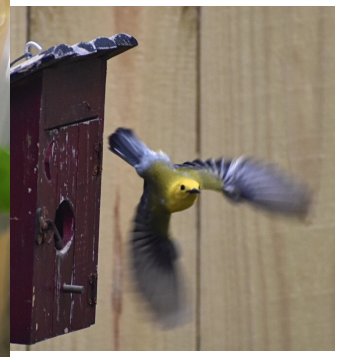
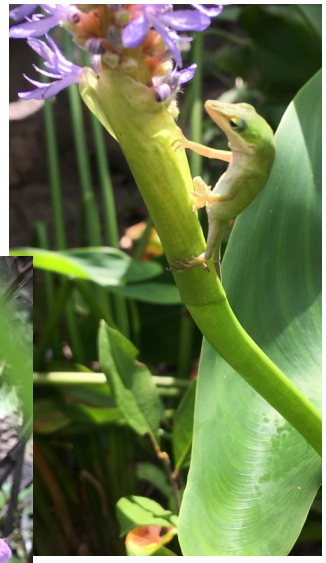
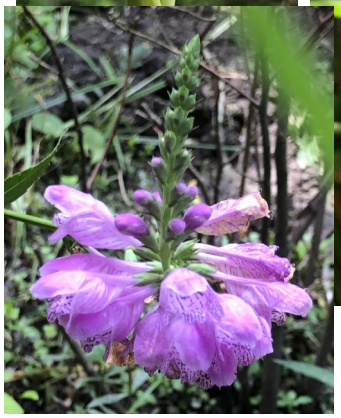






[1] Keddy, P.A. *Wetland Ecology: Principles and Conservation* (2nd ed.) (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[2] Helen Kraus and Anne Spafford. *Rain Gardening in the South* (Hillsborough, North Carolina, Eno publishers, 2009), 24.

[3] Kraus and Spafford. *Rain Gardening in the South,* 130.

[4] Kraus and Spafford. *Rain Gardening in the South,* 132.

PLANT SELECTION

The BRG can host plants found in aquatic or marshy habitats and generally any plants that thrive in moist, rich soil, such as:

Alligator Flag (Thalia dealbata)

American Crinum Lily (Crinum americanum)

Blue Cardinal Flower (Lobelia siphilitica)

Bog Hemp (Boehmeria cylindrica)

Cardinal Flower (Lobelia cardinalis)

Copper Iris (Iris fulva)

Giant Blue Iris (Iris giganticaerulea)

Lizard's Tail (Saururus cernuus)

Pickerelweed (Pontederia cordata)

Possumhaw (Ilex decidua)

Red Chokeberry (Aronia arbutifolia)

River Oats (Chasmanthium latifolium)

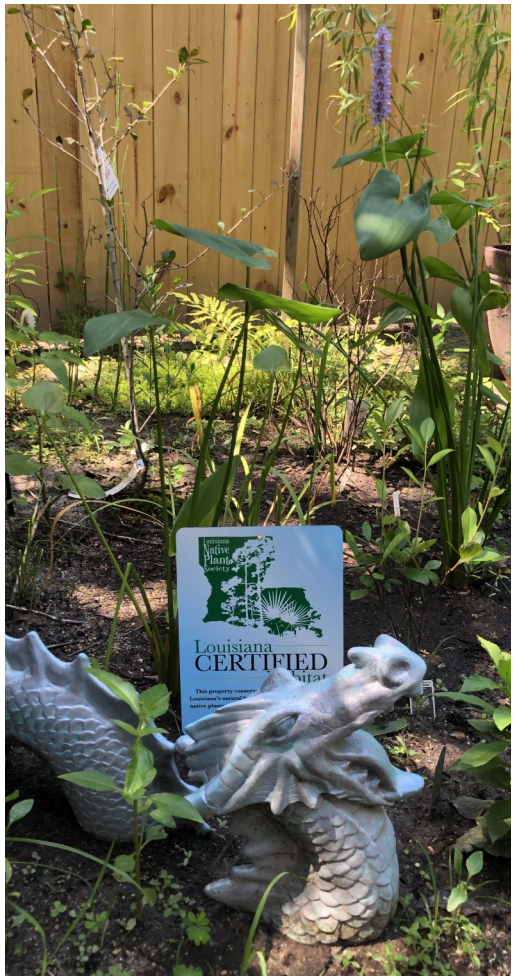
Scarlet Belle Pitcher Plant
(Sarracenia x wrigleyana)

