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**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



**August 2021**

## **Welcome to The Red Oak Rain Garden's monthly newsletter!**

The [Red Oak Rain Garden \(RORG\) Team](#) produces this e-newsletter monthly to keep our supporters up to date on everything that's going on at the garden.



A Ruby-throated Hummingbird visiting Cardinal Flower at the Red Oak Rain Garden. Photo by Layne Knoche.

**Public Engagement**

## Blogs

- [In the Garden: July](#)

## Social Media Highlights

- Celebrated [4<sup>th</sup> of July](#).
- Other popular posts included the [bridge completion announcement](#) and the [Woodland Brochure Series release](#).

## RORG Student Team

[Sandra Bjerga](#) continues to help plan and develop social media. She recently interviewed Professor Tony Endress, who led the charge on the original build of the garden in 2006. The interview is currently being converted into a blog. Sandra has also developed the Red Oak Rain Garden Plant Library on our website: <https://redoakraingarden.org/plants-of-the-red-oak-rain-garden/>.

## Presentations & Tours

The RORG team took July off to focus on the project and other work deliverables.

## Fundraising

As of early June, all Community Stewardship Challenge Grant goals have been met thanks to your generous support! Now that the bridge has been built, our fundraising focus shifts to the installation of an interpretive sign that explains what a rain garden is, as well as the general history of the Red Oak Rain Garden. If you're interested in supporting this phase of the project, click [here](#).

## In the Garden

### July Activity

- ***Plant Life***  
Showy summer blooms include Purple Poppy Mallow, Purple Coneflower, 'Rozanne' Geranium, Butterflyweed, Yellow Coneflower, Royal Catchfly, Cardinal Flower, Joe Pye Weed, Tall Bellflower, and Rosinweed. Nodding Onion, installed in Fall 2020, is performing very well and was a great addition to the garden. [See our full plant library](#).
- ***Monitoring***  
*Precipitation:* Our [CoCoRaHS](#) rain gauge watchers reported 3.62 inches of precipitation. The average for July is 4.5 inches.
- ***Boardwalk Bridge Update***  
The boardwalk bridge officially opened to the public on July 21. Visitors to the garden have been thrilled to cross it!

- **Field Guide Update**

The RORG Team is working with Extension's Justin Klett on developing a handheld field guide to be used by volunteers working in the garden. The guide, which is nearing completion, will include species identification cards for each of RORG's 54 species, as well as cards for a variety of weeds that pop up in the garden.

## **What to Watch for in August**

While Cardinal Flower has reached its peak bloom, sporadic blooms will last for another two months. In the meantime, watch for Ruby-throated Hummingbirds that have been seen many times visiting the flowers. Black Eyed Susan will be in full bloom later this month. Other species in bloom include Joe Pye Weed, Purple Coneflower, 'Rozanne' Geranium, Purple Poppy Mallow, Butterflyweed, Rosinweed, Compass Plant, Yellow Coneflower, and Royal Catchfly. See our full plant collection [here](#).

Many species of butterflies and other pollinators are coming into the garden to take advantage of the plentiful blooms from our native plants, especially Yellow Coneflower, Purple Coneflower, and Joe Pye Weed. Monarch caterpillars can be seen munching on Butterflyweed and Swamp Milkweed in the sunny areas of the garden.

## **Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities**

The garden is being kept beautiful with the help of volunteers from the [Champaign County Master Gardeners](#) and [East Central Illinois Master Naturalists](#), who have started a regular workday each Friday morning from 9:00-11:00am. Volunteers are needed throughout the growing season to help with various garden-care activities. If you are interested in participating, check out our [Volunteers hub](#) on the website, send us an email at [redoakraingarden@gmail.com](mailto:redoakraingarden@gmail.com), or contact us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [Twitter](#).





Nodding Onion (white), 'Rozanne' Geranium (purple), and Cardinal Flower (red). Photo by Layne Knoche.

Support the Red Oak Rain Garden

**Red Oak Rain Garden | [redoakraingarden@gmail.com](mailto:redoakraingarden@gmail.com)**

The Red Oak Rain Garden (RORG) is **located** on the University of Illinois Urbana campus between Allen Hall and McKinley Health Center. The RORG Team works for **Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant** and **University of Illinois Extension**.

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**Office of Extension and Outreach** | 111 Mumford Hall (MC-710) | 1301 W. Gregory Dr. | Urbana, IL 61801 | Phone: (217) 333-5900 | Email [extension@illinois.edu](mailto:extension@illinois.edu)  
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