



Greenfield Garden Club Newsletter

November 2022

Vol. 30, No. 11

Winter Sowing for a Jump Start in the Spring

November Monthly Meeting

Winter Sowing with Pamela Lester

Thursday, November 17, 2022

6:30pm at Gill Town Hall

325 Main Rd, Gill, MA

2nd Floor (*stairs & elevator*)

Parking available along Center Rd

What is Winter Sowing, you may ask? Come and listen to club member Pamela Lester talk about the advantages of starting your seeds in late winter in opaque (not white) milk jugs or other plastic containers. These containers act as mini-greenhouses, keeping the seedlings warm enough despite colder outside air temperatures. Natural precipitation (rain and snow) will reach the soil and seeds through the open lid, helping them to germinate in early spring. It's a bit of plant it and forget it, with Mother Nature doing all the work. Forget the tables and lights, seed-starting mats and other equipment. We'll talk about supplies, how to prepare the jugs, the best soil to use, and the plants best suited to this technique. Handouts will be provided. Pamela gardened this way last winter for the first time, and is eager to share what she has learned with us. Bring your curiosity and enthusiasm for gardening and start saving your containers now! RSVP if you can so we can set up the room. Don't forget to bring a friend!



November President's Report ~ *Laura Schlaikjer*



November is unusually warm, but I have to say I honestly don't mind having a few more days to pack up the vegetable garden for the winter, and to enjoy the lovely colors that still abound in nature, like the beech tree in my driveway at left, and the pink 'Sheffies' that surprised me in one of my perennial gardens (page 2). I have to let you all know that our usual November activity, wreath-making, will not happen this year. Stacey Chapley checked in with 30 suppliers, and not being able to secure one, she has decided to not do trees and greens this year. We will sadly leave you to find a way to make your own wreaths, and instead we will have an exciting program on Winter Sowing with Pamela Lester that will take place in a new venue for us, the Gill town hall. I saw her seedlings in the flesh last spring, and am excited to start seeds this way myself. I have already saved 2 milk containers from the recycle bin! To round out the year, our annual Holiday Potluck (finger food-type appetizers and desserts) will be Friday 12/9. We look forward to seeing you at both events, and hope November finds you grateful for all your blessings. ~ Laura

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 4-6 – 28th Annual Cider Days

Nov 6, 2am – set your clocks back one hour!

Nov 15, 5:30 pm – Steering Committee meeting

Nov 17, 6:30 pm – “Winter Sowing” program at Gill Town Hall

Dec 9, 5-8pm (Fri) – Holiday Potluck/Yankee Swap

Wear Gratitude like a cloak, and it will feed every corner of your life. ~ Rumi

Fall color that took me by surprise: ‘Sheffies’



I must have purchased this beauty from one of our plants sales as I do not remember purchasing it at a store. It practically knocked me out when I passed one of my gardens and there was this stunning display, made even more beautiful and long-lasting by the recent spate of warm weather. Here’s what Margaret

Roach has to say about them: [‘Sheffield Pink’](#) has 3-inch-wide, pastel-pink blooms in October here, lasting a month or longer, and though the catalogs all describe them as “apricot-pink,” I don’t see any hint of orange in its blush. The plant will grow from about 2½ to 3 feet, and as with any garden mum will perform best if divided regularly and flower most prolifically if pinched once or twice. The routine:

When the first signs of growth appear in spring (May for me), dig the old plants and toss the oldest, woody bits, replanting vigorous divisions 18 inches apart. Note: There will be far more than you can use, especially if you haven’t divided in a while.

Once the transplanted divisions settle in and get to about 6 inches high, around June here, pinch off (with fingers or a pruning shears) about ½ inch of top growth from the terminal point, repeating after another 6 inches or so of new growth is produced. This will encourage bushier plants. If you like a looser mum, pinch just once, and in either case don’t pinch after about mid-July (the approximate time here when buds set in earnest).

Margaret also says if you can only buy one or 2 mums for fall, add Will’s Wonderful. Will is currently available from [Avant Gardens](#), as other suppliers have gone out of business (gasp!).

Don’t forget to check out Margaret Roach’s excellent **Monthly Garden**

Chores on her website:

<https://awaytogarden.com/category/chores-by-month/>

Margaret has good information on the Fall cleanup vis-a-vis the ‘leave the leaves’ articles gaining in popularity. Make sure to check it out!

28th Annual Cider Days

Cider Days is here! Click on [this link](#) to read all about it and decide which events fit into your schedule. There will be workshops, tastings, demos, music and much more. Many sites offer child-friendly gatherings. There are local venues and more that are further afield. Artifact Cider in Florence, for instance, will be open early on the weekend (10AM) with coffee and cider donuts. They will be offering exclusive pours of unreleased ciders, and special pricing on cellar projects. And that’s just the tip of the iceberg! Click on the link above and discover a wonderful world of cider.

