

NATUREWORKS



The Garden is my Happy Place!

Greetings!

June is in full bloom everywhere I go. At Natureworks, I am astounded by the gardens, they are so lush and brimming with color. Peonies and Baptisias are stealing the show this week, and I find myself wandering around, soaking up the beauty, instead of going home to rest after a long day.



With June comes the time to do some serious pruning in the garden. Last week I gave two walks about cutting back perennials. [Click here](#) to link to the handout on this subject, which also includes deadheading, something we are starting to do with our early spring bloomers. As I say to my crews: "If you are not leaving the garden with tarp loads of debris, you are not cutting your plants back enough!". This week I am focusing on pruning woody shrubs, specifically "**The June Prune**". This is all about pruning the spring blooming shrubs that flower on last year's wood. They will be setting up their buds for next year very soon, the time to prune them is NOW. This includes Rhododendrons, azaleas, lilacs, quince, Deutzia, many Viburnums, bridal wreath Spireas, and anything else that has flowered already. The walks will be Thursday evening from 5-6 and Saturday morning at 9:30. We will begin with a demonstration on how to sharpen your pruners, a must if you are doing some serious pruning.



The questions continue to come in regarding hydrangeas. Yes, I will talk all about them at the pruning workshops. There are so many different kinds. *Hydrangea macrophylla* and *serrata* species really took a hit from the winter and lost most of their old wood. We are well stocked with the newest varieties of reblooming hydrangeas that will bravely bloom on new wood this year. Is it time to switch yours out and end the agony that winter often brings? I am leaning more and more towards *Hydrangea arborescens* and *Hydrangea paniculata* varieties. These have NO issues with hardiness as they bloom off of new wood and are totally reliable, no matter how cold our winter is.



Hydrangea 'Invincibelle Spirit' is completely hardy and a reliable bloomer each year.

In my garden I grow *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Invincibelle Spirit', the PINK form of our native 'Annabelle' hydrangea. She is paired with a purple smokebush and has never missed a year of blooming since I planted her.



This Sunday we are having a Grow Organic Kids and Teens event **-Making Mason Jar Lanterns**. This is a new, fun workshop. Please read all about it in the **Upcoming Events** section below and register today.

We continue to be fully stocked with organic vegetable seedlings. Many of us are still planting; some are just starting! If you plant with the moon phases, next week is the time to plant above ground flowering plants again. With ample rainfall, sunny temperatures, and gorgeous weather ahead, continue adding edibles to your gardens and landscape. Don't have a dedicated veggie garden? No problem. Tuck pepper plants into your perennial beds. Fill some Smart Pots with organic potting soil and plunk them down where you have some sun. I grow food in containers and in the ground. I plant constantly and harvest daily right up until Thanksgiving.



Got veggies? Got herbs? We do! We continue to be fully stocked with all kinds of organic edibles.

A few firsts popped up in my yard this week. The first of my breadseed poppies opened on Monday. I harvested the first of my garlic scapes on Sunday and added them to the chili I was cooking. If you have never grown garlic, it is planted in the fall, lives through the winter, emerges in the spring, and in June it tries to flower. The flower buds are called scapes. You must cut them off as they will take energy from the heads of garlic forming below ground. They are a gourmet delicacy, delicious made into pesto, grilled, or stir fried. I love a crop that is easy to grow and gives you two different harvests. Garlic I harvested last year is long gone- it is a delight to be able to cook with garlic scapes right now.



Garlic scapes- the harvest is starting!



As the spinach finishes and I harvest the early radishes and lettuce, I open up room for planting seeds of the next round of edibles. Cucumbers, squash, beans, and baby watermelons are just a few of the SEEDS that you can plant right now. Seed packets tell you how many days till harvest. As of June 8th, we have at least 90 or more frost free days in our growing season! I must admit many of my raised beds aren't planted yet. They LOOK planted as they are filled with self-sown Arugula (from last fall's crop), borage, poppies, and sunflowers. But the main bulk of putting in my summer crops is still awaiting a day off when it isn't raining or I don't have to go out of town to give a talk or I am just too exhausted to lift a finger. Thank goodness spring is long and June is such a great month to plant.