Scouring-rush horsetail (Equisetum hyemale)

Sensitive Fern (Onoclea sesibilis)

Sharpwing Monkeyflower (Mimulus alatus)

CREATING A BOG RAIN GARDEN



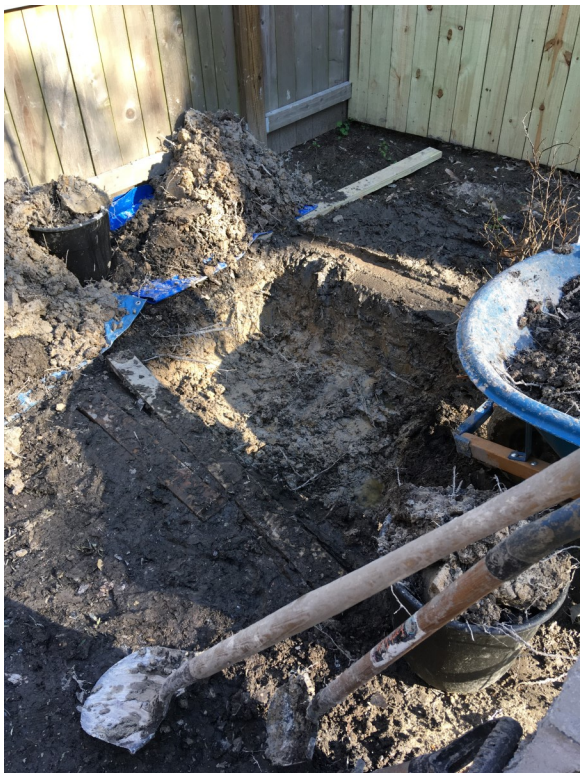
Alok R. Kharey

Flowering Soulfully Sanctuary & Studio

A bog is a wetland that accumulates peat, a deposit of dead plant material - often mosses, and in a majority of cases sphagnum moss.[1]

A rain garden contains soil that has been amended to allow water to infiltrate and drain through it quickly, thus creating a filter bed.[2]

A bog rain garden (BRG) combines the moisture and abundant organic matter of a bog with the water draining ability of a rain garden to create a habitat in which native plants that need moist soil can thrive.



SITE SELECTION

A BRG can provide the added benefit of improving drainage to a poorly draining part of a garden. A BRG is not well suited to solving drainage problems caused by excessive water runoff from a roof or other source. A traditional rain garden might be more useful for that purpose. A BRG, however, can be located in an area that drains poorly due to clay soil. Look for the "wet spot" in your garden, i.e., the part of the garden that drains more poorly than the surrounding area at the same level.

SOIL AMENDMENT

Clay particles are flat and stack together closely, creating long, thin gaps (pores) between the particles. These small, thin pores hold water tightly enough that gravity cannot pull the water down toward groundwater supplies quickly.[3] Additionally, if the soil lacks enough large pores to allow oxygen to move into it, roots will grow only at the surface where they can get oxygen. The better a soil is amended and the larger the mixture of pores, the deeper roots will grow, because the plant will have a greater volume of soil to exploit for water, nutrients, and oxygen.[4]

After selecting the site for the BRG:

1. Remove soil to a depth of approximately 18 inches;

2. Replace the excavated soil with a 50:50 mixture of sphagnum peat moss (SPM) and sand;

3. Following the next rain, add additional SPM and sand until the area will support your weight.

CAUTION: although the BRG may be firm enough to support your weight after step (2), once it encounters water, it will no longer do so. Until additional SPM and sand are added in step (3), the BRG is more wetland than BRG.