



GET INVOLVED!

- Sign up for newsletter.
- Attend one of the scheduled pop-up events (check upcoming events).
- Go to the [Engage R1](#) webpage to see project updates and provide feedback.
- **Volunteer to participate in planting days here** [VOLUNTEER SIGN UP FORM](#)

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY IN THE REGION

Know Your Native Plants

The textbook definition of native plants is: they are the plants that have been growing in an area prior to European settlement. Another way to define native plants is: Native plants evolved or adapted to our local environment for *thousands of years*, and are an important part of our local habitats, ecosystems and ecosystem services (pollination, infiltration, etc.). They are the most sustainable plants for our specific area. Our native plants not only adapted physically, but chemically and genetically.

Simply put, these plants existed here without human introduction. They are

adapted to our local climate and weather patterns. Many are hardy and easy to establish in the landscape.

Ken Rock Park Native Plants

Ken Rock Park is located at 2930 Bildahl Street, Rockford IL (61109), between 9th Street and IL 251 on Reed Avenue

Native Plants installed at the Ken Rock bioretention basin*

*A bioretention basin is a shallow, vegetated basin that hosts a variety of plants and typically includes an underdrain, which is a drainage feature installed underground. On average, bioretention basins filter out 77% of stormwater total suspended solids concentrations, 50% of total nitrogen, and 50% of total phosphorus to improve water quality.



Pale Purple Coneflower
(*Echinacea pallida*)



Blue Flag Iris
(*Iris virginica shrevei*)



Brown Fox Sedge
(*Carex vulpinoidea*)



Rattlesnake Master
(*Eryngium yuccifolium*)



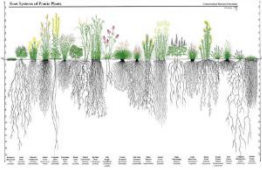
Cardinal Flower
(*Lobelia cardinalis*)



Marsh Blazing Star
(*Liatris spicata*)



Swamp Milkweed
(*Asclepias incarnata*)



Ken Rock Park Bioretention Basin

Project Partners



This brochure was prepared using United States Environmental Protection Agency funds under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act distributed through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

Image sources: Van Berkm Nursery, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, M. Pissant Iris Farm, Friends of the Wildflower Garden, High Country Gardens, Icel Native Plants, White Flower Farm, American Meadows, Est the Woods, Skeels Gardens, Scott SWCO

The poster shows a collection of native plants installed at the Ken Rock Park bioretention basin.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Dates TBD

Park-Er-Woods Planting Installation

Planting native vegetation at Park-Er-Woods project site. New dates coming soon. Sign up to volunteer for this planting event using the volunteer sign up link above!

NEED TECHNICAL SUPPORT?



Image Source: Alliance for the Cheapeake Bay

Property owners who require additional help with evaluating potential BMP improvements to their specific location can request technical assistance with staff from Olson Ecological Solutions. For more information, or to schedule a consultation, please contact Program Outreach Coordinator Estelle Adiaba, eadiaba@r1planning.org so that she can assist with determining eligibility. For more information, visit the [Engage R1 Page](#)

QUESTIONS? CONTACT

Estelle Adiaba

Outreach Coordinator

eadiaba@r1planning.org

For more information, visit project website: [Engage R1](#)



Join R1 and partners on a tour and information session of the best management practice (bioretention basin) installed at Ken Rock Park. Come see how the plant plugs will, in time, bloom to beautify the location, sleeping in the first year, creeping in the next year, and leaping to full bloom within the next three years.

Contact Program Outreach

Coordinator eadiaba@r1planning.org for more information and to schedule a tour.

POLLUTION CONTROL

THE ROLE OF NATIVE PLANTS IN WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Why Are Natives Being Installed In The Bioretention Basin?



Image Source: Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District

Native plants help reduce water pollution. They have deep roots that allow rainwater to soak well into the ground. Rain that does not soak into the ground flows off lawns and pavement and into storm drains where it is carried away to nearby ponds, lakes, and streams. This rain runoff brings with it many non-point pollutants such as sediments, nitrogen and phosphorus. Native plants soak up that rainwater and filter pollutants leaving less runoff and less water pollution that can lead to water quality concerns.