NOW is also prime time to plant flowers, both annuals and perennials. Our premise at Natureworks is that all veggie gardens MUST also contain flowers. The flowers offer nectar for the pollinators and attract beneficial insects. Besides the beautiful, edible blue flowers of borage which is so prolific in my yard, I always plant edible Calendulas, marigolds, Nasturtiums as well as many old fashioned annuals such as Cleome, zinnias, and sunflowers. I also have my raised beds absolutely surrounded by a melange of herbs. Mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum muticum*) assures that every pollinator in the neighborhood visits my garden. I allow lemon balm, mint, chervil, and fennel to thrive among the perennials. I am currently watching many Eastern black swallowtail caterpillars develop and grow before my eyes. I encourage daisies to grow near my edibles as well- they attract many beneficial insects. We call this a BLENDED GARDEN. Others refer to it as an EDIBLE LANDSCAPE. At Natureworks, we call it **Plants with a Purpose**. Yes, my garden is lush and beautiful but every plant in it serves an ecological function to enhance the habitat.



Edible Nasturtium flowers are a wonderful source of vitamin C.



Snapdragons, Cleome, zinnias, sunflowers and other old fashioned annuals can be planted now from seed or starter plants.

They enhance the habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects in your landscape.

This weekend I was horrified to find that my asparagus patch was infested with asparagus beetles. I have seen them in previous years, but had spotted them early and was able to control them easily. This year I have been too busy to notice



Asparagus beetles and larvae

and they were eating all the asparagus shoots bare. I managed to spray them thoroughly with Neem before the rains came. Whew. Many pests are popping up in June. Refer to the column below- **What's Bugging your Garden this Week?** -to read about a few of the ones that our customers are asking about right now and how to deal with them organically...

With the rain that we had, it's time to feed your containers, your early vegetables, and your annuals. We use Neptune's Harvest Rose and Flowering formula for annuals in containers and all hanging baskets. For the veggie garden, you can use Neptune's Harvest Fish and Seaweed combination or sidedress the garden with Coast of Maine Organic Plant Food. Kelp (seaweed) is an important part of all of these formulations. It helps the feeder roots to grow strong, and that makes for a very healthy, stress resistant plant.

So what's the highlight of your early June garden? I am sure you too are surrounded by nature's beauty and find it hard to go to work or to go inside at the end of the evening. These are the glory days of the garden, as we approach high summer, the solstice on June 20th. Monday night I gave a talk to the Glastonbury Garden Club and it was still light out as I drove home at 8:15. Soak up every minute you can, and be sure to make some time to come and visit.

I'll see you very soon...

Nancy

Succession of Bloom in the Garden



Monarda bradburiana is a really unusual form of bee balm. Here it is shown with the deep blue spikes of perennial Veronica which will continue to flower if you cut off the old flowers and feed it with Neptune's Harvest Rose and Flower Food to stimulate rebloom.

Many years ago, I wrote and published a book on **Succession of Bloom in the Perennial Garden** that explains how to plan your garden so that you have color every month of the growing season. This book came about because I was frustrated that most of the other books and catalogs that my students used for reference basically said most perennials "bloom all summer". Nothing could be farther from the truth. My goal was to track when the perennials, bulbs, and flowering shrubs that we use in our gardens begin and end blooming right here in Connecticut.

Most folks do a LOT of plant shopping in April, May, and June when they have spring fever. They buy what is in flower. New gardeners don't realize that the average perennial has a bloom period of about 3-4 weeks. Come the summer months, they are often disappointed when the plants that they put in stop



This is the lemon lily, Hemerocallis flava. It is an old fashioned, heirloom daylily that blooms in June and is sweetly fragrant. It marks the beginning of the daylily season that will last for the next four months. Let us help you select varieties to extend your bloom season into the summer and fall.

flowering and the garden turns green, perhaps even a bit disheveled or unruly. NOW is the time to plan and plant for your summer and fall garden.

We are entering a new phase of the garden. The daffodils, tulips, azaleas, rhododendrons, and many of our favorite early bloomers are finishing up. There are lots and LOTS of plants that are budding up and getting ready to burst into bloom—you just need to know what they are and how to weave them into your landscape.

