

Stormwater News

Fall Edition: Bringing Biodiversity Back to Your Yard!



The Environmental Cost of Lawns

Despite looking lush and green, traditional turf grass lawns provide little to no environmental benefits. In fact, they often have detrimental effects on the quality of local waterways, wildlife habitat, and the air that we breathe. Here are some of the ways that lawns can harm the environment:

- **Lack of Biodiversity** - lawns are typically made up of a single, non-native grass species that does not provide shelter or food for wildlife.
- **Increased Water Usage** - lawns consume more water than native landscapes leading to water waste and increased runoff.
- **Increased Carbon Footprint** - the maintenance of lawns requires the use of gas powered lawn equipment that contributes to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Use of Harmful Pesticides / Fertilizer** - these chemicals can harm local wildlife, contaminate water resources, and lead to the growth of algae that can be harmful to humans and pets.



learn more at: www.perkiomenwatershed.org



Swapping Turf Grass for Native Gardens

Want to swap your high maintenance lawn for something more colorful, environmentally friendly, and easy to manage? Here are some ways to add biodiversity back into your yard:

- **Decrease your lawn area** - smothering grass with cardboard is an easy way to kill turf and add garden area to your yard. Late summer / fall is the perfect time to remove turf and add native plants!
- **Reduce / eliminate your household pesticide / herbicide use** - use environmentally friendly alternatives or eliminate lawn care products all together!
- **Plant with a variety of native species** - native plants are vital to the survival of pollinators, birds and other wildlife. When planting your garden, aim to use species that bloom throughout the year as well as a mix of perennials, shrubs and trees!
- **Add a bird, bat or pollinator house** - providing safe areas for wildlife to rest and raise their young is a great way to increase the diversity of wildlife that call your yard home!

