

NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN



MAY 2019

CLEAN PLANT SALE

Saturday, June 1 / 2:00–6:00 P.M.



We bring the plants to you!

Get all your non-pesticide treated plants at the Second Annual Clean Plant Sale at the **Northampton Community Garden**.

Vegetables, fruits, annuals, perennials, and native wildflowers.

All are grown without pesticides!

All are pollinator-friendly!

All proceeds go to the farmers/growers!

Wing and a Prayer Nursery / Amy Pulley, Cummington

Bare Roots Farm / Chris Reid and Anna Maunz, Worthington

That's a Plenty Farm / Cathy and Michael Katz, Hadley

Crabapple Farm / Rachel & Tevis Robertson-Goldberg, Chesterfield

Nasami Farm / Native Plant Trust, Whately

The following groups will be on hand to offer information and answer your questions:

- Western Massachusetts Pollinator Networks
- Western Massachusetts Master Gardeners
- Greening Greenfield
- Native Plant Trust
- The Conway School

INVITE YOUR GARDENING FRIENDS!



JUNE INSPECTION

Sunday, June 2, is the date for our annual **IS-YOUR-PLOT-PLANTED? INSPECTION**. Volunteer inspection crews will be checking that you've been working in your plot this season: i.e., *seeds planted or starter plants in place; weeds under control; and grass at the edges of the plot trimmed.*

Perfection is not required, but evidence of gardening activity is. No one wants *weed seeds* blowing onto another gardener's plot. If your plot is a sea of weeds, it'll fail.

The inspection crews will also check to make sure there is a **permanent, visible, legible plot sign** that displays your **plot letter and number**. Please make the letters at least 1 1/2" tall, and set the sign 18" off the ground. You may wish to write your first name somewhere on your sign, so neighbors can say Hello. 🍀

WATER USE

Greetings from Tom and Jana, who serve as your water liaisons to the Garden Committee.

This year, we have been checking each water spigot every week, looking for leaks in faucets or hoses. However, we still need your help; if you see a leak that you're unable to fix, please immediately contact Tom Bassett at [<SHAWBASS@COMCAST.NET>](mailto:SHAWBASS@COMCAST.NET).

We also invite you to help us to conserve water every day. The



2019 GARDEN CALENDAR

IS-YOUR-PLOT-PLANTED? INSPECTION

June 2 / Sunday

RAGWEED / MID-SEASON INSPECTION

July 14 / Sunday

FALL CLEANUP DAY

October 19 / Saturday / 10-2

FALL INSPECTION

October 27 / Sunday

GARDEN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Second Wednesday of the month; @6:00 P.M. at the Rec. Dept. at JFK Middle School or in the Garden if weather permits, unless otherwise noted. Gardeners are welcome to attend. If you want to talk about something, please let us know in advance so we can add your topic to the meeting agenda. Check nohogarden.org for dates.

FRIENDS OF THE FORBES LIBRARY 26TH ANNUAL NORTHAMPTON GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, June 8 / 10 A.M.-3 P.M.
Rain or Shine.

All proceeds benefit Forbes Library

Information at: <[HTTPS://FORBESLIBRARY.ORG/FRIENDS/EVENTS/GARDEN-TOUR](https://forbeslibrary.org/friends/events/garden-tour)>.

Four plots in our Garden will be included in this year's tour: the gardens of Tom Gagnon and Larri Cochran. There will be signs directing you to their pollinator-habitat plots, an information table, and garden guides. 🌿

THEFT IN THE GARDEN — PLEASE BE WATCHFUL

We hate to have to publish this, but we have already had reports of theft in the Community Garden this season. Plant starts and decorative objects have gone missing from plots.

Please keep an eye out for suspicious activity in your area. You should feel free to *politely* ask someone you don't recognize if this is their plot (sometimes gardeners ask friends to pick produce or water if they're away). But please do not get into a confrontation with another person.

Report any theft to a member of the Garden Committee. You can take a photograph of a license plate if the suspicious person is in a car. If you see outright theft, call the police.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LOCK THE TOOL SHED whenever you leave it, to help prevent theft. 🌿

COMPOST vs. BRUSH PILE vs. DUMPSTER

COMPOST PILE

- Weeds (if not diseased)
- Dead or freshly-pulled plant material

BRUSH PILE

- Woody plants
- Dead asparagus ferns
- Sunflower stems

DUMPSTER

- Diseased plants
- Trash (but please first consider re-using it or taking it home) 🌿

following suggestions mean less work for you, more water for your plants, and less water use and a lower water bill for our community.

