



HEALTHY YARDS NEW ROCHELLE

healthyyardsnr@gmail.com

Welcome to the FALL 2023 ISSUE of our Healthy Yards New Rochelle (HYNR) newsletter. Our purpose is to provide information for creating healthy and sustainable yards in New Rochelle. We welcome participants who are new to healthy gardening as well as experienced gardeners.

THREE UPCOMING EVENTS

In addition to business meetings planned for the first Wednesday of each month, which are open to everyone, we have planned open garden days. We also present a lecture series in conjunction with the New Rochelle Library.



Two Art in the Garden Events on Sunday October 22, 2023

Event 1: 1:00 to 4:00 PM Art in the Garden Paper, Clay and Canvas

grow! Lincoln Park Conservancy Community Garden
Lincoln Ave. between Prince and Memorial Highway

Enjoy a family-friendly afternoon of Art and Garden Tours including a Native Plant & Butterfly Garden. Visit with Westchester Land Trust's Pollinator Pop-Up – an interactive mobile exhibit for children offering hands-on activities focused on bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators. Meet the artists and learn about various media including mono-printing, echo- print jewelry, porcelain vessels, nature inspired digital prints and accessories and abstract fine art.

Event 2: 1:00 to 4:00 PM Art in the Garden Inspired by Nature 30 Oakdale Ave. NR

Enjoy a selection of works by members of the New Rochelle Art Association and see a garden with a wide variety of plants with an emphasis on native plants and a rain garden which helps manage storm drainage. Artists will be present to discuss their work. This is a collaboration between Healthy Yards New Rochelle and the NRAA. Featured artists include Theresa Beyer, Patricia Pardini, Damali L. Murray, Doris Mady, Carol Herd-Rodriguez, and Fred Spinowitz.

[2023-ArtsFest-Brochure-PAGES-1.pdf \(newrochellearts.org\)](https://www.newrochellearts.org/2023-ArtsFest-Brochure-PAGES-1.pdf)

Tuesday October 24, 2023

VIRTUAL



HEALTHY YARDS NEW ROCHELLE
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Managing Common Invasive Plants in Westchester

Tuesday, October 24 - 6:30 pm

In this virtual program, presented in collaboration with Healthy Yards New Rochelle, learn how to identify and remove common invasive plants, aka "garden bullies", found in our local area. You will also hear about spotted lanternflies, the latest scourge to hit Westchester, and what you can do to address this new threat.



Presented by Bob Del Torto. Bob is the former Coordinator of Volunteer Activities for the Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation. In retirement, he became a Master Gardener Volunteer with Cornell Cooperative Extension in Westchester. He currently serves as President of the Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy where he leads their "vinecutter.com" program removing invasive vines and saving trees on the Bronx River. Please note this presentation will not be recorded.

Registration required at https://bit.ly/NRPL_InvasivePlants



STAY CURRENT WITH EVENTS

To keep current on events and resources please be sure you are on our email list and check the following resources on a regular basis:

[Healthy Yards New Rochelle | Facebook](#)

[Healthy Yards – Learn How to Change to More Sustainable Landscaping.](#)

[Westchester Pollinators | Facebook](#)





ASK THE HEALTHY GARDENER

What Are Good Healthy Yard Practices?

As noted at the top of the first page:

Our purpose is to provide information for creating healthy and sustainable yards in New Rochelle. We welcome participants who are new to healthy gardening as well as experienced gardeners.

What does that mean and what steps can you take to make that happen? Our key premise is to discourage the use of pesticides and other chemicals in your gardens. However, there are additional steps you can take to make for a better, sustainable environment such as go electric, leave the leaves, choose native plants, etc. Please go to **page 6** of our newsletter for a checklist and link to see what you can to make this happen.

Also check out our Healthy Yards New Rochelle website at: [Healthy Yards New Rochelle \(healthyyardsnr.org\)](http://HealthyYardsNewRochelle(healthyyardsnr.org)) and Native Garden Guide at: [Native Garden Guide](#).



HYNR T-SHIRTS We Need You!

Introducing our new HYNR T-Shirt. Shirts are provided, while supplies last, to New Rochelle citizens that volunteer in support of our events such as upcoming ArtsFest activities or marching with us in the NR Thanksgiving Day Parade. Please contact us at: healthyyardsnr@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer.

RECENT EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

June 11th: Five-Year-Old Native Garden in the Making/How to Get Started



HYNR members Natali and Mark held an outdoor meeting to present how they got started with native plants. They planted a meadow garden, a woodland garden, and shaded rock garden.

What used to be only grass is now home to over 100 species of plants, the majority of them native to the northeast.



