently:** Irrigate lawn areas separately from other plantings. Group plantings according to similar water needs. Water lawn with sprinklers. Water trees, shrubs, flowers, and ground covers with low volume spray, drip, or bubbler emitters. In addition, installing rain sensing automatic on-off controls conserves water.

**Maintenance (less is more):** Native landscaping coupled with reduced lawn areas requires less fertilizers, less pesticides, less time, less cost and less effort while at the same time it helps to improve water quality, expands plant and animal habitat and protects the natural Pinelands environment.

### Wildlife Will Love Your Garden

The Pinelands provides habitat for 144 different birds. In addition, 34 kinds of mammals and 30 kinds of reptiles and 24 types of amphibians live here. By using native plants you can attract some of these animals to your backyard and help them survive.

(Source: Boyd, "A Field Guide to the Pine Barrens" 1991)

### 6 Reasons to Landscape with Native Pinelands Plants

1. Conserves precious water
2. Reduces the need for costly and potentially toxic fertilizers
3. Provides food and shelter for birds, butterflies and other wildlife
4. Local plants are locally adapted, so they are healthier
5. Maintains the Pinelands' special biodiversity
6. Increases understanding and appreciation of our natural areas

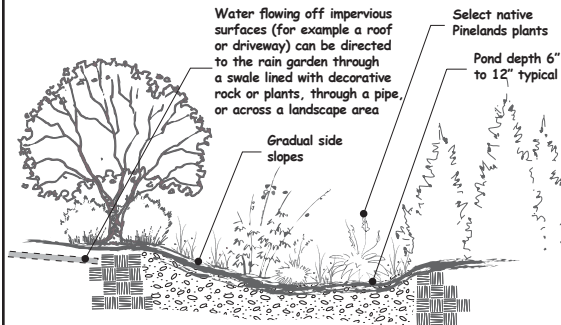
### Critter Control

One of the keys to successful native landscaping in the Pinelands is controlling the animals, especially deer, that want to eat your plants. Since deer will eat virtually any plant, native or otherwise, the most effective strategy is to exclude them from the portions of your yard that you want to cultivate. You can effectively discourage deer either by setting up electric fencing or by installing a high fence. Various types of deer fencing are commercially available. Black plastic mesh is relatively easy to install and virtually disappears when viewed from a distance. It effectively excludes deer while maintaining an open, natural-looking landscape.



### Consider A Rain Garden in Your Landscape Design

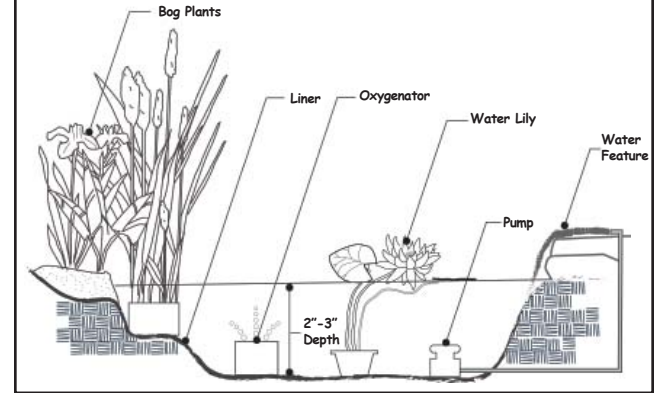
Rain gardens act like native forests by collecting, absorbing, and filtering stormwater runoff from roof tops, driveways, patios, and other areas that don't allow water to soak in. Rain gardens are simply shallow depressions that can be shaped and sized to fit your yard, are constructed with soil mixes that allow water to soak in rapidly and support healthy plant growth, and can be landscaped with a variety of native Pinelands plants to fit the surroundings.



Rain gardens are versatile and effective tools in a new approach to managing stormwater called low impact development (LID). A LID project may incorporate several tools to soak up rain water, reduce stormwater runoff, and filter pollutants. Some examples of these tools include permeable paving, compost-amended soils, vegetated roofs, rainwater collection systems, and rain gardens.

### Water Gardens Add Visual Interest

Water gardens attract a wide variety of native Pinelands wildlife such as birds and amphibians. They also provide options for increasing plant diversity in the landscape, offer an unusual alternative to large expanses of lawn, create a focal point in the garden and add serenity to your backyard environment.



### Did You Know That...

- Americans manage more than 30 million acres of lawn, our largest crop.
- We spend \$750 million a year on grass seed alone.
- In managing our yards and gardens, we tend to over-apply products, using 100 million tons of fertilizer and more than 80 million pounds of pesticides annually - up to 10 times more than farmers use on crops.
- The average homeowner spends 40 hours each year behind a power mower, using a quart of gas per hour.
- Grass clippings consume 25% to 40% of landfill space during a growing season.
- Per hour of operation, small gas-powered engines used for yard care emit more hydrocarbon than a typical automobile (mowers 10 times as much, string trimmers 21 times, blowers 34 times).
- A yard with 10,000 square feet of turf requires 10,000 gallons of water per summer to stay green.
- 30% of the water consumed on the East Coast goes to watering lawns.

(Source: "Bay Journal", Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, April 2004)

Consider the environmental benefits or just think about all the time, money and effort you could save and you'll probably agree that it's worth going native. There is a broad array of Pinelands plants that are well suited to the gardens around your home. Use them in your landscaping plans and contribute to the protection and preservation of the Pinelands and the natural environment in which you live.

A list of Pinelands plants and their uses for landscaping, habitat enhancement and forest restoration is available on line at the following web site:

[http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/infor/fact/native%20plants\\_links.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/infor/fact/native%20plants_links.pdf)