Self-Guided Tour

THE NATIVE PLANT CENTER'S
STONE COTTAGE GARDEN AND RAIN GARDEN

Stone Cottage Garden
The Stone Cottage Garden is divided into four demonstration areas divided by pathways. Each bed displays a different way native plants can be utilized. Most of these plants tolerate full sun. The gardens are being redesigned to develop a stronger focus of each theme.

A Fall and Winter Interest
Plants that look especially nice in fall and winter are sited here. The faux archway is flanked by an upright form of southern magnolia (Magnolia virginiana ‘Apex’), an evergreen that bears white flowers spring–autumn followed by decorative “cones” with red berries. The moss phlox (Phlox subulata) is a sturdy evergreen spreader that flowers in spring and sprawls over slopes and stone walls.

B Foundation Garden
Plants along the wall would do well as a foundation planting in a sunny location; dwarf inkberry (Ilex glabra ‘Compacta’) is a sturdy evergreen, and the hawthorn trees (Crataegus viridis ‘Winter King’) have spring flowers, vibrant fall color, and red berries that last all winter. The tidy dwarf fothergilla (Fothergilla gardenii) has clusters of frilly white flowers in spring and brilliant orange-red color in fall. It also will grow in sun or part shade. Dwarf clethra (Clethra alnifolia ‘Hummingbird’) flowers in late summer through autumn with sweetly-scented white blossoms. The bush honeysuckle (Diervilla lonicera) at the end of the garden bears attractive yellow flowers in spring–summer and handsome reddish-tinged new growth.

C Hummingbird and Butterfly Garden
Bees and hummingbirds frequent the brilliant red bee balm (Monarda didyma), butterflies love the pink and orange milkweeds and the ox-eye sunflower (Heliopsis helianthoides ‘Summer Sun’) that blooms for a long time and freely seeds itself. False indigo (Baptisia spp.), a large, shrub-like perennial, in spring burst with dramatic blue or white flowers that complement their powdery, blue-tinged foliage. A summertime favorite is Dumbo’s ears (Rudbeckia maxima) that have bold, blue-green foliage and tall stems topped with black-eyed susan flowers.

D Low Groundcovers and Lawn Substitutes
Plants in this garden are good alternatives to replace sunny lawns. Bearberry (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi) is a creeping evergreen shrub that likes sandy soil and has red berries and red-tinged leaves in winter. Tickseed (Coreopsis verticillata ‘Grandiflora’) spreads prolifically, chokes out weeds, and blooms all summer. Appalachian sedge (Carex appalachica) has a soft look that could substitute for turf.

Rain Garden
The central element of the Rain Garden is a wide streambed lined with gravel and round river stones. The streambed carries stormwater runoff from the roof and downspouts of the cottage and channels it into a twin series of depressions, or infiltration trenches, connected by an additional streambed. These trenches are lined with filter (scrubber) fabric and filled with a soil mixture composed of equal parts soil, sand/gravel, and compost.

Plants installed in the trenches were carefully chosen for an ability to tolerate extreme fluctuations in moisture, from temporarily submerged to drought conditions. Their characteristic development of long tap roots with fibrous root structures increase their ability to absorb water efficiently and effectively assimilate pollutants that may be present in stormwater. Among the species in this garden are river birch (Betula nigra), blue flag iris (Iris versicolor), winterberry (Ilex verticillata) red twig dogwood (Cornus stolonifera) sweet pepperbush (Clethra alnifolia), and swamp milkweed (Asclepias incarnate).

In Addition...
The Stone Cottage, home of The Native Plant Center, is surrounded by a multitude of species. On the west side above the Rain Garden is a wildflower and fern garden to explore. Stroll around and enjoy the beauty and diversity of native plants.

THANK YOU FOR VISITING.