Officers 2022:

President/Newsletter/FB/Website:

Laura Schlaikjer

Vice President:

Marsha Stone

Treasurer:

Becky George

Recording Secretary:

Annette Kilminster

Corresponding Secretary:

Eva Carrier

At Large Member/s:

Nicki Shipman, and maybe you?

Photos of the wonderful fireside gathering we had in October with Kyle Bostrom talking about farms in the Meadows section of Greenfield, and our follow-up hard cider tasting and discussion with Charlie Olchowski. The weather could not have been nicer. Many thanks to Marsha and Norm who hosted with flair, as always!



CANS
 Anxo - Cider Blanc
 / Artifact - Feels Like Home Classic
 Artifact - Slowdown
 Citizen Cider - Unified Press
 Stowe Cider - Tips Up
 BOTTLES
 Le Pere Jules Perry
 South Hill Cider - Bluegrass Russet
 West County - Baldwin
 West County - Quince Cortland Empire





Looking to discover a new Garden Blog? Try the [Garden Foreplay](#) blog, a plant-focused blog from [Avant Gardens](#) Nursery and Garden Design/Build firm over in Dartmouth, MA. They design and install garden landscapes and offer uncommon plants for sale at their nursery. Their website also has a Newsletter Archive, where you might discover an answer to a gardening question that you didn't know you had! Anyone for a field trip in 2023?

NOVEMBER RECIPE: BUTTERNUT SQUASH CHILI

From [SpendWithPennies](#) (click the hyperlink for the full recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 butternut squash, peeled and cut into half inch pieces
- 1.5 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 15 oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 15 oz can kidney or great northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 14 oz can petite diced tomatoes, with juice
- 2 bell peppers, any color, diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 TBSP chili powder
- 2 TSP ground cumin
- 1 TSP ground ginger
- 1 TSP each salt and pepper



DIRECTIONS:

After you prepare the ingredients (drain/rinse beans, chop veggies), combine everything in a large pot and simmer on the stovetop until squash is tender, about 45-60 minutes. Alternatively, you can combine the ingredients in a slow-cooker, cover, and cook on low for about 4-5 hours. You want to use your Instant Pot? Cook onion and squash in a little butter using the sauté function. Add the remaining ingredients, cover, and cook for 8 minutes on high pressure. Let naturally release for 5 minutes.

Thicken the chili slightly using a potato masher or the back of a wooden spoon.

Add your favorite cooked meat (shredded chicken, ground beef/turkey, etc.) for additional protein.

Serve over rice, orzo, or other grain or pasta – or by itself! Top with a dollop of sour cream, or Greek yogurt. You can also top with any of the following: cilantro, tortilla chips, cheddar cheese, avocado, jalapenos, pumpkin seeds, a splash of lime juice. Also good with cornbread.

Your takeaway: Wait until next spring to rake & clean out garden beds/your yard

~ Susan Farber

You are aware, I'm sure, that insects are important – essential – to healthy ecosystems. You may be aware of the truly frightening collapse of insect populations around the world. Please be aware of how your fall clean-up practices will either support or kill beneficial insects & help or harm the entire web of life.

The relatively new & ecological way of approaching yard clean-up in fall: as much as is practical, DON'T. For garden beds next to your house & around your yard, don't rake, don't cut back stems, don't mow. Let everything sit until warm weather returns in spring. Keeping a seasonally "messy" garden is important to support beneficial insects & other invertebrates & also to help birds.

LEAVES: Leave the leaves where they fall in beds, and rake yard leaves onto garden beds (or near your compost pile). Many native bees, caterpillars (like woolly bears), & other small creatures snuggle in the leaves to survive the cold. In winter, hungry birds know to scratch in leaf litter to find those insects & spiders to eat.

STALKS: Don't cut down stems of tall plants like zinnias & bee balm. Some beneficial insects have crawled inside those standing stalks as protection during their winter's deep sleep (*diapause*). Others have laid eggs inside stalks to hatch in the spring. Seedheads left standing, like goldenrod, cosmos & echinacea, provide important winter meals for birds.

Caveat 1: For vegetable gardens, recommended practice is to clear out vegetation that might harbor blight or other diseases, especially tomatoes & potatoes.

Caveat 2: There's no One Right Way to handle fall clean-up. Nature is complicated. For example, most gardeners mulch to protect the soil, but in early spring native ground-nesting bees need bare naked soil to burrow into to raise their babies.

IN THE SPRING: Delay raking & cleanup until daytime temperatures are 50-degrees.

