

# Garden News

OCTOBER 2020



## STRANGE NEW WORLD

It has been quite a season.

Thank you to everyone who has been reading e-mails and following the rules required by the City of Northampton.

We hope you have found solace and comfort in our Garden.

It's time already to clean our plots and close down the Garden for winter. 🌿

## END OF SEASON SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY, OCT 17 / 10:00 A.M. / STRAW BALES DELIVERED

**\*For those who have already ordered.** If you have already responded to earlier e-mails, Sandy Jaescke from Pine Brook Farm will deliver to the rear of the Garden on Saturday, October 17, at about 10:00 A.M.

**\*NOTE\*** Straw bales are \$8.50 each. Please bring cash — exact change — or check made out to “Sandy Jaescke.”

Please remember that you, or your designated representative, must be at the Garden within the 10:00 – 10:30 A.M. time window to pick up your bales.

We are not able to promise help carrying straw, but we'll try to have carts nearby.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 / 10:00 A.M. / COMPOST

**\*For those who have already**

**ordered.** Bulk compost from Bear Path will be available for pickup for those who have ordered, between **10:00 A.M. and noon.**

We'll be selling compost (at cost) at \$3 per five-gallon bucket. Again, **please be there at the designated time** to purchase your compost. You may pay with cash (exact change) or by check made out to the “City of Northampton / Recreation Department.”

**Please bring buckets** and someone to help you carry.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24 / 10:00–2:00 / CLEANUP DAY

Come to the Garden on Saturday, October 24, to help prepare for winter. If you have not fulfilled your two-hours-per-plot service requirement, this is a great time to help out! Garden Committee members will be on hand with a list of garden chores to be completed.

Please remember that **everyone must wear a mask** while working at the Garden. We'll also have plans in place to allow everyone to maintain adequate distance for other gardeners.

### PLOTS SIGNS

**PLEASE, please, please** — be sure you have a **legible sign**

indicating the number of your plot — **where we can see it!** We have 400 plots in the Community Garden. Garden inspection goes so much faster when the people



## GARDEN CALENDAR

### STRAW DELIVERY

(for those who have ordered)  
Saturday, **October 17**  
10:00 -ish

### COMPOST SALE

(for those who have ordered)  
Saturday, **October 17**  
10:00 -ish

### FALL CLEANUP DAY

Saturday, **October 24**  
10:00 – 2:00

### FALL INSPECTION

Sunday, **October 25**

### DUMPSTER LAST DAY

October 25

### WATER TURN-OFF

DPW determines, based on weather

### GARDEN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Garden Committee has not been meeting in person for the last few months.

Please e-mail us if you have questions: [NOHO-GARDEN@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM](mailto:NOHO-GARDEN@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM)

inspecting don't have to search for your plot number.

### DUMPSTER

The dumpster will be removed on Monday morning, October 26th. After then, please **take home your trash** to dispose of it.

## WATER

We're not sure about the final date for water shut-off. But we will send out an e-mail as soon as we hear from the DPW.

## WHAT IS FALL INSPECTION?

On Sunday, **October 25**, 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 a **visible, legible sign(s)** showing your plot number(s).
- ✓ You have **cut down** all dead plant material and properly disposed of it. Compost healthy plant material in your own plot or in one of the community compost piles. Woody plant material goes into the brush pile. 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 back sunflowers and dumped them in **brush pile**.
- ✓ 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.)

- ✓ 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.

If your plot does not meet the guidelines as outlined, you will receive an e-mail (or notice by mail) telling you what needs to be done.

Plots which do not meet ALL of these requirements will fail.

There will be a "last-chance" inspection the following weekend. If your plot fails that last inspection, you will be unable to complete a full registration for next season. **There will be no extensions.** 🌱

## TO CONTACT THE GARDEN COMMITTEE

E-mail us at [NOHO-GARDEN@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM](mailto:NOHO-GARDEN@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM) 🌱



## GIVING UP PLOTS

If you've found that your garden plot is more than you can handle, or you're moving out of the area, or if for any reason you plan to give up your plot, **please let us know now** — at [NOHO-GARDEN@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM](mailto:NOHO-GARDEN@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM). Please leave your plot in good shape. 🌱

## THANK YOU

Thank you, Northampton Parks and Recreation Department, especially **ANN-MARIE MOGGIO**, **JACKIE LIENERT**, and **SANDRA GROSS**, who helped us register Gardeners even while the Rec. Dept. office was closed during COVID spring.

Thank you, **GENEVA BRINTON**, for researching and helping plan a **Tool Locker** that will be added to the existing shed, so everyone can get to the tools without entering the shed.

Enormous thanks to Mowing Mastermind **BLAISE BISAILLON** and all the mowers who kept our paths clear this season, even during the hot, sticky summer.

Huge thanks to **LINDA BISAILLON** for taking charge of all seasonal inspections. 🌱

## REGISTERING FOR THE 2021 SEASON

Plot **renewal forms** will be mailed in **late December** or **early January** 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 2020, and
- 2) Request an additional plot (or plots). 🌱

## THE PANDEMIC AND MY EXPERIENCE AT THE COMMUNITY GARDENS

It's been an extraordinary time for all of us. The pandemic, the climate crisis, the political tone. So much is being asked of each of us — to accommodate, to adapt, to give up. It is a time of loss and isolation. As a psychotherapist, to help people cope better with all the changes asked of us, I encourage them to find a routine and structure that gives meaning, to find ways to reach out to others to decrease isolation, to have things to look forward to. I talk about micro-pleasures, joy in small moments. Future thoughts give us hope. Be outside, and go to nature for sustenance. For me, the Northampton Community Garden offers all of that and more.

