

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



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Celebrating natives
plant and natural
landscapes
since 1979.

The Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Water You Gonna Do About It?

In 1917, during World War I, the Washington State Legislature passed a bill which reads, in part, "... all waters within the state belong to the public, and any right thereto, or to the use thereof, shall be hereafter acquired only by appropriation for a beneficial use and in the manner provided and not otherwise. ..."

The practical upshot of this law is that all water in Washington, whether in rivers, lakes, the ocean, or the atmosphere is the property of the people and subject to regulation by state government. To be within the letter of the law, residents need to apply for special permits to restrict the flow of rainwater. One would suppose that this rule also applies to rain gardens.



For many years, people have collected rainwater for use on their property. This practice may be illegal. Senate Bill 5113, presented to the Washington State Senate in January 2005, is designed to allow the Department of Ecology (yes, they have a Department of Ecology in Washington State), to draft rules to permit the legal use of rain barrels and cisterns to collect water for beneficial use on one's own property. Landowners would not need to seek permits on an individual basis. The Washington State Department of Ecology has no interest or intent to require a water right for rain barrels.

Looking to Identify an Insect You Found?

If you would like help to identify an insect, spider, or one of their kin, visit the guide at www.bugguide.net/. If you don't find it there, and you have an image of it, you may wish to register and request an identification by posting your image in the "ID Request" section.

Disclaimer of the web site: Dedicated naturalists volunteer their time and resources to provide this service. We strive to provide accurate information, but we are mostly just amateurs attempting to make sense of a diverse natural world. If you need expert professional advice, contact your local extension office.

I like their attitude; sounds a lot like that of Wild Ones.

Maryann is Editor of the Wild Ones Journal, and comes to the position with an extensive background in environmental matters of all kinds.