

# NATUREWORKS

## Gardening Chronicles

July 2012

### SUMMERTIME IN BLOOMING COLOR!

*Dear friends,*

Welcome to the summer gardening season at Natureworks. Spring was amazing, starting a month early and providing us with nearly perfect conditions to grow oversized plants. The result is that our gardens are gorgeous, lush, and exploding with color. This is the time of year for enjoying the fruits of our spring labors as well as finessing our beds and borders.

Our focus at Natureworks is always constant color. It is easy to achieve if you visit regularly. Stroll our gardens and observe the “dance of the plants” as flowering shrubs, perennials, annuals, herbs, and ornamental grasses flow in and out of bloom. You can browse our benches which are restocked every single week with fresh, colorful products. You can join us on our weekly garden walks, where the mysteries of the gardens and their care are explained. Our weekly emails keep you up to date on pests and diseases to watch for and interesting new varieties of plants that we are excited about.

The second focus of the summer season is tending to the plants. This involves dead-heading, cutting back, organic feeding, staking, scouting for insects and diseases, and the judicious use of organic pest control products. We are here to help you with that work. Because our gardens are our living

classroom, it is easy to come for a visit, wander around, and then ask a Natureworker about things you are seeing.

Summer is also the time to continue planting your edible gardens. At Natureworks we have two beautiful raised beds filled with vegetables and herbs. At my house, I tend 14 raised beds. Every week I am harvesting and planting. As one crop is finished, another goes in. In July and August, you can start the seeds for your fall crops such as broccoli, kale, carrots, spinach, and a lot more. Even edible container gardens need a summer tune-up. It doesn't matter where or how you grow food, it is a steady, constant process that can feed you and your family until November and beyond.

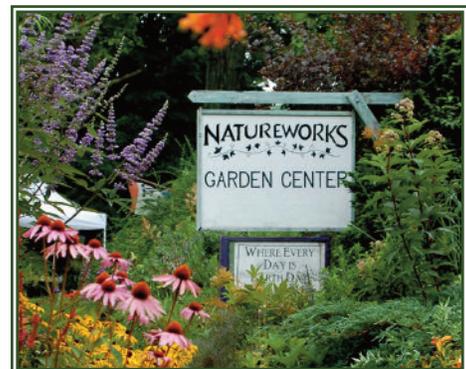
Summer is also the time for having fun, kicking back, and relaxing. We have some new and very exciting workshops planned including our first ever Fairy Festival and Anything but the Pot Planting Party. Our Summer Calendar of Events is on page 3. If you are having an outdoor gathering, we can help you embellish your gardens and containers with some fresh color. We also sell a wonderful herbal incense that you can place around your patio to keep away the mosquitoes. We have all-natural insect repellants as well. If you are invited to a friend's house for a picnic, bring them a summer blooming perennial! That has been my tradition for many years. You wouldn't believe how often

people tell me about the plants I have given them and how much they enjoy them.

There is magic happening at Natureworks. The gardens have never looked better as they are being regularly tended by our dedicated staff members. I have given them permission to do a lot of planting in our demonstration beds this year so that what we are growing more closely reflects what we are designing in our clients' gardens. All throughout the nursery you will find delightful displays of miniature landscapes that my enthusiastic younger staff members have put together. I find myself smiling and squealing with delight at the creativity they are expressing. My mission this year has been to greatly diversify our plant offerings. I scour the weekly availability lists and stock the benches with all kinds of new plants that get all of us super excited about horticulture day after day. Our customers seem to love this approach as we often get in a shipment of plants and half of it is gone within a day or two. I also see my gardening crews contributing to this phenomenon. They arrive at 7 a.m. every morning and pull plants from the benches for their clients. We are all having tons of fun!

I hope you can visit often this summer. Make Natureworks a summer destination. I'll see you soon...

*Nancy*





# Just Keep Planting!

Don't let the fact that it is summer stop you from continuing to plant in your gardens. Our crews leave Natureworks every single morning with their trucks filled with plants. The secret to summer planting is knowing how to water. Every time you dig a hole, fill it with water mixed with Organic Plant Magic, a compost tea blend that immediately helps the feeder roots to start growing. After planting, make a well around the plant and fill the well with water. Then add 2" of mulch. This will keep the moisture in. Water deeply the second day, and every other day for about a week. After that, you should monitor the temperature and be sure all newly established plants get a DEEP SOAKING once a week.