At Natureworks, we keep our benches filled with fresh, flowering, colorful plants every week of the summer. Our goal is to inspire you to continue planting perennials, vines, annuals, and flowering shrubs that will thrive in hot weather and the inevitable

humidity. Some of our favorites include butterfly weed (great for the monarchs), anise hyssop (Agastache), Echinaceas, 'Becky' Shasta daisies, fragrant summer Phlox paniculata, early blooming asters, snakeroot (Cimicifuga)... the list is long and very exciting. Folks visit our gardens daily and stroll around, taking notes and learning how to increase the color in their own gardens using ours as an example. Shrub roses, butterfly bushes, glossy Abelia, and St. Johnswort (Hypericum) are just a few of the shrubs that are reliable summer bloomers. We fill in the gaps where the bleeding hearts and poppies go summer dormant with tender perennial Salvias, zinnias, Cleome (spider flowers) and other vigorous annuals that say "bring on the heat!"



Salvia coccinea 'Cherry Blossom' loves hot weather and attracts hummingbirds to your garden.



We carry all kinds of Agastaches including this 'Acapulco Orange' variety that will flower until late fall. The flowers and foliage are edible and taste like a combination of mint and licorice.

Whenever we plant, we water our new additions in with **Organic Plant Magic**. This dehydrated compost tea makes the feeder roots grow and helps the plants get over any transplanting shock. It is so important that watering in with Organic Plant Magic is built into every estimate that we do for our landscape installations.

What's Bugging Your Garden this Week?



Oh joy, there is nothing like harvesting fresh lettuce for a salad on a Sunday afternoon. Imagine my surprise when I found a slug in my colander of lettuce as I washed it! Yes, along with the much needed rain comes slugs, snails without

shells, slimy creatures that come out at night and eat holes in your plants. One way to control them is to sink shallow cat food cans into the soil and fill them with beer. The slugs are attracted to the yeast in the beer, fall in, and drown. As we would rather drink beer than use it to drown slugs, in our own and in our client's gardens, we use **Sluggo**, an all-natural product made from iron phosphate.



Earwig damage on Joe Pye weed

We have been getting lots of customers asking us why the leaves on our Joe Pye weed plants (Eupatorium) and our butterfly bushes have holes in them, yet they don't see any insects. This is due to earwigs, another night-feeding insect that hides in debris at the base of the plants during the day. You can place an empty paper towel roll on the ground beneath the affected plants at night. In the morning, the earwigs will be hanging out in the tube and you can decant them into a waiting jug of soap and canola oil. Another alternative is to sprinkle **Sluggo Plus** at the base of these plants. This product contains not only iron phosphate, but also Spinosad, an organic insecticide which will kill the earwigs.



Flea beetle damage on an eggplant leaf that has been dusted with diatomaceous earth.

Another pest that people are asking is the flea beetle. These tiny black, fast flying insects chew small holes in your vegetable plants, especially eggplants and often, tomatoes. In my garden, I sprinkle the plants with diatomaceous earth, a crusty powder filled with silica. I do this in the early morning when the dew is on the plants. Using an old flour shaker, I cover both the top and bottom surfaces of the leaves. Spraying the leaves first with Hot Pepper Wax will also deter the flea beetles. Hot pepper (capsacin) repels bugs, it doesn't kill them.

Finally, everyone is talking about the gypsy moth caterpillars that seem to be plaguing us in great numbers this month. For true caterpillars, we use *Bacillus thuringiensis* or B.T. Spray this on the caterpillars when they are young. This means you should be walking your gardens daily and scouting for any pests to "head them off at the pass" before they become a really serious problem. Then, knowing exactly what the pest is and its life cycle will help you, and us, suggest the least toxic, most effective organic solution.

To reference material from emails we've sent out in the past, [click here](#).

June is National Pollinator Month



Have you seen our Insect Hostel yet? Early this spring my staff built an insect hostel to welcome and support the native pollinators. Did you know that many of our native bees are tunnel nesters, backing into holes in hollow plant stems, tubes, or rotted logs to lay their eggs. Be sure to check it out when you come to visit. Anyone on our staff will be willing to explain the details to you. We will be giving a free workshop on Attracting and Protecting Pollinators later in June. Stay tuned. Meanwhile, plant a succession of pollinator-friendly plants to assure plenty of nectar every week of the growing season.

SHOP & SAVE \$10.00

Buy a Syringa 'Red Pixie' lilac and use this coupon to save \$10.00 off the price. Enjoy this dwarf, fragrant lilac in your yard. You will be delighted to see that it only grows 5-6' tall.

