



HEALTHY YARDS NEW ROCHELLE

healthyyardsnr@gmail.com

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS

We are planning meetings and garden tours for 2023 and will be sending out dates and times as confirmed. We are also working with the New Rochelle Library to hold a series of meetings/presentations starting in the Spring.

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](#)



ABOUT HYNR

Healthy Yards New Rochelle is here to encourage you to help restore our natural environment while still 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.



Early Spring Blooming Packera aurea

Email us a picture of your garden for our newsletter!

ASK THE HEALTHY GARDENER

We are excited to introduce our new Healthy Yards New Rochelle Website and Native Garden Guide developed by our Steering Committee Member Mark Napier.

The website 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)

Mark also created the Native Garden Guide to answer some of the questions he commonly hears from people that want to get started planting a native wildflower garden. He is a homeowner in Westchester County, NY and learned how to develop their garden by reading, searching online and asking other gardeners a lot of questions. Hopefully this guide can provide a quick start for the gardeners that are just getting started. Topics include Quick and Easy tips (leaving leaves, when to trim you plants, mowing), Learn About Natives, Observe Your Garden Conditions (sun vs shade, wet vs dry, soil types), Planting Natives (planning, what are natives and what to plant), and Designing a Garden (planting in layers and mulching).

[Native Garden Guide](#)



2022 WAS A GEAT YEAR!

Thanks to you in New Rochelle, our local elected officials, and neighboring communities we had a fantastic 2022. HYNR has grown from five founding members who first met in 2020 just when Covid hit to our mailing list of more than 250 participants and interested parties. Below are highlights of some of our events and activities from 2022.

MARCH: Our Educational Season began with a well-



attended Zoom presentation by **Nick Storrs**, NYBG Instructor and Owner of Homegrown Nurseries. He eloquently spoke on the value and care of yards and gardens, how your own should be a place to enjoy, spend time, relax, and interact with nature. Nick emphasized starting

small with what you have, and growing into a nature-focused garden that supports native local flora and fauna.

APRIL: HYNR's April meeting at the **Lincoln Park Native Plant Garden** in New Rochelle was jointly hosted with ENRAC, and grow! Lincoln Park Community Garden / The Lincoln Park Conservancy. **Jessica Schuler**, who designed this native plant and butterfly garden when it was established in 2017, gave a delightful garden tour of her design and plant choices. Jessica is Program Coordinator of Natural Resources for Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Conservation, Director of Lasdon Park Arboretum and our own HYNR Programs Advisor



MAY: HYNR met at **Danielle Adams O'Malley's** home for a garden tour and educational session on plant identification apps **SEEK** and **iNaturalist**. **Bob**



Finkelstein presented and discussed the apps followed by a practice session in the garden.



Also in May, HYNR members organized 'Sustainability Corner' events at **Daniel Webster Elementary School's Spring Festival**. **Nicole Forman** gave

demonstrations on backyard Bin Composting, how to start composting at home and flower seed plantings for young attendees to take home.

JUNE/JULY: HYNR joined in the first annual **Sound Shore Pollinator Tour** teaming up with our neighbors in Pelham, The Village of Larchmont, Town of Mamaroneck, and Village of Mamaroneck. Thanks to **Natali Meytin** for organizing the June and July tours and to our HYNR members who opened their gardens: Kiera Wickliff Berger (Butterfly House), Rod Rolett (Stuart Drive Garden), Natali Meytin and Mark Napier (Blue Bird Garden; **pictured**), Amy Ehrlich (Amy's Garden), Dominic Schmitt (Old County Roads Garden), and Joan Glickman (Holly Drive Garden).





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AUGUST: HYNR met at Theresa Beyer's house to learn about her **rain garden**. These beautiful gardens serve a valuable purpose not only in your own yard, but for your

neighbors also. Please see the featured article on page 4 of our newsletter.

SEPTEMBER: HYNR hosted a booth at the **9th Annual New Rochelle Street Fair**. Along with booths from The Westchester Land Trust Pollinator Pop-Up and Grow! Lincoln Park Community Garden, we had a solid block of pollinator-friendly locally grown educational outreach. Many Fairgoers stopped by, and interest is growing (along with our plants!).



We had quite a few requests for Garden Buddies. Thanks to our volunteers: **Amy, Danielle, Bob, Theresa, Jeff, Genevieve, and Marilyn.**

OCTOBER: HYNR was honored to be a part of **New Rochelle ArtsFest, Art In the Garden**, an opportunity for the public to enjoy free art exhibits inspired by nature, each with its own distinctive character, displayed in the following gardens across New Rochelle: the **Lincoln Park Conservancy**, displayed in the Lincoln Park Native Plant garden, the private garden of **Bob Finkelstein** featuring works from New Rochelle Art Association (NRAA), and



Theresa Beyer's private garden that included her artwork along with other NRAA artists. Thanks to Theresa for her hard work planning and coordinating HYNR ArtsFest efforts.



NOVEMBER: Our 2022 activities wrapped up with several HYNR members marching in the Thanksgiving Day Parade with Sustainable Westchester. Thanks to Nicole Forman and her son Luis, Ruth Bryan and her husband Paul Greene. They had a fun time, especially Lewis who delighted in handing out candy to children watching the parade.



