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MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN'S NEW RAIN GARDEN IS A SUSTAINABILITY SHOWCASE

(ST. LOUIS): The Missouri Botanical Garden has added one of the hottest trends in sustainable gardening practices to its grounds: a **rain garden**. The new display, located north of the Kemper Center for Home Gardening building, captures rain water in a garden bed, alleviating excess storm water runoff that can infiltrate the sewer system and eventually pollute lakes and streams. The Garden's ornamental display of both natives and hardy non-native cultivars was designed for easy replication by home gardeners.

Rain gardens are shallow depressions that mimic wetlands in form and function. Plants, stones and landscape characteristics force rain water to slow down and capture it temporarily. Plants and soil absorb the water, seizing impurities and carbon dioxide while releasing oxygen. When this excess water eventually reaches the sewer system, there is less contamination from chemicals and other wastes. Plants selected in the Midwest growing region should include varieties that can tolerate periodic inundations followed by dry conditions later in the summer when rainfall is at a minimum.

“We chose our rain garden site because of its significant slope that naturally collected runoff,” said June Hutson, supervisor in the Kemper Center for Home Gardening. “Water would typically run to a lower drain near the site, but our new rain garden should distribute the water and eventually replace this feature.”

The Kemper Center is dedicated to home gardening, so care was taken to select plants that could be easily obtained and grown. The display includes both Missouri natives and others not native to the St. Louis-metropolitan region but that are dependable cultivars. The result is an

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ADD ONE: Rain Garden

ornamental display that can be both functional yet attractive to home gardeners.

Rain garden plants used by the Missouri Botanical Garden include:

<i>Achillea</i> ‘Red Beauty’	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
<i>Amsonia</i> ‘Blue Ice’	<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i> ‘Piglet’
<i>Amsonia hubrichtii</i>	<i>Hibiscus</i> x ‘Fantasia’
<i>Amsonia montana</i> ‘Short Stack’	<i>Kalimeris</i> ‘Blue Star’
<i>Aster oolentiginensis</i>	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>
<i>Carex</i> ‘Ice Dance’	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>
<i>Carex stricta</i>	<i>Phystostegia</i> ‘Miss Manners’
<i>Coreopsis</i> x ‘Jethro Tull’	<i>Rudbeckia</i> ‘City Garden’
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> ‘Vintage Wine’	<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> ‘Sensation Rose’
<i>Geranium</i> x ‘Rozanne’	

Other selections used in edging include:

<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	<i>Heuchera</i> ‘Purple Petticoats’
<i>Aster laevis</i>	<i>Heuchera</i> ‘Rave On’
<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	<i>Nepeta</i> ‘Candy Cat’
<i>Dianthus</i> ‘Firewitch’	<i>Oenothera macrocarpa</i>
<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	<i>Rudbeckia missouriensis</i>
<i>Gaura</i> ‘Siskiyou Pink’	

See photos and read more about these plants by visiting www.gardeninghelp.org and searching the PlantFinder database, or visit http://www.mobot.org/hort/rain_garden/default.asp. Learn more about rain gardening by enrolling in “Native Plant School: Rain Gardening and Storm Water Runoff,” Thursday, June 11 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit, Mo. Cost is \$12 per person and advance registration is required; call (636) 451-3512, extension 0.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in south St. Louis, easily accessible from Interstate 44 at the Vandeventer exit. The Kemper Center for Home Gardening is approximately a ten-minute walk from the Garden’s main entrance.

Garden admission is \$8 for adults; St. Louis City and County residents enjoy discounted admission of \$4 and free admission on Wednesday and Saturday mornings until noon. Children ages 12 and under and Garden members are free.

For general information, visit www.mobot.org or call the recorded event line at (314) 577-9400 or toll-free 1 (800) 642-8842.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is the oldest continually operating botanical garden in the nation, celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2009. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years*.

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NOTE: Digital color images available by request. Download media materials at www.mobot.org/press.

The Missouri Botanical Garden's mission is "to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life." Today, 150 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education and horticultural display. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years.*

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of I-44 at Vandeventer-Kingshighway (exit #287B). Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Dec. 25. Grounds open at 7 a.m. every Wednesday and Saturday. Admission is \$8; free children ages 12 and under and Garden members. St. Louis City and County residents are \$4 and free every Wednesday and Saturday until noon (exception: special admission rate events). Park for free on site and two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. The Garden is easily accessible by taking the MetroLink commuter rail line to the Central West End station and picking up a Metro bus (www.metrostlouis.org). For general information, log on to www.mobot.org or call the 24-hour recording at (314) 577-9400 or 1-800-642-8842. For membership information, call (314) 577-5118 during weekday business hours. For volunteer opportunities, call (314)-577-5187 or visit www.mobot.org/volunteer. The Missouri Botanical Garden is a tobacco-free environment.

(Note: A section of the I-64/U.S. 40 highway is under construction through 2009. Before traveling, check www.thenewi64.org for updates or visit www.GetAroundStL.com for other helpful information.)