Milkweeds, Verbena, Foxglove, Black eyed Susan, Cardinal flowers, Woodland phlox, wild strawberry, and ferns. They enjoy the Monarch butterflies, bees, songbirds, hummingbirds, chipmunks, and many other surprising guests that make their home in their garden.

July 16: New Rochelle Pollinator Garden Tours

As part of the lower Hudson Valley Pollinator Pathway Tour series eight homeowners in New Rochelle opened their gardens to the public. Although it was a rainy day with downpours our gardens had a good number of visitors. Thanks to Natali Meytin and Mark Napier, Amy Ehrlich, Theresa Beyer, Dominic Schmitt, Rod Rolet, Keira Wickliff, Mia Bowdry, and Bob Finkelstein for hosting visitors. Thank you Natali for tour planning, coordination, and outreach.



Dominic and Emilie Schmitt in front of Bayberry Community Pollinator Garden planted by summer camp kids.



Bob Finkelstein's Garden with visitors between the downpours.



July 24th: Bird Friendly Gardens A NR Public Library and HYNR Virtual Presentation



Recorded Event presented by Cary Andrews. Cary is an avid birder and on the board for Saw Mill River Audubon. She is past chair of the Croton Conservation Advisory Council and has worked for many years on the Croton annual Earth Day celebration. Most recently she was named as the Croton Bird Commissioner and writes articles/letters on various bird topics and events in the area for the local newspaper The Gazette. As a recently retired Physician Associate at Montefiore, she is enjoying being able to go birding more often, and recently traveled to Gaspé Peninsula/Quebec Canada, the Adirondacks, and South Africa on birding trips.

Eighty individuals attended the virtual presentation! We are glad Cary agreed to share with us her knowledge about how to make the world a safer place for birds for birds to thrive. **To watch the full recording of the presentation please click on: [Virtual/Online Program: Bird Friendly Gardens - YouTube](#)**

Thanks to Lisa Itzkowitz who manages marketing, communications, and community outreach, and for managing virtual presentations for the New Rochelle Public Library. Also thank you to the participating partner library coordinators - Cathleen Sulli at the Ruth Keeler Memorial Library in North Salem and Aurora Cruz at the Grinton I. Will Library in Yonkers. Thanks also to Ruth Bryan of our HYNR Steering Committee for working with Cary and Lisa to make the presentation happen.

September 10th: New Rochelle Street Fair



HYNR hosted a table at the Street Fair. Marilyn Brown and Bob Finkelstein set up the table and were ready to welcome visitors for the 11 AM opening. Sadly, a huge downpour accompanied by lightning, thunder, and strong winds rolled in around start time. Although the displays were protected as well as possible, some damage incurred. Out of safety concerns the booth was packed up early along with many other Fair participants. We heard that people missed us at the Fair, but safety was a

priority for our members and visitors. Thanks to Theresa Beyer for putting together our beautiful trifold display.

September 18th – 22nd: New Rochelle Public Library Climate Change Week



HYNR was pleased to participate with a display highlighting actions a person can take to mitigate climate change. In addition to our display present all week we had visitors asking lots of questions during the time we staffed our table.

Thanks to Bob Finkelstein for putting together the display and talking with visitors.

ENRAC and CITY of NEW ROCHELLE

New Rochelle's Ecology and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) plays an important role with the City of New Rochelle's 2023 initiatives.

ENRAC is continuing their work on updating the original 2010 GreenNR sustainability plan. They will also be gathering local input to identify climate hazards and the risks posed to community resources for The Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA), The City was awarded technical assistance from HUD for the CVA to support the City's engagement of vulnerable populations including seniors, low-income households, and residents for whom English is not their primary language.

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT of NEW ROCHELLE

The City School District of New Rochelle began their Green Schools Initiative in 2022 – 2023 to make schools safer, more sustainable, and more energy efficient. The goal is to reduce their carbon footprint and help protect the environment while involving students in learning life-long, environmentally sustainable practices. Raised bed vegetable gardens and native plants will be part of the program.

Jefferson Elementary School Principal Kim Nieves is Co-Chairing the Education Committee along with Nicole Forman. Rod Rolett and Bob Finkelstein will be serving as Education Committee members.

For detailed information about the program and goals click on: [Green Schools Committee | City School District of New Rochelle \(nred.org\)](#)

School is back in session and plans for 2023 – 2024 will be communicated soon.



NOTEWORTHY NEWS



What Happened To The Butterflies? Climate, Deforestation Threaten Monarch Migration

For some time, we have all noticed fewer and fewer Monarchs visiting our gardens. Please click on the link to read an important article about how climate change is threatening their existence.

