

Pollinator PATHWAYS New Hampshire

Restoring Habitat, One Yard at a Time

Sept. 2021

Hello Everyone,

It's Fall! Somehow with all the rain and crazy temperatures I still am not ready for Fall. It seems too soon. But here we are. It's that famous time of cleaning up gardens and making things neat. Or is it? Neat is not necessary good for pollinators. In fact, lots of neat is detrimental to pollinators. Perhaps the word should be tidy instead. You can tidy the gardens and leave the fibrous stalks about



a foot high. Or you can leave them alone. I do advocate lazy gardening, after all. A lazy gardener can trim stalks of the plants that are obviously in the way and leave the others. Pollinators use fibrous stalks as hotels for the cold weather.

Definitely **leave the leaves**. Rake leaves off to the side of lawns. Use them as a mulch in the gardens. Why buy mulch if you have leaves? Don't chop leaves up and then mulch. There are so many different little creatures who live in the leaves and winter-over in the leaves. Chopping up leaves is killing the next generation of pollinators and the tiny life forms that birds and some pollinators eat.

There are so many good places to find advice about Fall maintenance rather than total clean up.

The following is a good resource:

The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden
by Roy Diblik

To quote from the author.

"6 Important Reasons NOT to clean up the garden in Fall.

- 1) Native Bees – are some of the stalk 'hotel' dwellers
- 2) Butterflies – Most butterflies don't migrate like the Monarchs. They stay local (often curled up/or under leaves)
- 3) True Ladybugs, not the invasive Asian Ladybug – hunker down for the winter and then come out in the spring to eat the pests they are famous for eating.





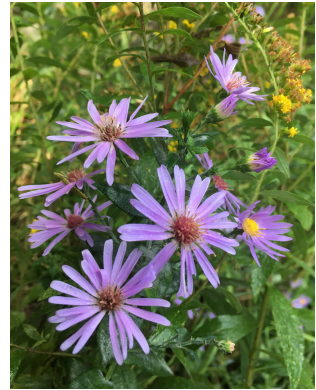
4) Birds – need the catapillars that hatch out in the spring to feed their chicks.

They need thousands of catapillars to raise just one batch of chicks.

5) Predatory insects winter over and then come out to eat pests in the Spring.

6) The beauty of a winter garden is good for the people who are around it.

Save the Garden clean up for Spring-wait for 7 days of above 50 degrees temperatures.”



Fall is the best time to plant native seeds and plants. Native seeds need cold winter temperatures. Wild Seed Project is having a sale right now until the end of Sept. They are local seeds that are native to our area.

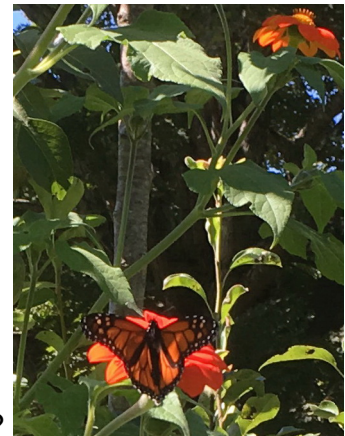
info@wildseedproject.net Other suppliers also have native seeds. Be sure to check that the seeds are good for the Northeast region. The best way to get native seeds from your own area is: gather seeds from your neighborhood. They need to be dark brown and dry. They need to be stored in paper bags (not plastic).

Right now NH Fish & Game is asking people to collect milkweed pods and bring them to gathering spots. <https://nhfishgame.com/2021/09/15/residents-asked-to-collect-milkweed-pods-to-benefit-pollinators/>

This is a state-wide project.

Collect White Oak Acorns for Genetic Research For the second year, a researcher from the University of Kentucky is looking for citizen scientists interested in contributing white oak acorn samples for her research on improving white oak for reforestation. Dr. Laura DeWald and her collaborators are trying to get white oak acorns from across the entire range of white oak so they can sample the full range of genetic diversity in the tree species. Collections from New Hampshire are especially critical because they represent the northeastern edge of the range where the genetics will differ from the core of the white oak range. Interested?

Visit <https://white-oak-genetics.ca.uky.edu/acorn-collection> to learn more, and contact Laura.DeWald@uky.edu if you can help collect.



We hope to offer a workshop in – **October - Putting your Garden to Bed.- event TBA.**

Kingston PPNH will hold our **3rd Annual seed swap on Nov. 13th**
Kingston Community Library. This is our most popular event !

The following are some interesting notes that I have saved over time:



- Small areas, by themselves, are not self sustaining. But, they are supportive of other small areas and larger surroundings. You and your neighbors may each have a small area dedicated to pollinators. All those small areas build a pathway for the pollinators. Saving pollinators 'one yard at a time' builds a supportive network for the surrounding landscape. Try a four by four foot garden. It's small and easy to care for. The size is good for the plants to sustain pollinators and will help build a pollinator pathway.

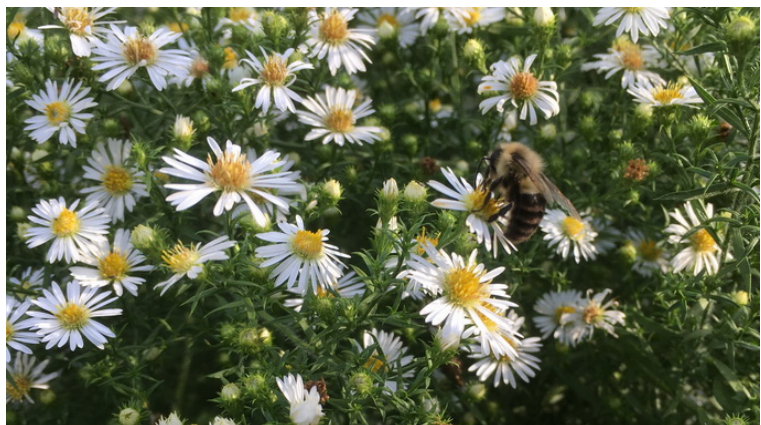
- Rethinking your lawn?

Use native ground cover-instead of grass.

Use grass where you walk and play -- let the rest be gardens. Use soft, rounded curves in your yard's edge planning. There are no hard, straight lines in nature.

- Have bugs in your gardens, shrubs or trees? It's a sign that you have good, healthy biodiversity in your property. Every bug is a meal for someone.
- If you have trees around your lawns provide a 'soft landing' for the bugs that hatch in them. "Caterpillars that are so vital to the food web, most of them develop on trees, but then they fall from the tree. They've got to complete their development—either they tunnel into the ground and pupate underground or they spin a cocoon in the leaf litter under the tree.(Doug Tallamy)"
- Provide a ground cover of native plants and grasses. Please don't mow right up to the tree trunks.

Think about including birds in your yard planning. All the plants, bushes and trees with seeds are a magnet for birds. They are nature's bird feeder. I was always afraid of Pokeweed when I had small children who might eat berries.(the plant is very poisonous for humans) But now I let it grow in certain places....it has beautiful blooms and is an amazing source of berries for the birds in the Fall.



If you have a problem and need an answer. Bring your questions to:

Ask UNH Extension Master Gardeners & Extension Specialists

answers@unh.edu

Phone: 1-877-EXT-GROW (1-877-398-4769)



The best message of Fall is ... enjoy it! Go out and walk in the cooler, bugless temperatures. Check out what's still blooming. Asters and Golden Rod are mainstays for pollinators at this time of year but there are other flowers and berries that are blooming. It's a beautiful time of year. Happy Exploring!

Marghi Bean

Pollinator Pathways NH

<https://www.facebook.com/pollinatorpathwaysnh>