EROSION CONTROL

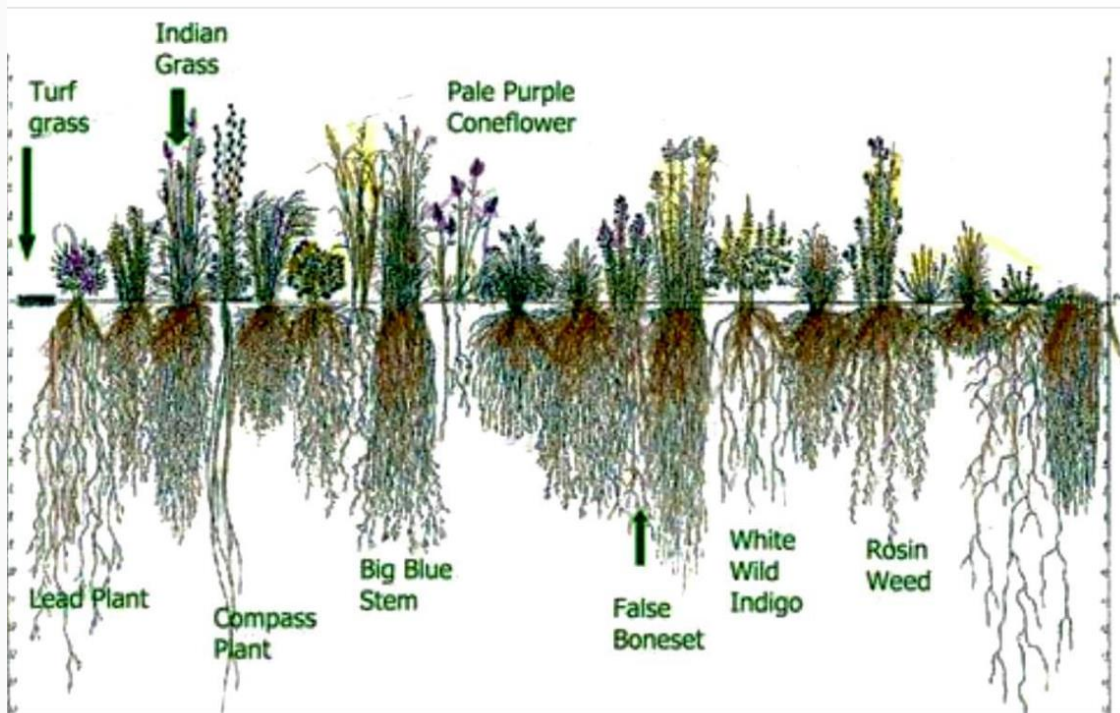


Image Source: The Eco Preservation Project

Native plant roots often have extensive networks that aid in soil stabilization and erosion control. They help bind the soil particles together, reducing the risk of erosion caused by wind or water. Native plants are essential in maintaining healthy riparian zones, preventing sediment runoff into water bodies and preserving water quality.

BIODIVERSITY SUPPORT



Image Source: [medium.com](#) @stephen-Webb

Native plant roots support biodiversity by providing habitat and food sources for a wide array of soil-dwelling organisms. They promote the growth of beneficial soil microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, which contribute to nutrient cycling and the overall health of the ecosystem. Native plant roots also attract beneficial insects and provide shelter for various organisms.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Winnebago County SWCD is excited about this Education and Outreach Project, which will help demonstrate Best Management Practices that government bodies, public and private organizations, and individual landowners can do on their properties to address soil erosion, nutrient runoff and other pollutants that impact our local natural resources.

Our region has very diverse land uses, ranging from agricultural cropland and pastureland, recreational parks and open space, commercial and industrial uses, and large to small lot residential communities. The District will assist in this project by presenting at, or hosting, educational workshops and programs on various best management practices landowners or operators can adopt on their property. The District and its partner agencies within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Pheasants Forever have multiple programs that provide cost-share or technical assistance, that can be utilized to help implement these practices.

The District is also providing technical assistance for the demonstration projects

that are being done as part of this grant. To check out what services we already have, such as our cost-share programs, or our rain barrel and low-cost tree and shrub sales, go to our website at www.winnebago-swcd.org. For information on federal programs through USDA, go to www.nrcs.usda.gov/il.

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<https://engager1.mysocialpinpoint.com/watershed-education-outreach>

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