Show cashier this email on your mobile device or [click here](#) to print coupon and redeem.

Sale applies to in-stock items, while supplies last.
Sale does not apply to special orders.

Coupon expires: 06/15/2016

Bi-Weekly Specials*

Thursday, June 2nd
through
Wednesday, June 15th

20% Off

All Miniature Perennials in 3" pots- great for troughs and and fairy gardens

All peonies

All aged white cedar trellises- ideal for Clematis and climbing roses

30% Off

All Azaleas-add some to your foundation planting for a pop of color.

* Sale applies to in-stock items, while supplies last.
Sale does not apply to special orders.

Upcoming Events



This is what I used to call my father's Rhododendron torture chamber. He would trim them to within a 2 foot wide border between the garage and the sidewalk. It wasn't until I started taking care of them and letting them grow a bit that I realized they were our native Rhododendron maximum, which grows 12-15' wide and tall! Don't let this happen to your plants. Learn how to prune properly at our free workshops this week.

Thursday, June 9th

5:00-6:00 pm **The June Prune - Our Most Famous Walk - Free**

June is the time to prune all of your spring blooming shrubs such as lilacs, rhododendrons, weigelas, and forsythias. Join Nancy and learn how to: time your pruning so you don't cut off next year's flowers, renewal prune for overgrown plants, as well as shape plants to increase the amount of flowers too!

Saturday, June 11th

>> 7:00-9:00 am **Early Bird Sale.**

Coffee and a free \$5 gift card for those who shop before 9 am.

>> 9:30-10:30 am **The June Prune - Our Most Famous Walk - Free**

June is the time to prune all of your spring blooming shrubs such as lilacs, rhododendrons, weigelas, and forsythias. Join Nancy and learn how to: time your pruning so you don't cut off next year's flowers, renewal prune for overgrown plants, as well as shape plants to increase the amount of flowers too!

Sunday, June 12th

1:00-2:00 pm **Mason Jar Lanterns - GO Kids/GO Teens**

Light up your room or garden with a beautiful lantern. We will be frosting the glass for a warm glow and adding silhouettes and charms for a magical look.

Registration in advance is required. FEE: \$15. Class limited to 10 participants, age 11 and up.

Thursday, June 16th

5:00-6:00 pm **Throwback Thursday-Macramé Hangers**

Join us for this throwback craft and learn the art of making macramé. You don't need to be very artistic because Kassandra will teach you how to tie basic macramé knots. Light refreshments will



be provided.

Registration in advance is required. FEE: \$10 (includes all supplies). Class limited to 12 participants

Saturday, June 18th

>> 9:30-10:30 am **How to Make a Dog Fur Nesting Ball**

Bring your friendly dog and your pets brush. Let's brush our dogs and use their fur to make a nesting ball. We know you've always wondered what to do with that fur! Nesting balls can be made of various materials which can then be hung or placed outside. Birds will then pull from the ball the

materials it wants to add to its nest.

Registration in advance is required. FEE: none. Class limited to 8 friendly dogs and their friendly owners.

>> 11:30 am-12:30 pm **Have Fun with Flowers**

This is the third of our monthly series designed to encourage you to pick flowers from your garden and feel comfortable making arrangements in all kinds of containers. Nancy will provide a vintage vase and fresh cut flowers and foliage from her home gardens as well as the Natureworks demonstration gardens. She will share with you the simple basics of conditioning and arranging flowers and you will make your own creation to take home. Class is limited to 8 participants. FEE: \$15. You must pre-register in advance.

Sunday, June 19th

Happy Father's Day Natureworks open 9 am-5 pm.

For the June Natureworks Events flyer, [click here](#).

Unless otherwise noted, events are held on-site at Natureworks.

Quick Links Buttons

Our Website

Buy a Gift Certificate

Handouts

Employment Opportunities

Landscaping Services

Learn about our Natureworks App

Organic Lawn Care

The DuBrule Diaries Blog

Vegetables-Incredible Edibles

Hours

Monday - Saturday 8 am - 6 pm

Thursday our late night 8 am - 7 pm

Sunday 9 am - 5 pm



Natureworks Horticultural Services ([map](#))
518 Forest Road, Northford, CT 06472
naturework.com | nature@iconn.net

STAY CONNECTED:

