

Creating a Simple Bog Garden

A fun project for the garden is creating a new environment for some specialized plants. Bogs are home to many beautiful plants, and form naturally over years where water tends to collect. There are many plants suitable for a bog garden, including some of the hardy terrestrial orchids, pitcher plants (*Sarracenia* species), and some iris and monkey flower (*Lupinus*) species. A simple bog is easy to construct using a pre-formed plastic pond from a nursery or big box store.



Choose a site for your bog with compatible sun exposure for the plants you intend to grow. Choose the size of bog you want

for your landscape. Either sink the pre-form into the ground, or plan to disguise it with rocks or other means. The bog in this example is about 3 feet deep, and an oval shape about 3 feet by 4 feet, but you can use a smaller or larger container to fit your desired space. Fill the bog to a depth of about 2 feet with course rock, the larger rocks on the bottom, getting smaller toward the top. Drill holes in the sides of the container at the top of the rock layer for drainage. This will be your water reservoir. Place a liner of landscape cloth over the rocks. This will prevent your soil mixture from compacting into the rocks, but allow water to wick up to the planting area. You can sink a

pipe into one corner of your bog, 1 to 2 inches above the edge of

the container, to facilitate adding water to the reservoir if necessary. The idea is that your bog plants like the water to be available all the time, but don't necessarily want to be saturated. The crowns of the plants will be relatively dry, and the roots will reach for the water in the reservoir. In our climate, rainwater will provide enough water most of the year. If the bog starts to dry out add fresh water to the reservoir. Flush the reservoir occasionally with fresh water. Fill the remainder of the container with a mixture of 1 part sand and 3 parts peat moss or compost, dampened and mixed well. Allow this mixture to settle for a few days. Now you are ready to plant.



Some of the references below have alternative bog preparation methods, some simpler, some more complex. There is even a blog devoted to answering questions about bog gardens. Have fun with your new environment!

For a list of additional plants recommended for bog gardens, see BackyardGardener.com.

References

[Build a Simple Bog Garden](#), Debra Teachout-Teashon, retrieved 2/10/08.

[Making a Bog Garden](#) Rob Sacilotto, retrieved 2/10/08.

[A Bog Garden](#), C. Colston Burrell, 1997 Brooklyn Botanic Garden, retrieved 2/10/08

[Garden Web: Bog Garden Forum](#)