HYNR YARD SIGNS



Yard sign distribution is well under way with 65 signs distributed to date! You can pick up signs at one of our meetings or send an email to HealthyYardsNR@gmail.com. Bob Finkelstein will follow-up with you and can coordinate dropping off a sign at your house. 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.



A Little About Rain Gardens By Theresa Beyer



A rain garden is a wonderful way to create a garden bed that can also help our environment by collecting and filtering excess stormwater. They can even help prevent or reduce the impact of flooding events.

A rain garden is like an ornamental perennial bed, but it contains a shallow depression with a layer of gravel and sand that can collect and filter stormwater running off driveways, patios, or roofs. Often downspouts will carry water from a roof to the rain garden. The plants in the garden slow the rate of the runoff and can help reduce flooding and erosion. Plants, often natives, are chosen that do not mind occasionally having wet feet.

Westchester County requires providing storage for additional stormwater when you add impervious surfaces to a property. Instead of installing a big plastic tank in your yard (aka a drywell), you can have a beautiful garden bed instead.

However, you do not need to build an addition to install a rain garden. You just need to find a place not too close to a building that is slightly downhill from the areas that produce runoff and that is not permanently wet. If built properly, your site should drain within 24 hours. This is a short enough time that you do not need to worry about mosquitos laying eggs. If your water table is very high, you may need a wetland garden instead.

There is a wealth of information about raingardens. These are some helpful links:

[Rain Gardens - A how-to manual for homeowners](#)

This 32-page pdf from the University of Wisconsin Extension is the most comprehensive free guide. It includes not only instructions for how to size and create a rain garden, but also suggestions for planting and layouts for different soil types and sun exposures. (Note some plant suggestions might not be appropriate for our area, but most are fine.)

<https://libguides.nybg.org/raingardens> This is shorter introduction to the concept of a rain garden from the

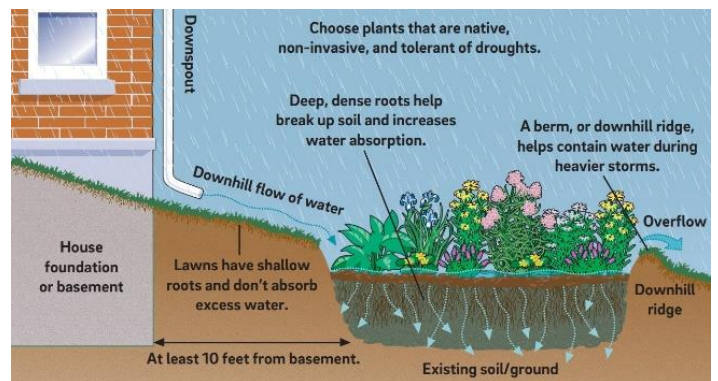
New York Botanical Garden. They have some book suggestions and plant ideas.

https://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/native_plants_f_or_new_york_city_rain_gardens

This is an article from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden with a lengthy list of native plants to consider for a rain garden.

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/29072.html>

This link will take you to the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual. It is not for the faint of heart, but it will give you the formulas for determining the size for a rain garden if you are required to install a stormwater management system. Click on the link for Chapter 5 and go to Section 5.3.7 which begins on page 70.





LOOKING FORWARD TO 2023

ENRAC and City of New Rochelle

New Rochelle's Ecology and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) will play an important role with the City of New Rochelle's 2023 initiatives identified below. If these are of interest to you, please email HealthyYardsNR@gmail.com.

In 2023, the City of New Rochelle is pursuing several important sustainability initiatives, including: (1) updating the original 2010 GreeNR sustainability plan; (2) conducting a climate vulnerability assessment (CVA); and (3) evaluating policies for climate resilience. In particular, the ongoing GreeNR update will emphasize climate action and environmental justice. The upcoming CVA will utilize local input to identify climate hazards and the risks posed to community resources. The CVA will also feature a natural resources inventory and a resilience hub assessment. The City was also 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. Lastly, the evaluation of policies for climate resilience will focus on extreme heat, resilient shorelines and establishing an annual environmental, social, governance reporting framework.

City School District of New Rochelle

In November 2022, the City School District of New Rochelle launched a Green Schools Initiative 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.

Subcommittees are being formed to engage in learning and collaborating around the following:

- ✓ Education
- ✓ Facilities & Central Office Operations
- ✓ Healthy & Sustainable Food Services
- ✓ Student-led Green School Audits
- ✓ Funding

A Districtwide Green Schools Committee (GSC) will work to identify best practices for the whole District. Jefferson Elementary School Principal Kim Nieves is

Co-Chairing the Education Committee along with Nicole Forman. Rod Rolette and Bob Finkelstein will be serving as Education Committee members.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES LINKS

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

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 couple 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, Event Coordination
- Ruth Bryan: NR Library Coordination
- Nicole Forman: CSDNR Education Committee Co-Chair, Composting Mentor
- M. Genevieve Hitchings: Newsletter Support
- Millie Magraw: Editorial Support
- Natali Meytin: Communications, Event Coordination
- Mark Napier: Website, Help Page Coordinator
- Danielle Adams O'Malley: Event Support
- Rod Rolett: CSDNR Education Committee Member, NR Library Coordination
- Meryl Rubin: Natives Technical Resource
- Jessica Schuler: HYNR Programs Advisor
- Keira Wickliff: Photography