

WOODBURY

CONSERVATION

COMMISSION

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NEWSLETTER | FALL 2025
Your source for local conservation updates, insights, and events.

Do Less with a Neat Mess A Pollinator Friendly Fall Clean Up



With the growing awareness of how important creating habitat is for our native pollinators, there has been a tremendous, and necessary, focus on planting the right plants in our gardens. We want to know what flowers will best attract and feed our pollinators. While some of those pollinators will head south for the winter, many more will stay behind to overwinter close to the food sources that feed them earlier in the year. So it is equally important to consider how we can provide appropriate habitat for the local populations that stay behind during the winter months.

National organizations like the Audubon Society, Xerces Society, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have several recommendations on how we can provide suitable habitat for our overwintering friends. A suitable habitat is defined as one that will allow a species to complete a full life cycle. While our gardens provide feeding and breeding habitat, the winter spaces we set up in our yards this fall will help support the survival of the next generation of essential pollinators.

While transitioning a yard into a completely wild space is an understandably unrealistic option (for most), there are ways to make year-round pollinator friendly spaces a staple feature on your property. The easiest option is to consider a neat and tidy clean up in your front yard and using your backyard to establish a small nature preserve to carry out some of the following recommended practices:

Leave the Leaves

Leaves are vital overwinter habitat for butterflies, moths, bees and other animals. When we bag up and toss the leaves we've raked up, we are sending a future generation of pollinators along with them! They may end up in a landfill where they will be buried or burned, or a composting facility where the depth of the leaves will be too thick to be suitable. Leaves are also a source of nutrients necessary for healthy soil and therefore provide a natural fertilizer as they break down.

- Simply leave leaves in place in your yard if possible
- Rake leaves neatly under the very tree that created them - usually species rely on a particular tree as a food source or habitat for a future stage in their life cycle.
- Designate an area of your yard for all or some of your leaf litter; avoid thick piles
- Use leaves as mulch for shrubs, plants, and in resting flower and garden beds

(Continued...)

Make fall clean up fun!

- **Mindset shift:** you're making a small nature preserve - cool!
- Involve the **whole family**
- **Create Signs** - educate onlookers!
- **Observe** - what do you notice?
- Take **pictures** and share with us!



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Shhhh!
Pollinators
Sleeping.



Read the Full Guide

Nesting & Overwintering Habitat
<https://tinyurl.com/xercesorg>

Logs, Sticks, Stems and Rocks

Many bees and garden friendly insects make use of small cavities and crevices for their winter sleeping quarters. With a little planning we can incorporate neat spaces into our landscape design that will provide these types of homes to our pollinators.

Logs - Wood-boring bees and beetles benefit from the decaying wood of logs to create their burrows. The moist soil under a log also acts as an attractive habitat for ground nesting insects and spiders. Consider leaving logs in a backyard garden bed. In warmer months, plants will keep it hidden from view.

Sticks - Picking up sticks is a traditional fall-clean up activity. Make use of the collected debris and establish a stick pile, or a brush fence. The layering creates various sized spaces for insects to make use of. Larger brush piles also create habitat for birds and other small animals to shelter in.

Stems - Instead of cutting down flowers and plant stems, consider leaving them be. Flower heads not only provide food for birds, but hollow stems provide safe pockets for insects to lay eggs, nest and spend the winter protected.

Continued...

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Rocks - Similar to logs, rocks also provide favorable soil conditions for burrowing underneath. Additionally, the nooks created by the piling and stacking will create welcoming spaces. Get creative and use piled rocks strategically to build a border for some of your garden areas.

Plan and Have Fun

Now that Summer has ended, evaluate what's happening in your space. Try to identify an area of your property where you can use of some of these practices. Next, get excited about establishing overwintering sites for our native pollinators on your property. It may look messy at first, but that feeling tends to wear off once you experience the benefits of your efforts. Don't forget to have fun with your household creating your very own nature preserve, and especially don't forget to get curious. Start making observations. *What do you notice?* Then look ahead. *What will emerge in the spring?*

SPONSORED BY WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

TOWN OF WOODBURY FALL CLEAN UP DAY

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 4**

8:30 - 12:00

HOLLOW PARK

- Meet & Sign Up at the Hollow Pavilion
- Road Assignments, Gloves & Refuse Bags Available
- Traffic Safety Vests can be Borrowed
- Rain or Shine
- Questions: jjsherm@yahoo.com

10:30 -
12:00 PM

LUNCH FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS



MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

SCAN HERE



SIGN UP



EVENT DETAILS



Cleaning out your closet? Donate!



Unfortunately, only 15% of textiles are donated for reuse or recycling in the United States

'In Connecticut, we dispose of about 96,500 tons of textiles every year in our waste-to-energy facilities. This costs Connecticut municipalities and taxpayers close to \$5.7 million in unnecessary disposal tipping fees... We have a significant opportunity to save our communities disposal tipping fees, increase economic value, and reduce environmental impact by recovering more textiles!' - **CT DEEP**

LEARN MORE: <https://tinyurl.com/TextileReuseCT>



NHS Annual Fall Clothing Drive

Saturday, October 18 | 8AM to 3PM

Nonnewaug High School | 5 Minortown Rd

<https://www.NHSGradNite.com>

NonnewaugGradNite@gmail.com

Accepted items: used clothing, shoes, pocketbooks, belts, towels, sheets, curtains, blankets, pillows, quilts, comforters, stuffed animals, small toys (<2'), outdoor bicycles
Bring in bags (except bicycles).

Not accepted: appliances, electronics, books, VCR tapes, CD's, carseats, exercise equipment, Pots and pans, toy trucks/cars, Dolls/doll houses, outdoor playsets.