

Rain Dog Designs

Building Sustainable Neighborhoods

osprey drive gig harbor



12216 osprey drive

1 front before and after

2 back before and after

3 construction

4 rain gardens

5 shrubs and ground covers

6 trees

7 amenities

The homeowners on Osprey Drive wanted to 1) strike a better balance with their beautiful natural surroundings and take more responsibility in managing the rainfall from their roof; 2) create an engaging landscaping that required less maintenance, using little or no pesticides or fertilizers; and 3) enjoy an outdoor space that would be much more useful and attractive, with an informal and natural back yard and a more formal front yard entrance.

Rain Dog Designs worked closely with them over a two year period to design and install a front and backyard landscaping system that:

- completely disconnects from the stormwater system using three rain gardens
- provides edible fruit trees and shrubs
- provides low maintenance native plants and hardy cultivars
- establishes natural yard care practices and water conservation
- provides attractive and useful amenities

Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are simply shallow depressions of compost amended soil, planted with native plants and hardy cultivars, and finished with a layer of mulch. They require an inflow, usually from a downspout or driveway surface, and a safe overflow during heavy rain events. They are shaped and sized to fit the yard and landscaped with plants that match surrounding elements, improving the appearance of the home. Rain gardens mimic a native forest's drainage system by collecting, absorbing, and filtering stormwater runoff. Rain gardens filter pollutants from rain water and infiltrate that water safely into the soil.

Three rain gardens were designed and installed, two in the back and one in the front yard, and they were sized to catch and infiltrate all of the roof rainwater. Rainwater is captured and slowly released, so that in a day or so all of it infiltrates and recharges local streams and aquifers. In the winter when there is a lot of rain, these gardens attract several wild mallard ducks that live in the neighborhood.

Plant Choices

Edibles and native plants became important project elements. The high maintenance turf was now mossy and multicolored, and a priority was to replace it with useful plants that would attract wildlife and provide food. We established a rich palette of natives and cultivated edibles, including blueberry, lingonberry, apple trees, camas, huckleberry and serviceberry. All the plants were sourced locally or within a few hours driving distance from the project site.

Natural Yard Care

Our yards are an outdoor extension of our homes, and in taking care of them we often water inefficiently, produce a lot of yard waste, and overuse chemicals that are bad for the environment and our families' health. We employed natural yard care best practices, including amending soils with compost, choosing low maintenance native plants and hardy cultivars that need little or no attention for insects and disease, and replacing high maintenance turf with mulch and native ground covers. The irrigation system now in place can be turned off in the next watering season.



cover photo is of front yard 1

photo above is of front yard rain garden 4











1 western sword fern

2 heuchera

3 mock orange

4 serviceberry

5 coastal strawberry

6 lupine

7 rubus emerald carpet

8 golden mop



1



2



3



4



5



6

1 bloodgood maple

2 vine maple

3 paper birch

4 cascara

5 ashfield weeper hemlock

6 laceleaf maple