Although it's hard to greet other gardeners with masks that obscure their smiles, I still see the gleam in their eyes. I miss sharing time there with those who share my plot, but we are still all working toward a shared and common goal — just at different times. I miss seeing visitors who take delight in our patchwork landscape as they stroll about, and I miss the butterfly and bird enthusiasts who search for nature gems.

What I do find is that every day after I finish my work of Zoom appointments, I so look forward to heading to G2/H2 to see what magic has happened. It offers a me peace-“full” solitude that helps nourish my soul and make these pandemic protocols for safety sustainable. Time is elastic, and though I promise my spouse “I’ll be back soon,” as I head out the door,

I am invariably late, having gotten lost in pulling weeds or adding mulch.

I get to be outside, notice the weather, the sky, the air. Be in the moment aware of my surroundings — a welcome change from the screen I sit in front of all day. I look forward to the bees and butterflies who come to visit. I ask the flowers and vegetables “Who wants to come home with me tonight?” I get to feel a part of something bigger than me, and it puts things into the right size, into perspective.

The Garden offers me many resources. structure and routine, perspective, solitude, and a sense of belonging. There are so many micro pleasures! — a bear whose visit has left dung in my path; a rabbit who enjoys my herbs as much as I do. (I do not mind sharing.) Seeing a neighboring plot grow and evolve, and knowing all the hard work it entails. I notice the little treasures someone has left by the picnic table to recycle into my garden.

We are together six feet apart. See you all next year, hopefully with smiles exposed and embraces safe to give and receive. 🌱

— *In Harmony and Balance*,  
Jori Ross

## MEDICINAL PLANTS

To my delight, after inheriting a second garden plot adjacent to my own, I uncovered some already growing plants. Beneath all the weeds and overgrown grass, I recognized some medicinal plants — and probably some are growing in your garden, too.

## ECHINACEA

*Echinacea*, also known as the cone flower, is an herbaceous flowering plant, a member of the daisy family. It is a perennial with vibrant pinkish purple daisy-like pedals and seems to be quite hardy.



*Echinacea* is an herb that can be harvested and used as a tea, tincture, extract, or tablet. It is believed to have antioxidant properties and to stimulate the immune system. It may help prevent infections and viruses such as cold and flu, shorten the duration of the illness, or provide symptomatic relief. Moreover, it may improve blood sugar levels and address inflammation. It may be used to treat pain and migraine and reduce feelings of anxiety.

It is most commonly known to be high in antioxidants such as flavonoids, cichoric acid, rosmarinic acid, and alameda that help defend cells against oxidation and relieve stress that can lead to chronic disease.

**Please note: Herbs can be as powerful as medication.**

People with allergies to other flowers may develop a reaction. People with autoimmune disorders or those taking immunosuppressive drugs should avoid this herb and consult their health care practitioner first before using echinacea.

**Recipe for echinacea tea:**

You can use the roots, stem, pedals and leaves. You can use them dried or fresh. Echinacea does not have a great taste so adding in mint, ginger, lemongrass, elderberry, rose hips, goldenseal, yarrow or linden in the ratio of 1 teaspoon to 1/2 cup fresh echinacea may enhance the flavor. Steep in 8 ounces of boiling water for 15 minutes.

**COMFREY**

*Comfrey* is a member of the Borages family *Boraginaceae*, also known as *Symphytum*, a flowering shrub with large green leaves. It can be used **only for external** topical treatment.



**Do not ingest** Comfrey, as it may harm the liver and may be carcinogenic if taken internally. Comfrey can be used externally for treatment of muscle sprains, bruises,

cuts and scrapes, burns, sore joint inflammation, and other inflammatory conditions. The dried roots and leaves contain the protein allantoin and rosmarinic acid which stimulate new cell grow and promote wound and bone healing, as well as relieving pain and inflammation. It can also be used to fertilize and build up your soil. Comfrey can become an invasive species; it spreads easily and is difficult to control.

It can be harvested and made into healing ointments, creams, and salves.

Here is a recipe for a Comfrey salve that is easy and inexpensive to make: [HTTPS://PRACTICAL-SELFRELIANCE.COM/COMFREY-](https://practical-selfreliance.com/comfrey-)



**SALVE/**

**CALENDULA**

The third medicinal plant that is common in many gardens as an insect repelling companion plant is **Calendula**.

Calendula is commonly known as pot marigold. There are 15-20 annual and perennial species. It is a member of the *Asteraceae* daisy family of herbaceous plants. The calendula flower can be harvested for topical skin treatment for

wounds, rashes, burns, infection and inflammation. It even touts effectiveness in slowing the wrinkling process with aging. The chemicals in calendula have anti-bacterial properties. Calendula is edible and can be made into a tea. Calendula essential oils can also repel insects and can serve as a companion plant in gardens. It can be made into ointment, oil suspension, and tincture. It is especially adaptive to our northern colder climate. A calendula cream recipe can be found at [WWW.GROWFOR-AGECOOKFERMENT.COM](http://WWW.GROWFOR-AGECOOKFERMENT.COM)>[HOW-TO-MAKE-CALENDULA-CREAM](http://WWW.GROWFOR-AGECOOKFERMENT.COM)

The Northampton Community Garden can be a resource of healing plants, alongside all the other gifts we receive from the flowers, vegetables, and the community. 🌱

—Jori Ross

**STAY WELL**

We wish everyone a safe and healthy winter. We look forward to seeing you next year in the garden! 🌱

— The Northampton Community Garden Committee

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