The absolute worst thing you can do is sprinkle your garden every day with a shallow amount of water. This causes the plant roots to grow up to the surface seeking out this water. Because they are then shallow rooted, hot weather makes them wilt. This is exacerbated if you leave the ground bare. Mulch is your best friend in the summer.

Container plantings usually need to be watered daily in the summer. As the season progresses, many container gardens get pot bound. That means the pot fills up with roots and there is very little soil to hold the water for an extended period. We add mulch to our containers and often sit them in saucers of water on really hot days. Sometimes, it's just best to take the smaller 10" and 12" pots that you purchased in the spring and move them up to larger pots. This will give you the opportunity to freshen up the combinations and perhaps switch out some spring plants with summer color that LOVES the heat.

In the edible garden, summer is prime time for planting. Here is a list of some vegetables and herbs that can be direct sown in July and August. Always read the seed packet and look for the words "days till harvest". Remember, many cool weather crops are happiest in September and October. Other warm lovers such as beans and squash may only take 50-60 days to grow to maturity.



## Warm loving edibles to Direct Sow in July for a late summer crop:

- Bush and pole beans
- Summer squash
- Cucumbers
- Mesclun Mixes, slow bolting lettuces and greens

## Edible Crops to Direct Sow this summer for a fall crop:

- Lettuce
- Radishes (sow every other week starting in late August- ready in 28 days!)
- Kale
- Beets
- Carrots
- Broccoli Raab
- Broccoli
- Spinach
- Chard
- Collards
- Turnips
- Mustard
- Salad/stir fry Greens
- Cabbage-start in July for a fall crop

## Herbs to keep sowing all summer:

- Dill
- Arugula
- Cress
- Cilantro
- Nasturtiums
- Calendula
- Parsley- sow anytime as it does fine in cold weather

We keep our seed racks stocked with the seed that you need. We also keep our herb benches stocked all summer. It's never too late to plant potted herbs, start a blueberry or raspberry patch, or plant some strawberries. Later in the summer we will also carry some vegetable seedlings of the most popular fall crops. Stay tuned to our weekly emails for updates.

# Foliar Feeding

The hotter and more humid it gets, the more important it is to foliar feed your plants. I always say that if we're uncomfortable, so are the plants! Foliar feeding literally means watering the leaves with a diluted spray of some type of organic solution. I use a hose-end sprayer. It's a quick job and produces fabulous results. If the weather is very hot and humid, or rain is lacking, I use liquid seaweed as a highly effective "stressbuster". Another alternative is to spray your garden with Organic Plant Magic compost tea. Both have been proven to increase the plant's resistance to stress and drought by increasing the amount of fine feeder roots. For plants that have been drastically cut back or plants that need a nitrogen boost to green up their leaves, I use Neptune's Harvest fish emulsion mixed with seaweed or MultiBloom catfish/mint fertilizer. Plants that



would benefit from this are: roses in containers that are being watered daily, and any plant growing during an excessively rainy season. (Too much rain leads to nitrogen leaching from the plants.) How often do I foliar feed and what do I use when? I wish I could give you an exact formula. I use my instinct and I want you to learn to use yours. Monitor the weather and the conditions of your plants and keep in mind the basic guidelines above. We usually foliar feed every few weeks in a tough summer. You can't make a mistake. No matter what you use, foliar feeding can only help.

Don't forget- your lawn can really benefit from foliar feeding as well. We recommend Fire Belly Turf Soother, a blend of seaweed and humic acid. This will create very good root systems, with a dramatic increase in the hard working feeder roots that will make your lawn much more resistant to drought and heat stress.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Unless noted otherwise all events listed below are free of charge, no pre-registration required, just show up!*



## Saturday Morning Garden Walks

**9:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m. Every Saturday-no pre-registration needed, just show up!**

Our FREE Saturday morning garden walks will continue throughout the summer and into the fall. The Natureworks Demonstration Gardens are our living classrooms where you can grow your gardening knowledge. Join us to see what is in bloom each week. Learn organic techniques for feeding your plants and controlling pests. Follow along as we help you understand how to pinch, prune, cut back, deadhead, and stake your plants. Visit us often to study garden design as the seasons unfold.



