

Out in the Garden

Rockport Garden Club, September 2019



Horticultural Classroom: Stop, Look, and Listen

Labor Day signals the unofficial end to summer — kids are back in school, summer visitors have left, and our gardens are winding down. Now is an excellent time to review your garden's performance — before the apple-picking and pumpkin-carving frenzy begins! Stop, look, and listen. Did everything grow and flower as you had hoped? Did you see lots of butterflies and hummingbirds? Did you hear the drone of bees and bird song? Chances are you might note changes you'd like to make for next year's garden, and while planning these changes consider transitioning to a more sustainable garden.

Last year, the RGC Board encouraged town garden teams to adopt more sustainable principles when designing town gardens. In short, a sustainable garden is one that avoids depleting our natural resources and promotes a healthier ecosystem. Incorporating more native plants is one way to achieve a more sustainable garden. According to the National Audubon Society, native plants are naturally adapted to local conditions, and as such frequently require less water, a reduced need for pesticides and fertilizers, are lower maintenance, and attract native insects, birds and wildlife.

Another way to embrace the sustainability movement is to incorporate plants that require less water. In addition to lower water needs and drought tolerance, many low-water trees, shrubs, and flowers provide beautiful blooms and fruits that attract butterflies, bees and birds.



Questions? Contact your Home Gardening Committee:

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Wait! What about all those outrageous colorful tropic-als and oh-so-tempting "New for this Season" offerings found in nurseries or catalogs? Relax, those have a place in your garden too; but by incorporating them along with natives and drought tolerant plants you create a more diversified garden. And in the long run, a diversified garden is healthier and more sustainable — better for the environment and less effort for the gardener! For plant recommendations see:

<https://ag.umass.edu/home-lawn-garden/fact-sheets/drought-tolerant-annuals-perennials>

<https://plantfinder.nativeplanttrust.org/index.cfm>

September Garden Reminders

- Plant/transplant trees, shrubs, ground-covers and perennials
- Fertilize peonies with superphosphate; feed roses for last time
- Remove any leaves with black spot; do not compost
- Begin to move houseplants indoors (check for bugs)
- Buy spring blooming bulbs for fall planting



Happenings

Workshop, "Create Your Own Autumn Wreath," Thursday, October 3rd, 10–Noon, Nunan Florist & Greenhouses, 269 Central Street in Georgetown. You will only pay for the materials you use, including a grapevine base, approximately \$35-\$40. To register email:

moorbymary@gmail.com.