[Monarch Migration Threatened By Climate Change, Deforestation : NPR](#)

Spotted Lantern Fly



The Spotted Lantern Fly is a hot topic. There are many opinions as to “if and how” to control. To view current discussions on what actions should be taken please go to our Facebook page at:

[Healthy Yards New Rochelle | Facebook](#)

The Tragedy of Bird Strikes



Millions of birds are killed each year striking buildings during migration. For more information and actions take a look at the Healthy Yards Checklist on page 6 and click on: [Unseen Danger: One Day of Deadly Window Strikes for New York's Birds | Audubon](#)

YARD SIGNS

Is your garden pesticides and herbicide free? Yard sign distribution is well under way with seventy distributed to date! You can pick up signs at one of our meetings or send an email to healthyyardsnr@gmail.com. Proudly display your support for healthier yards and our environment.



GARDEN BUDDY

Not sure how to get started or what to do next?

We are here to help and would be happy to designate a Garden Buddy for you. Your Garden Buddy will be an experienced HYNR volunteer who is looking forward to sharing their expertise and ideas in a no-pressure setting. Let us know if you would like to meet with a Garden Buddy to help you on your way or discuss issues with your mature or growing garden.

HYNR WEB PAGES

Check out our new Healthy Yards New Rochelle Website and Native Garden Guide developed by Mark Napier. It features general information and links about our group including contact information and resources. Click on the two links to view the sites:

- ✓ [Healthy Yards New Rochelle \(healthyyardsnr.org\)](http://HealthyYardsNewRochelle.org)
- ✓ [Native Garden Guide](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES LINKS

- ✓ [Healthy Yards New Rochelle | Facebook](#)
- ✓ [Healthy Yards – Learn How to Change to More Sustainable Landscaping.](#)
- ✓ [Westchester Pollinators | Facebook](#)
- ✓ [Home Composting - NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation](#)
- ✓ [The Native Plant Center - SUNY Westchester Community College \(sunywcc.edu\)](#)
- ✓ [Planting Westchester \(westchestergov.com\)](#)
- ✓ [Native Flowers, Grasses, Shrubs, Trees, and Vines \(ny.gov\)](#)





ABOUT HYNR

Healthy Yards New Rochelle is here to encourage you to help restore our natural environment while enjoying a beautiful yard. Learn how to invite pollinators, avoid pesticides, love leaves, use better equipment, plant wisely, go native, have a healthier lawn, and how to discuss healthy practices with your neighbors and landscaper.

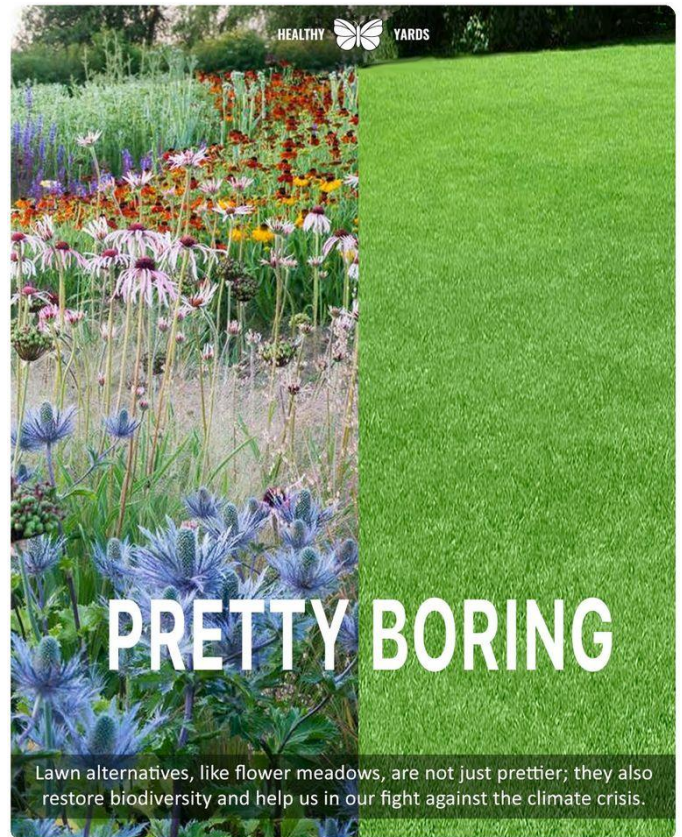
- JOIN our monthly meetings and yard tours, meet knowledgeable people.
- LEARN about the importance of native plants in supporting pollinators and local fauna.
- SUPPORT our events and local nurseries.

HYNR STEERING COMMITTEE

HYNR is an organization of New Rochelle residents and neighbors committed to working together to learn about healthy yard practices that protect our environment, children, families, and pets.