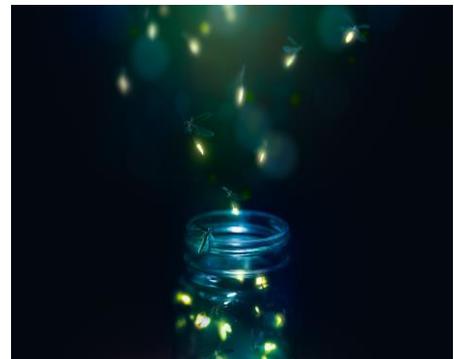
Here are some recommended resources to learn more:

[Six reasons to NOT clean up the garden this fall](#)

[When can I clean up my garden... and still protect beneficial insects?](#)

[Plummeting insect numbers 'threaten collapse of nature'](#)

And finally, a personal story: In our linked backyards on Birch Street (Greenfield), we enjoyed the magic shows of abundant fireflies on summer nights. Then my neighbors cleaned out "the mess" along the back edge of their yard, mowed down the tangle of wild plants & raked it clean. The next year: few fireflies. The summer after that: no fireflies.



Take Action to Save the Fireflies!

[National Recreation and Park Association](#)

(This article is aimed at Parks, but we can all take a lesson from this information.) There are 2,000 firefly species across the world, and 200 live here in the United States. But sadly, their species is declining. Due to habitat loss, as well as both chemical and light pollution, humans are negatively impacting these nocturnal pollinators. And, some of these species are habitat-specific, which means they could be lost forever if their habitat isn't preserved. Much of the research around the decline of the firefly is fairly new, but we do know there are steps we can take to help:

1. **Turn off the lights.** Lights at night not only confuse fireflies and can interfere with their reproduction, but also interfere with other species, like birds and nocturnal creatures. For more information, check out the [International Dark-Sky Association](#).
2. **Avoid using pesticides or chemical fertilizers.** These chemicals have negative impacts on many species — especially our glowing friends.
3. **Cut down on mowing.** Fireflies stay on the ground during the day and mowing can disturb them. Try incorporating areas in your parks where mowing is restricted or even eliminated — this helps all pollinators!
4. **Plant native.** Plant native trees and grasses to help support habitat loss — this helps all wildlife!
5. **Protect marshes and wetlands.** Fireflies love humid and moist areas. Incorporate or keep water-rich areas in your parks.
6. **Leave the leaves.** Don't over-rake or clean up a site too much, since this is where firefly larvae live — you don't want to throw them away.
7. **Host a Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz.** Take part in this second annual NRPA event (this was in 2020) to identify areas that provide suitable habitat for fireflies, to learn how to protect their habitat and to educate your community about the importance of these glowing creatures.

From the website [Mental Floss](#): Fireflies are victims of the broader [insect apocalypse](#) impacting ecosystems across the globe. Insects like flies, moths, [bees](#), and beetles are also affected. This is why you don't find as many splattering car windshields as often as you once did.

They may be small, but insects—including fireflies—play a [vital role](#) in their environments. Individual action alone won't be enough to reverse the insect apocalypse, but there are [steps you can take](#) to help the fireflies in your backyard.



Treasurer's Report

Balance as of Sept 15, 2022\$8,654.25
Income\$150.20
Interest \$0.22; Fair winnings: \$150
Expenses \$505.61
Balance as of Oct 16, 2022.....\$8,298.84
\$40.61 Staples(cards); \$100 Eveline's Recorder article re: Tour; \$365 Fair Booth

*All financial matters and membership dues should be directed to Greenfield Garden Club:
c/o Becky George, 61 Madison Cir
Greenfield MA 01301 **Questions?**
greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com*

December NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
Sunday, November 27th
greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com



Greenfield Garden Club
PO Box 309
Greenfield, MA 01302-0309

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

These vendors have agreed to provide the listed discounts for members who show their membership card when making a purchase. We appreciate their support! Please respect their offers by remembering these generous discounts are for club members only and only when your card is presented.

Baystate Perennial Farm

36 State Road (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants with membership

Chapley Gardens

397 Greenfield Road (Route 5/10), Deerfield
10% off regular priced plants and pond supplies

Greenfield Farmers' Cooperative (Agway)

269 High Street, Greenfield
10% anything garden related

Silver Garden Daylilies – 23 Picket Lane, Greenfield

10% off daylilies

Any vendors interested in offering our club member - gardeners a discount, please contact a member of the Steering Committee – thank you!!

LaSalle Florists

23 LaSalle Drive (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants

O'Brien Nurserymen – 40 Wells Road, Granby, CT

10% off plants

Mill River Farm Market – Conway

Road/corner 116 & Rtes 5/10. S. Deerfield
10% off plants in Spring and Fall

Warm Colors Apiary

2 South Mill River Road, South Deerfield
10% off

Wilder Hill Gardens

351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway
10% off plants and consultations