Retention Pond/Rain Garden Update – March 2025

For those that don't know what all those plants are doing in that shallow trench to the north of our parking area, that is a retention pond. It was required by the county to catch the rain and snow melt coming off our hardscape (the driveway, roof, etc.). There used to be a soggy, sometimes-lake in that area during wet season. But that pond, on its own, was big and frankly ugly.

How about a rain garden there – filled with native flowers and shrubs, attractive to pollinators, birds, and other wildlife? Rain gardens are specially built areas with particular plants that can handle the widely varying conditions of both drought and standing water, With advice from WSU and other local rain garden establishments, we began putting in natives in the furthest west portion a little over a year ago. Amazingly, they almost all survived that 19° cold snap last winter. Spring and fall '24 we installed more plants, and are looking to complete the remaining open area either this spring or next fall.

Because pollutants from the driveway, etc. are flowing into the rain garden which helps to naturally cleanse the runoff, please know the plants may be unhealthy for human consumption. Admire and enjoy, but please don't pick or eat anything out of the rain garden.
Also, due to the fragile nature of the pond's construction, we ask that folks stay out of the garden, to reduce soil compaction and prevent damage to those sometimes small native plants (the reason for the flags).

Each year, as the garden begins to fill in, we should see more winged visitors to share in the beauty and peace of our own native oasis. Many hands (and shovels) helped in its creation – a shout-out to Lou Foldoe, Edie Davis, Nels Peterson, and especially to Rose Prestipino, who believed in the project from the get-go. For questions, please contact Cyndi Ross at cydiross87@gmail.com