

# Horticulture News!

## September Gardening Tips from the Horticulture Committee

*Martha Pendergast, Horticulture Chair*



*“Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.”*

*“Antony and Cleopatra”, William Shakespear*

Hello September!

Our gardens tell us that it is not quite Summer anymore and not yet Fall; we are in that beautiful shoulder season when we can still easily tend our gardens, hike, swim, sail and watch a beautiful sunset as if nothing’s changed. We have lots of beautiful days remaining in 2023!

Our gardens could be looking pretty good right now if we have been putting in the required work but are we full time gardeners? Likely, not. We have guests to attend to, club social activities, friends to visit and a stack of book still to read. Where is the time? Are we really going to get every weed now? Not likely. However, there is still much to be proud of and we can take a minute out in the yard with our coffee or tea or other favorite flavored water to assess what worked and what didn’t this year, ever-determined to get it right (or at least presentable!) next year. Do we have new plants in mind? Now is a good time to request good seed and plant catalogues or to start checking out preferred websites. Have we learned what part-sun means for certain plants that didn’t quite get enough? Have we learned what parts of our yard are more acidic or more alkaline? Why do we care? There’s nothing worse than seeing a plant languish despite all our hopes and aspirations for it because of poor placement with too much or too little acid, water, or sunlight and oh the worst: not staking it and it breaks off in the wind or is toppled by a neighboring plant! Live and learn. But look at what we got right! It’s gorgeous! Truly a super-human feat! We are so proud. So, we vow, as always, to do our best, with the rest of this as well as next year in mind.

It might be a good time to get a soil test and check with a light meter how much sun or shade that spot actually gets. Pruning we have done this year may have increased the sunlight in certain areas. When we take our stakes out this year let's make sure they are ready to put in early this year. And the ties. I save all my attaching Velcro, ties, and padded wire and put them in a bag for next year. It saves cutting new ones and it saves money too!

It's not too late to correct some of the mistakes of the 2023 garden; plants can still be moved; we can be more watchful for pests and get them sooner (I have had good luck with diatomaceous earth this year); we can figure out how to get a drip line in a certain spot because haven't we had enough or black spot and other nasties that come from over-head watering; we can get our winter mulch ready to cover those plants that need protection and it's best to be prepared.

Pollinators are still around and the song birds! How beautiful! Our September gardens are still a testament to all the hard work we have put in now for months and they deserve to be shared! Call a "flower-friend" and invite them over for some garden-viewing. Nighttime garden-viewing can be fun too, give it a try! Isn't this what it's all about?

Have a good gardening tip you'd like to share? Drop your suggestion at the "Tip of the Month" jar at Horticulture Committee's Flower of the Month table in the back of the meeting room. Be sure to put your name on it so we can quote you as the source!

Have a plant in your garden that you would like to share? Exhibit at the Flower of the Month program! Our table is set up each month at the back of the room for members to display their horticulture and compare notes with other gardeners. Come early to the meeting and we will help you set up your entry with glass vases ready and index cards available for you to tell us the Botanical Name and Common Name of your entry (we can help you with this) and be sure to put your name on the back. Select your entries with good form, condition and color and after the meeting come check the back of your card to see your score of a possible 5 points! Check page 25 of your yearbook for additional info on the Flower of the Month program. Even if you are not submitting an entry, stop by to see the beautiful entries from fellow members and to say Hi. We love talking about and sharing Horticulture!

Join us on September 6<sup>th</sup> from 9-12 at the home of Priscilla Ruegg, 138 Two Ponds Rd, Falmouth for the first **"September Swap"**- **Bring a plant, take a plant. There is no charge for this event and no RSVP required. Please do label the Botanical and Common name of your donated plant. This is a great way for members to get to know each other, to compare notes and share out love of horticulture!**

We hope you enjoy the rest of your summer days!

**Tip of the Month:**

**September-** September is a great time to start planning what hardy annual seeds we can sow and which spring bulbs we want to add this year. Be sure to check out the upcoming FGC bulb sale! Fall cleanup can start early with the ongoing removal of spent perennials, deadleafing, deadheading, transplanting, dividing and maybe sharing some of your favorite plants. Be sure to stop by “The September Swap” on September 6<sup>th</sup> from 9-12 at the home of Priscilla Ruegg at 138 Two Ponds Road with one of your favorites to share! September is also a good time to gather and give away bouquets filled with beautiful flowering herbs, flowers, hosta and peony leaves, rose hips and anything else that inspires us. Have a neighbor or friend who is not feeling well or going through a tough time or someone you just haven’t had time to connect with? Nothing says love like a hand-picked bunch of flowers!