We are part of a local and regional movement taking steps to improve our yards and make them safer and healthier. HYNR Business Meetings are held monthly on zoom and are open to everyone. Please let us know if you would like to attend. We welcome your suggestions and participation whether or not you have a particular area of interest. Each meeting's zoom link will be available a few days before the meeting. For more information email us at HealthyYardsNR@gmail.com.

Amy Ehrlich: Co-President, Treasurer
Bob Finkelstein: Co-President, Newsletter
Theresa Beyer: Communications, Event Coordination
Marilyn Brown: ENRAC, Newsletter
Ruth Bryan: NR Library Coordination, Event Support
Nicole Forman: CSDNR Education Committee Co-Chair, Composting Mentor
M. Genevieve Hitchings: Advisory
Millie Magraw: Advisory
Natali Meytin: Communications, Event Coordination
Mark Napier: Website, Help Page Coordinator
Rod Rolett: CSDNR Education Committee Member, NR Library Coordination
Meryl Rubin: Natives Technical Resource
Jessica Schuler: HYNR Programs Advisor
Keira Wickliffe: Advisory, Photography



- ✓ Native plants do not require fertilizers and require fewer pesticides than lawns.
- ✓ Native plants require less water than lawns and help prevent erosion. The deep root systems of many native plants increase the soil's capacity to store water.
- ✓ Native plants can significantly reduce water runoff and, consequently, flooding.
- ✓ Native plants help reduce air pollution. Native plantscapes do not require mowing. Excessive carbon from the burning of fossil fuels contributes to global warming. Native plants sequester, or remove, carbon from the air.
- ✓ Native plants provide shelter and food for wildlife.
- ✓ Native plants promote biodiversity and stewardship of our natural heritage.
- ✓ Native plants are beautiful and increase scenic values!



HEALTHY YARDS

Checklist for a Healthy Yard

MOW HIGH AND WATER LESS

Mowing grass to about 4" helps shade out weeds and encourages roots to grow longer: this helps the lawn tolerate heat better and require less watering.

check

GO ELECTRIC

Switch to electric or battery powered yard equipment. It's cleaner, less polluting, quieter and it is better for your health as well as the planet's.

check

DON'T USE ARTIFICIAL PESTICIDES OR HERBICIDES

Save the natural ecology of the soil and the quality of our drinking water by using only natural amendments. For the safest protection against ticks, use tick bait boxes and check yourself.

check

DON'T USE ARTIFICIAL FERTILIZERS

Runoff from chemical fertilizers causes great harm to our streams and ponds. Native plants, shrubs and trees don't need fertilizers.

check

MULCH GRASS AND LEAVES

Leaf blowers damage our yards and our health. Leave grass clippings on the lawn and attach a leaf mulching blade to your existing mower in the fall to mulch leaves into the lawn.

check

CHOOSE SUSTAINABLE PLANTS

Pollinators and birds rely on native plants to raise their young. Plant native perennials also for better drainage, erosion control and their beauty.

check

COVER AND AMEND THE SOIL NATURALLY

Try to plant densely to decrease the need for water and weeding. Compost and fallen leaves improve the soil structure and add nutrients for your plants.

check

REMOVE INVASIVES

Familiarize yourself with the invasive plants in your area and remove them from your property.

check

REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE LAWN

Turf grass provides very few benefits to the ecosystem. For a more sustainable yard, reduce the size of the lawn and add beds for native plants.

check

KEEP IT DARK

If you place light fixtures in your landscape make sure they direct downwards, so they don't distract wildlife. Don't use blue light and turn the lights off when you leave the outdoors.

check

For more details and information please visit www.healthyyards.org

Love the leaves and rake as many as you can into your beds. Fallen leaves provide shelter and nesting for wildlife, protect plant roots from excessive heat and cold, and once they decompose keep the soil healthy. So why do we spend millions of dollars, millions of hours and millions of gallons of diesel and gasoline to get rid of those leaves, while there is plenty of evidence that leaf blowers are:

- Extremely polluting: leaf blowers have a 30 times bigger carbon footprint than driving a passenger car. Leaf blowers account for a significant percentage of the total air pollution in this country.
- Disturb nesting and breeding of birds, harm microorganisms and other wildlife, and are bad for the soil.
- Stir up pollutants such as mold spores, fecal matter, pesticides, fertilizers, etc., and blow particulates in the air that aggravate allergies and asthma.
- Disturb neighborhood peace and quiet, raise our blood pressure and exacerbate pulmonary issues, such as bronchitis.

For information about each practice in the checklist click on: [Ten Healthy Steps – Healthy Yards](#)