

# NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN



# NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2018



## CHANGING SEASONS

This summer was too hot, too rainy, too muggy — but also beautiful at times. We hope you had a good growing season.

**THANK YOU** to everyone who pitched in this year to make the community garden thrive! This is a team effort that works only if everyone participates. 🍀

## GIVING UP PLOTS

At the July Ragweed Walkthrough, inspectors discovered 35 plots that appeared to be abandoned and 42 plots without signs. *Don't wait until the last minute!* Start cleaning up plots now, so you won't miss the October deadline.

And if you plan to give up your plot, e-mail Larri or Betsey now to let us know. Please leave your plot in good shape. 🍀

## END OF SEASON CLEANUP

**NOTE:** The Garden Committee has decided to push back the dates for Fall Cleanup and Fall Inspection — because some things are still growing in early fall and Gardeners still want to use the hoses and water, etc.

## FALL CLEANUP DAY

Come to the Garden on **Saturday, October 20**, 10–12 and 2–4, to help get the garden ready for winter. Have you fulfilled your two hours per plot service requirement? If not, this is a great time to help out.

Garden Committee members will be on hand to suggest garden chores for you to tackle. Now that the weather is cooler, come out and get some exercise!



Trish Allen

Master Gardeners will offer **SOIL TESTING** on Cleanup Day. Find out if your soil needs amendments before the end of the season.

## PLOT CLEANUP

Every gardener must clean up plot(s) in preparation for winter. Fall Inspection is scheduled for **Sunday, October 21**.

If your plot does not meet the guidelines described below, you will receive an e-mail (or written notice) saying what further needs to be done.

There will be a “last-chance” inspection on **Sunday, Nov. 3**. If your plot fails *both* inspections, you will be unable to register for next season. If your plot passes



## 2018 GARDEN CALENDAR

**\*\*NOTE NEW DATES!!!\*\***

### FALL CLEANUP DAY

Saturday, **October 20**

### FALL INSPECTION

Sunday, **October 21**

### LAST-CHANCE INSPECTION

Sunday, **November 3**

### GARDEN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Third Monday each month @ 6:00 p.m.  
at the Rec. Dept. at JFK Middle School

on the second inspection, you may register, but there will be a \$10 fee, payable with registration. **There will be no extensions.**

## WHAT IS FALL INSPECTION?

On Sunday, **October 21**, teams of volunteers will be checking plots to make sure the guidelines for fall cleanup have been met. They will be checking to see whether:

- ✓ You have **cut down** all dead plant material and properly disposed of it. (Compost it in your own plot or in one of the community compost piles. Do not leave old tomatoes, squashes, etc., lying in your plot uncovered, as this attracts animals. Put diseased plant material in plastic bags and toss into the dumpster.
- ✓ You have **cut down** tall grasses and weeds around your plot, to no more than 6” tall. (NOTE: if not

cut, they will send unwanted seeds into your plot and others' plots as well.)

✓ You have **cut back** perennials where appropriate. (The point of this is to prevent unwanted seeds from invading others' plots.)

✓ You have **disposed** of all paper and plastic debris, paper and plastic bags, and plastic plant pots. (Left in your plot, they blow all over the Garden and across the street into our neighbors' yards.)



Noa C.W.

✓ You have **removed** all tools, watering cans, etc., if not in use; you have taken hoses home or coiled them and stored them flat; you have removed plastic furniture. (Some of these items will blow around the Garden and be lost to you and become a nuisance to someone else. All will deteriorate from being exposed to weather.)

✓ You have **laid flat and anchored** securely any stakes, tomato cages, etc., that you leave in your plot.

✓ You have **firmly anchored** any structures – arbors, trellises, birdhouses – that remain in your plot.

✓ You have a **visible, legible sign(s)** showing your plot number(s).

Please remember that failure to pass inspection means that you won't be able to renew your plot(s) for next year. 🍀

## REGISTERING FOR 2019 SEASON

Plot **renewal forms** will be mailed in **early December** to all gardeners who have passed fall inspection (see story below) and fulfilled their community service requirements.

These forms will allow you to:

- 1) renew registration of your garden plot(s) for 2019, and
- 2) request an additional plot (or plots).

The Garden Committee will also include a questionnaire, which asks how you think we could improve the Garden. 🍀

## THINK OF POLLINATORS WHEN PUTTING GARDEN TO BED FOR WINTER

Soon Monarchs will start heading south and other pollinators will start looking for a place to hunker down for the impending winter. Fall inspection at NCG happens on October 14 with all the hurry and scurry that deadline brings with it. In the midst of all the bustle, kindly pause to remember the pollinators.

Some plants are particularly beneficial for wildlife and insects during winter months. For example, The hollow stems of swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) are nesting material for various bee species whose services we will need next spring. Cast an extra eye, too, on the stems of any dead stalks before

they are cut to see if they might harbor future Swallowtail butterflies. Those hardy beauties stick around for the winter, often hiding in their chrysalis' to ride out the snow and cold. The accompanying photo show how different these tiny protective cocoons can be.



Swallowtail chrysalis coats come in many shades

So instead of quickly plunking those stalks and seedheads on the mulch pile, consider leaving them up, at least a few, for the bees and butterflies. These little steps can go a long way to help ensuring NCG's gardens will continue to have thriving pollinator habitats everyone can enjoy. 🍀



Noa C.W.