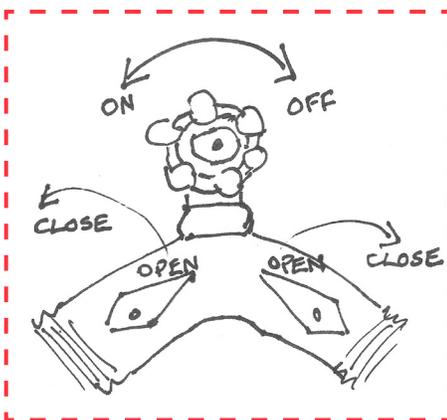
You can **save water** by:

- Mulching your crops with straw or other covering
- Practicing No-Till gardening
- Watering in early morning or evening (not in the heat of mid-day)
- Spot watering, using a watering can
- Using watering vessels planted in the ground
- Allowing your plants to suffer a little dryness early in the season so that they put down *deeeep rooooots*. Deep roots mean less watering for you all summer long!
- And please, always, when you are done watering, close all of the shutoff valves, not just the main spigot. That helps a lot.

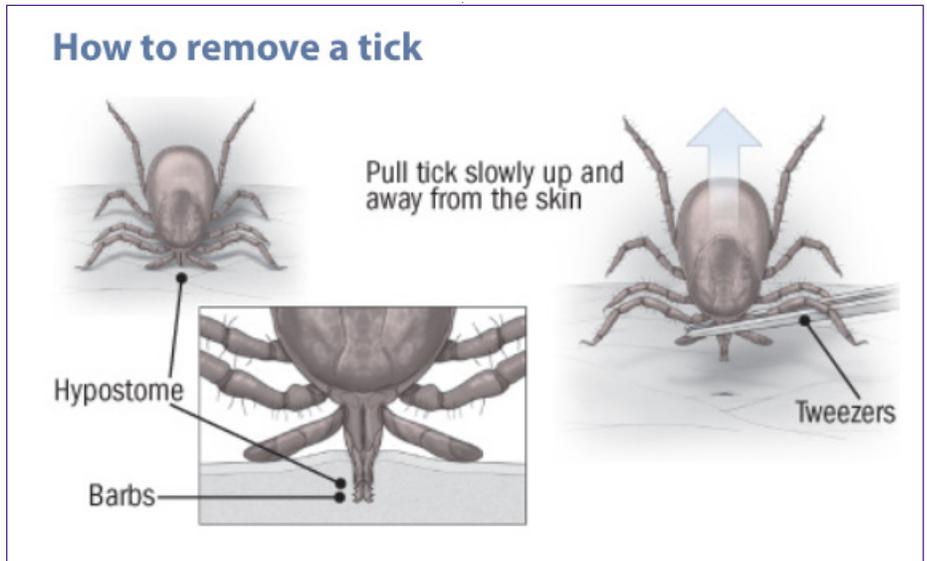
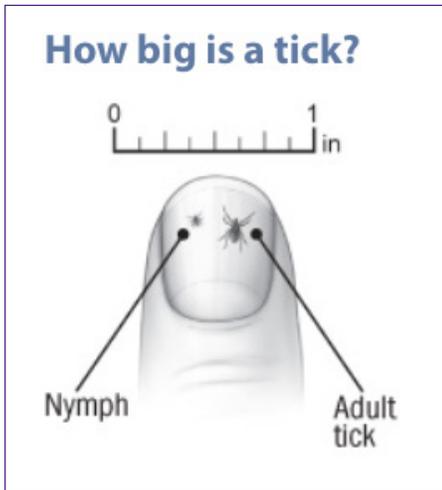
Use the water you need to make your garden grow; but keep cost and conservation in mind.

Thanks everyone; we'll see you in the garden! 🌿

— Jana Chicoine



Please turn off **BOTH** the handle and the little lever. **EVERY** faucet! **EVERY** time!



Illustrations from <www.health.harvard.edu>

TICKS

As gardeners, we all need to be very aware of the dangers of ticks and the diseases they carry.

<MASS.GOV> publishes lots of information specifically about the risks in our state: <HTTPS://WWW.MASS.GOV/TICK-BORNE-DISEASES>

One of the most important things you can do is **check yourself for ticks** once a day. Remember to check your children and pets, too. Remove any attached ticks as soon as possible.

