

*S. Lignum Vitae (Guajacum sanctum)*

Native to the Caribbean, Lignum-vitae (Tree of Life) is a showy large shrub or small tree with shiny evergreen leaves, light gray bark, and the bluest flowers you will ever see on a tree. Lignum-vitae has the hardest wood of any commercially harvested tree; it is very heavy (it will not float), close-grained and split resistant, and is valued for propeller shaft bushings, machine parts, and other applications in which its natural resins make it self lubricating. Lignum-vitae also is the source of *gum guaiacum*, a resin once used to treat syphilis, arthritis, gout & sciatica.



*T. Flamboyant (Delonix regia)*

Flamboyant is native to Madagascar (where it is endangered), but it is cultivated world-wide, including in the Caribbean. It is a legume so it has nitrogen-fixing and soil-improving properties. Its dense shade and root system prevent other plant species from growing under it, and its wide-spreading roots can damage building foundations and pavement. The seed pods are used in the USVI as a percussion instrument known as a 'shack-shack.'



*U. Christmas Palm (Veitchia merrillii)*

Christmas palms are native to the Phillipines, but are cultivated world-wide, including in the Caribbean.



USDA-NRCS Caribbean Area

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# Rain Garden Plants

USDA-NRCS,  
 St. Croix Environmental Association  
 (SEA) & Horsley Witten Group, Inc.



**53 Hope & Carton Hill,  
 St. Croix, USVI**

Tired of rutted roads?

Do your part and disconnect! Call your HOA for details.

**Rain gardens** are shallow, man-made depressions that are planted with deep-rooted plants and grasses, preferably native species. They are strategically located to capture runoff from paved areas like driveways, parking areas, sidewalks or streets. Rain gardens fill with a few inches of water after a storm. Then the rain water slowly seeps into the surrounding soil, rather than running off to flood or erode streets or drainage channels.

The Cullen's rain garden is a pilot project in the Hope & Carton Hill neighborhood to show residents how to capture storm water runoff from their driveways and retain it on their properties. Removing driveway runoff from the neighborhood road network helps to reduce road deterioration, improve road drainage and provide homeowners with a beautiful landscape; as well as reducing the amount of eroded sediment that reaches coastal waters, protecting coral reefs.

20% of the total Hope & Carton Hill road network is driveways. Runoff from driveways that drain to our roads contributes to road erosion and overall road maintenance costs. If each homeowner managed the runoff from their driveway with a rain garden, our road problems would be greatly reduced!

Check it out as you are driving through!



N. Unknown (??)

O. Marron Bacora (*Solanum conocarpum*)

*Solanum conocarpum* is a thornless, flowering shrub native to the dry, deciduous forests of St. John. It is severely threatened due to limited range and habitat destruction, with only ~200 known individuals in the wild, it is a candidate for federal endangered species listing.



P. Purple Queen (*Tradescantia pallida*)

Purple queen is an evergreen perennial native to Mexico's Gulf Coast. It is a shade-tolerant ground cover thriving in a wide range of soil conditions.



Q. Wedelia (*Sphagneticola trilobata*)

Wedelia is native to the Caribbean and Central America. It is a creeping, perennial herb with yellow-orange daisy-like flowers. Wedelia forms a dense ground cover that crowds out weeds, but can also crowd out other plants so must be regularly pruned. It grows well in shade and in poor soil, and is useful for erosion control.



R. Turpentine Tree (*Bursera simaruba*)

Turpentine is a semi-deciduous tree native to the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America. It is fast-growing and can reach 20-50 feet in height. Its reddish bark peels away in thin flakes, inspiring the nickname "tourist tree." A resin from the trunk and bark is used in the West Indies to make glue, varnish, water repellent coatings and incense. It smells a little like turpentine. The fruits are eaten by birds.



J. West Indian Mahogany Tree  
(*Swietenia mahagoni*)

Native to the Caribbean, Central & South America, Mahogany is prized for lumber and furniture. It is also grown as an ornamental and shade tree in subtropical and tropical regions.



K. Ti Plant (*Cordyline fruticosa*)

Ti Plant is native to tropical southeastern Asia, the Indian Ocean, and parts of the South Pacific. It is an evergreen flowering plant in the Asparagus family, also known as Cabbage Palm, Good Luck Plant and Palm Lily. It was cultivated in Polynesia for its starchy rhizomes, which are very sweet when the plant is mature, and eaten as food or medicine. Its leaves were used to thatch the roofs, to wrap and store food, and to make clothing.