## Back to Basics Garden Walks

This summer we are going to return to our original format for some of our walks. We will meet in the tent to talk about what's going on that week. We will then wander the gardens for about an hour without a specific agenda in mind, learning about the plants that are in bloom that week and fielding questions.

**Saturday morning, July 28<sup>th</sup> | Saturday morning August 4<sup>th</sup>  
Saturday morning, August 11<sup>th</sup> | Saturday morning, September 1<sup>st</sup>**

## Themed Garden Walks

Sometimes we just have to focus on a particular topic. The following Saturday Morning Garden Walks will be themed walks:

**Saturday morning, July 14<sup>th</sup>**

### Eastern Black Swallowtail Butterflies

What kind of caterpillar is that eating my parsley? Wait--don't smoosh him--come to our butterfly workshop first! Learn how easy it is to raise Black Swallowtail butterflies! We invited a long time customer and butterfly fan Merilyn Sandberg along with Helen Stowe, a retired Wallingford kindergarten teacher, to do the workshop with our Grow Organic Kids lady, Diane St John. Join us in the garden to discuss butterfly habitats and the life cycle stages of the Eastern Black Swallowtail, one of CT's most cherished butterflies. Learn what attracts them to your gardens, what they lay their eggs on and how to recognize them as they grow from caterpillars to butterflies. We will (hopefully) have all stages of this beautiful butterfly to view and touch. Once you spot these fascinating creatures in your yard in any stage of their life cycle, you will be hooked! This workshop is for kids and their grown-ups.

**Saturday morning July 21<sup>st</sup>**

### The Fine Art of Deadheading Plants

By the middle of July, your garden is crying out for a good haircut. This walk will focus on how to artistically deadhead your plants so they don't look chopped. Learn how to do a hard cutback on certain plants to get them to grow back and bloom again in the fall. Watch Nancy open prune a rosebush for a second season of color. Learn which summer blooming shrubs benefit from renewal pruning.

**Saturday morning, August 25<sup>th</sup>**

### What do I do with all this FOOD???

Late August is the time when the garden is overflowing and you need to take action. Join Jane and Nancy as they talk about their various methods for processing and making sauce and salsa from tomatoes, tomatillos, and peppers. Jane will explain how she makes pickles and preserves. Nancy will talk about freezing and drying herbs and vegetables. We will share our favorite recipes utilizing the bounty that our gardens are producing.



## Thursday Evening Garden Walks 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Occasional Thursday evenings in the summer.

In the summer, our lives slow down and so do our Thursday evening walks. Join us during these special evenings to wander our gardens, cool off, and expand your gardening horizons.

**Thursday evening, July 19<sup>th</sup>**

### Anything but a Pot Planting Party

This year we have been having a blast planting up wagons, tables, chairs, pallets, you name it! For this unusual planting party, customers are asked to bring in any plantable object. We're talking an old boot, a wok, an old children's wheelbarrow, a chair that has lost its seat, you name it, we can probably figure out a way to plant it! The workshop is free, the only cost to you will be the plants, soil, and materials used less a 20% discount. We will take pictures of all of the finished planting projects and post them on our Facebook page. Let your imagination soar. Bring a few friends and "think outside the pot" for one magical evening.

**Thursday evening, August 9<sup>th</sup>**

### Dry Shade

There is no better time than an evening in August to hang out in the shade garden. We will talk about the challenges presented when gardening in the roots of trees. Learn all about the wide array of plants that will grow and thrive in this challenging environment. Learn Nancy's tricks of the trade to establish plants under trees from their first growing season. Iced drinks will be served.

## Grow Organic Kids

We have been developing a children's garden at Natureworks for the past few years. Karen Gallagher has taken charge of this project and has created a delightful garden filled with plants that can be touched, smelled, even eaten! There is a bamboo pole tipi covered with vines, a children's table and chairs complete with crayons and coloring projects, and a lot more. This year we started our Grow Organic Kids series of workshops to help teach the next generation of gardeners all about flowers, bugs, and the natural world. We continue this summer with two exciting events.

**Thursday morning, July 12<sup>th</sup> 10:30-11:30 a.m.**

### I Spy in our Children's Garden

The Natureworks staff will teach your kids all about the natural world by playing I Spy in our Children's Garden. This event is free, but please call or email and let us know you are coming so we can plan the event and the snacks around the number of children attending.

**Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> 9 - 5 p.m.**

### Fairy Festival- An All Day Event

Join us for our very first Fairy Festival! This is an all-day event with storytelling, crafts, a garden walk pointing out the fairy flowers, fairy house building in the gardens, fairy treats, and magic wand workshop. You can enter your fairy container garden in our contest and it will be on display for the day. Watch our website and weekly emails for all the details, or give us a call and let us know you are interested and we will send you the complete flyer on this event. Remember, you don't have to be a kid to believe in fairies or love fairy gardens!





# NATUREWORKS

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## Hours

### OFF-PEAK HOURS BEGIN JULY 3<sup>RD</sup>

Monday – Wednesday	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday	9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Friday & Saturday	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday	Closed

#### Holiday Closings:

We will be closed Monday, September 3, 2012 in observance of Labor Day

Return Services Requested

### THE NATUREWORKS MISSION STATEMENT:

Natureworks offers organic and ecologically friendly products, services, and information to our customers. We are deeply committed to education in all we do. We beautify our surroundings with colorful, creative designs and cutting edge plant material. We proudly provide fair living wages and benefits to our employees, and constantly strive to further their knowledge of plants, design and organic practices. We are a stable, financial entity working to strengthen and build our local economy.

*Summer Calendar of Events Inside!*

**Gardening organically for 29 years and still GROWING strong!**

### FLOWERS YOU SHOULD FEED THIS SUMMER!

At Natureworks, we believe in feeding the soil and then the soil will feed the plants. We do this work is in the spring, when we mix compost and Pro Gro together and work it into the soil. After that, most plants are happy and need no further feeding. There are some plants that we feed again in July. These include roses, butterfly bushes, Delphiniums, repeat blooming daylilies, and repeat and long bloomers that you expect to keep blooming from summer into fall such as 'Rozanne' and similar cranesbill geraniums, St. Johnswort (*Hypericum 'Hidecote'*), *Kalimeris integrifolia*, *Persicaria 'Firetail'*, *Lamiums*, and more. If a plant blooms for 3- 4 months, chances are it will benefit from a midsummer pick-me-up. It's easy to do!

### OUR MAGIC FORMULA FOR MIDSUMMER (JULY) GARDEN FEEDING

Put 3 bags of compost in a wheelbarrow. Add 15 pounds of Pro Start (a 2-3-3 blended organic fertilizer). Mix together until the fertilizer is evenly distributed. Add 1-4 shovels full of this mixture (depending on the size of the plants) around the base of the plants mentioned above and scratch it in.

### Perennial Buying Club Appreciation Days

If you belong to the Perennial Buying Club you receive a 10% discount on all plant purchases all year long. During these two P.B.C. Appreciation Days events, you can double your discount and save 20% on all plant purchases. Spend \$300 or more (pre-discounted price) and you can triple your discount and save 30%! Cold beverages will be served on all P.B.C. Appreciation Days.

- **Thursday, Friday, and Saturday July 12-14<sup>th</sup>**  
(open late Thursday evening until 7 p.m.)
- **Thursday, Friday, and Saturday August 9-11<sup>th</sup>**  
(open late Thursday evening until 7 p.m.)



### Horticulturist

#### DICTIONARY DEFINITION:

The Latin words hortus (garden plant) and cultura (culture) together form horticulture, classically defined as the culture of garden plants.

**NATUREWORKS DEFINITION:** A horticulturist is someone who is totally, insanely, madly in love with gardening and the natural world. They squeal with delight at the sight of a beautiful flower. They can smell out a new shipment of unusual plants from 25 miles away. They wake up in the morning and immediately fling open the door and look to see how the garden is doing. They stroll the garden in the evening before going to bed. And after working in the garden in the hot sun for hours, they read gardening magazines before dropping off to sleep. Never drive behind a horticulturist as they will slow down, pull over, and practically drive off the road if they see an amazing garden, rare plant, or a plant they don't recognize. Horticulturist should be required to have the bumper sticker: "I brake for gardens" prominently displayed on their back bumper.

**We have been Connecticut's organic gardening experts for the past 29 Years!**

We grow our gardens the way nature intended, creating healthy and beautiful ecosystems right in our own backyards.