

## Oasis Built on Sustainable Living Practices

June 8, 2010

Bob and Janet Pollan love the outdoors, but the sounds from neighboring pool pumps and air conditioning units made it difficult for them to truly enjoy their back yard. "We wanted something beautiful and peaceful to improve the value of our property and just spend more time outdoors," Janet said.

[Click here for slideshow.](#) From a friend's recommendation, the Pollans contacted Kelby Reed at Rainscapes Environmental Solutions, a Tampa, Fla.-based company specializing in water features, rainwater harvesting and landscaping. After reviewing Reed's proposal, the Pollan's hired Reed to 'create a visually stunning landscape, while raising the bar on environmentally friendly practices and sustainability.'

Reed designed the water feature with a main waterfall to collect, filter and direct rainwater to a 1,200 gallon RainXchange basin at the bottom of the waterfall and with two 7,000gph high-efficiency pumps to push the water back to the top of a meandering 50-foot stream. The second waterfall was designed to help aerate the feature as well as direct floating debris to an overflow skimmer.

Heavy rains, seasonal preparation for winter's deep freezes, steep slopes and limited site access, forced Reed's crew to build one section of the water feature at a time. Reed's team took advantage of the land's natural slope and set flagstone and large stones as walkways, stepping stones and constructed a small bridge over the stream to an adjacent seating area with flagstone terrace patios. They also strategically placed boulders along the pond at the perfect height to allow visitors to dangle their feet in the water.

"The water feature is the heart of the project," Reed said. "Saving natural resources now is the way of our future. By converting the existing irrigation to micro, reusing and storing rainwater, adding sustainable plants and creating our own micro environments, Rainscapes significantly reduced the amount of water used at this Tampa residence."

Koi fish welcome passers-by with open mouths in hopes of receiving something tasty to nibble on. When the curved palms do not provide enough cover, the fish can find protection in small caves and passages.

The pond aerates on a timer and can be operated with batteries in the event of a power loss. The bottom drain prevents sediment from accumulating in the deep pockets of the pond. An ionizer maintains and regulates water quality.

Pond water is drawn directly from the stream's tank by a booster pump and hose bib. Micro irrigation uses the enriched

stored water on the aquatic plant material along the stream as well as the surrounding herb and vegetable gardens. The micro irrigation is controlled by a Hunter Syc-100 wireless controller timer and solenoid valve.

The water feature includes automatic pump shutoffs in case the water levels become too low. Reed's team installed "rain swales" and an elaborate storm water filtration and distribution system.

"I love the conservation side of it," Janet said. "It's quiet and peaceful and landscaped beautifully. All we hear now is the trickling brook."

### Specifications

Designer: Kelby Reed, Rainscapes Environmental Solutions

Contact: Zephyrhills, Florida, 813-500-2939, [www.rainscapesllc.com](http://www.rainscapesllc.com)

Project Location: Tampa, Florida

Components: Aquascape Products - Signature Series 6000, one Signature Series 2500 Biofall, one Aquascapes 7000, two 120-foot 2-inch flex PVC, one large snorkel and vault, RainXchange 1000-gallon kit, eight small Aquablox, three downpoint filters, 10-foot by 50-foot liner, 20-foot by 30-foot liner and underlayment, two autopump shutoffs, one ion gen and one half-HP booster pump. Other components include about 8,500 pounds of Pennsylvania bluestone flagstone, about 7,000 pounds of Pennsylvania mountain stone, about 280,000 pounds of Tennessee riverstone, about 9,000 pounds of river gravel and LED lighting.

Time to complete: 3.5 months for the entire project; just over two weeks for the water features