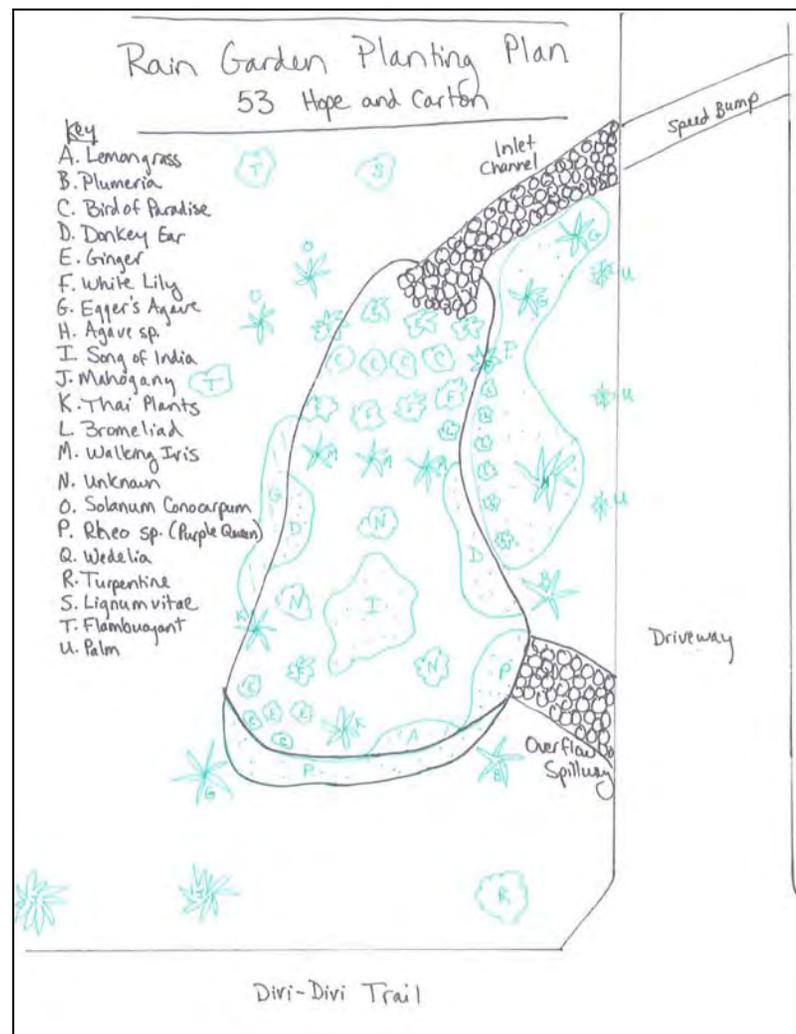
L. Flaming Torch Bromeliad (*Billbergia pyramidalis*)

Native to Brazil, it can grow as a terrestrial or epiphyte. When planted in the ground, it quickly creates large clumps; when planted at the base of a tree, will slowly climb the trunk. It is very hardy and needs little care. In heavy shade leaves are dark green, while in sun the leaves are bright yellow-green. The water-filled well at the base of the leaves acts as a frog refuge.



M. Apostle's Iris (*Neomarica gracilis*)

Apostle's Iris is a type of walking iris native to Central America. The flowers only last one day but the plant produces many blooms. Once the flower is spent, the stem it was on leans to the ground and forms a new plant. Both the white and yellow varieties have been planted in the rain garden.



A. Lemon Grass (*Cymbopogon*)

Native to India and tropical Asia. It is widely used as a herb in Asian cuisine. It has a subtle citrus flavor and can be dried and powdered, or used fresh. Lemongrass is commonly used in teas, soups, and curries. It is also suitable for poultry, fish, beef, and seafood. Lemongrass oil is used as a pesticide and a preservative. Research shows that lemongrass oil has anti-fungal properties. Despite its ability to repel insects, its oil is used as a "lure" to attract honey bees.

B. Frangipani (*Plumeria alba*)

The native, or wild, frangipani has smooth bark and long, slender leaves. It produces a white, aromatic flower that is processed into essential oils used for fragrances.

C. Bird of Paradise (*Heliconia psittacorum*)

This species is indigenous to the Amazonian rain forest and are typically pollinated by hummingbirds.

D. Elephant Ear (*Alocasia sandieriana*(?))

Alocasia species are native to tropical & subtropical Asia and widely cultivated as ornamentals.

E. Red Ginger (*Alpinia purpurata*)

Red Ginger are native Malaysian plants with showy flowers on long brightly colored red "bracts." The bracts look like the bloom, but the true flower is the small white flower on top.

F. White Flag (*Spathiphyllum sp.*)

*Spathiphyllum* is a genus of about 40 species of flowering plants native to tropical regions of the Americas and southeastern Asia. Certain species of *Spathiphyllum* are commonly known as Spath or Peace Lilies. They are evergreen herbaceous perennials with large leaves and flowers that are produced on a spike surrounded by a white, yellow, or green curved bract. It doesn't need excessive light or water to survive.

G. Egger's Agave (*Agave eggersiana*)

Egger's Agave is native to St. Croix and a candidate for listing as federally-threatened or endangered. It is a robust, perennial herb with a flower stalk that can grow up to 21 feet tall. Its yellow flowers are large and funnel or tubular shaped.

H. Century Plant (*Agave sp.*)

Perennial herbaceous plant native to the southwest United States and the USVI. Each rosette flowers once & then dies. In the USVI, the flowers & stalks have traditionally been harvested & spray-painted for use as a Christmas trees.

I. Song of India (*Dracaena reflexa*)

*Dracaena reflexa* var. *angustifolia* (or *D. marginata*) is a popular houseplant that needs little attention. It has thin, linear, deep glossy green leaves with red edges; there are also cultivars with variegated leaves with pale yellow or red edges. It tolerates dry soil and irregular watering, but not water-logged soils. It is an effective air cleaner and can remove formaldehyde, xylene and trichloroethylene from indoor air.