As soon as you come inside, check these areas of your body:

- Inside and behind ears
- Along hairline
- Back of neck
- Armpits
- Groin
- Legs
- Behind knees
- Between toes

UMASS OFFERS TICK-BORNE DISEASE DIAGNOSTICS

The UMass Amherst Laboratory of Medical Zoology (LMZ) tests ticks to determine whether or not they carry the pathogens that cause Lyme Disease and more than twenty other tick-borne pathogens. All species of ticks do

not carry all of these pathogens.

For help in a preliminary identification of ticks, visit URI Tick Encounter: <TICKENCOUNTER.ORG/TICK_IDENTIFICATION/TICKID_NONFLASH>. To get a tick tested at UMass (for \$50) visit <WWW.TICKREPORT.COM>. 🌿

CARING FOR YOUR GARDEN PLOT

There is one thing that, above all else, helps you to have a successful gardening experience, and that is getting weed roots out. Doesn't it figure that the activity we like the least is ultimately the most necessary! The good news is that if you put in the time to weed well, and then if you will cover your soil with mulch, you will have happy soil and you will not need to weed much in future years. If you have to plant in an area that still has lots of weed roots, you may be frustrated by the weeds after a while, as they can soon choke out your cultivated plants. By working on this during cool spring and fall weather, and by mulching, you can optimize conditions for success.

Once the heat of summer hits, bare unmulched soil seizes up and becomes hard, and it is more difficult to get out the weed roots.

Walking around the garden, you will see some plots with no weeds, some plots with all weeds, and some plots with a balance of weeds. Some plots have thick tangled weed roots that have to be dug out, and some gardens have shallow weeds that are easy to pull. Some gardeners grow certain kinds of weeds on purpose, because they help make healthy soil, and they do not choke out other plants. Some of our plots have a form of weed grass that is particularly challenging — crab-grass. The roots can go down two feet and across two feet, the brittle roots can easily break when pulled, and a one-inch bit of root can regrow. But don't despair; it can be conquered through vigilance and gratitude.

If you want to have few weeds, and have those weeds be easy to pull, take the time to get the big roots out of the soil first, and then mulch. Try to put in a few hours a

week until your weeds are under control. Since the weeds were covering and protecting your soil health, try to then cover your soil with something else – hay, shredded leaves, pine needles, even cardboard. These materials keep down weed growth, keep your soil moist and fluffy, and keep worms happy. The worms, in turn, make beautiful soil for your vegetables and flowers to grow in. More about happy soil later... for now, remember that early weeding means happy summer gardening and a better harvest! 🍀

— Jana Chicoine

NORTHAMPTON NEIGHBORS

Northampton Neighbors (NN) is a no-fee, member based non-profit organization that offers volunteer services, programs, and events to seniors who wish to continue living independent, engaged lives in their homes and communities, with a little neighborly help. We have over 600 members in our city so far, and NN Neighbor Circles — smaller neighborhood group — have begun to meet, help, and socialize.

This spring, the NN Village Hill Circle group applied for a Community Garden Plot, and five members are working together to produce wonderful vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Our group of five includes a Master Gardener, an ex-farmer, and lovers of gardening. Getting our hands into the soil while chatting and laughing makes the work easier. At the end of the summer or in early fall, we plan to have a great feast with all of our Circle neighbors, featuring our garden-to-table, very fresh produce.

Stop by Garden plot G09 to see our progress! Learn more at NORTHAMPTONNEIGHBORS.ORG. 🍀

— Sarah Bachrach



Garlic mustard in bloom

ANOTHER INVASIVE PLANT GARLIC MUSTARD

WHAT IS IT?

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is an herb from Europe that was likely introduced for use in cooking. A biennial plant, it doesn't bloom until its second year, when it grows to 1' – 3' tall and produces small white flowers.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Its numerous seeds are dispersed by wind and water. It invades fields and woodlands, displacing native vegetation. Garlic mustard can change soil conditions to inhibit the growth of most other plants.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

For small populations, hand pulling can be effective. You can also mow before the plants produce seeds, but if the stems are cut too high, they may flower again. [According to the Mass Audubon] ...effective remedies are systemic herbicides, applied as a foliar spray. Because

garlic mustard seeds persist in the soil, annual control may be needed for several years. 🍀

— (from WWW.MASSAUDUBON.ORG/LEARN/NATURE-WILDLIFE/INVASIVE-PLANTS/GARLIC-MUSTARD)