

Conservation Landscapes

Conservation landscapes are designed, planted and maintained to benefit people, the local streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Conservation landscapes use native plants as a low-cost alternative to traditional landscapes, which use turf grass and ornamental plantings.

The benefits of conservation landscapes include:

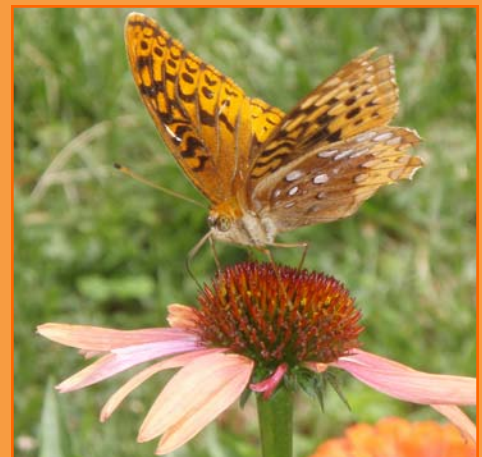
- A unique, aesthetic beauty.
- Minimized need for mowing, pruning, irrigation, pesticides and fertilization, saving you time when compared to traditional lawn maintenance.
- Costs typically half or as little as one-fifth the cost of conventional landscapes.
- Creative and fun designs with plants of your choice.
- Absorption of more stormwater than a conventional landscape.

Native plants used in a conservation landscape:

- Are relatively low maintenance and better adapted to local climate conditions than conventional landscapes, resulting in less need (and cost) for herbicides, fertilizers, pesticides or soil conditioning.
- Help to remove suspended solids and heavy metals from groundwater.
- Stabilize soils and prevent erosion.
- Provide food and habitat for local wildlife such as beneficial pollinators, songbirds, and migrating birds and butterflies.

To install a conservation landscape:

1. Select an area where you would like to create a conservation landscape. It can be in an existing garden bed, or you can replace an area of lawn. Native plants flourish in local soils—even clay— but working leaf mulch or compost into the soil can improve drainage.



Some native plants options will attract butterflies and birds to your yard.

2. Select the plants and get started creating! Landscapes that include trees or shrubs provide the most benefits for water quality and wildlife, but beds of flowering native perennials will attract pollinators like butterflies and bees. County staff can provide you with information on appropriate plants for a conservation landscape.
3. Plant your landscape!

Conservation landscape maintenance in the first year after installation may require the new plants to be watered if it doesn't rain for an extended period of time. Mulching can help improve soil health and limit weed growth. Occasional weeding may be needed. Trees and shrubs may need pruning and perennials may need deadheading, depending on species. Replacement of diseased or dying vegetation, or reseeding, may also be required.

Learn more about conservation landscapes at:

- www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake
- www.chesapeakelandscape.org
- www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/nativeplants.shtml
- <http://audubonva.org>

Arlington's StormwaterWise Landscapes Program
www.arlingtonva.us/stormwaterwise



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