

Alton students soak up some artistic inspiration

Rain gardens collect and filter rain water.

They also inspire students to create beautiful one-of-a-kind sculptures.

Students at Alton Public School unveiled their art projects, made from reclaimed wood, Oct. 22. They will be showcased as permanent art installations in the new rain garden at Alton Park.

The rain garden is an educational resource for students, teaching them about the water cycle, biodiversity and how to care for their local environment. The garden is also a demonstration site for the community, showcasing what people can do to improve water quality and decrease flooding on their properties. Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) built the rain garden in partnership with Alton Public School and the Town of Caledon.

“Rain gardens are beautiful additions to any property,” said CVC spokesperson Julie McManus. “We’re very encouraged by the level of involvement from Alton Public School. These students are the next generation of environmental champions.”

Kindergarten through Grade 6 students from the school were involved in the project from the start. In 2013, they helped CVC win a grant from Shell FuellingChange by encouraging residents to vote for the project online. This past June, the students helped CVC choose a design and select plants for the garden at a design workshop held in partnership with Fern Ridge Landscaping. In September, students and teachers at the school created beautiful art pieces from reclaimed wood that are now featured in the garden.

“The artwork speaks to the strong connection between art and nature,” said McManus. “The rain garden inspired these students but more importantly, we’re inspired by the students’ commitment to the natural environment.”

Rain gardens collect rainwater from hard surfaces, such as roofs or pavement, and filter out pollutants so cleaner water can flow into waterways. They also help conserve a valuable and often disregarded source of water. The rain garden at Alton Park collects rainwater from the roof of a pavilion and helps clean this water before it enters Shaws Creek, a tributary of the Credit River.

The Alton Park rain garden is one of three demonstration sites recently built in Alton. Rain gardens were also built on two residential properties in the village. These sites prove that you can build a fantastic looking landscape and also ensure clean and abundant water for the community.



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