

## BRRALLIANCE INC.

*Building Bridges to a Brilliant Future*

## Garden Patch Pg. 1

### A Giant Sunflower "Thank You!"

I want to extend my personal thank you and a thank you from the BRRAlliance Garden Group and the BRRAlliance Board of Directors for all the wonderful support we received for the Sunflower Project. I do believe our community was just a little more "Blooming Gorgeous" because of all the sunflowers put in our gardens. If you have pictures please send them along to:

[BRRAlliance@outlook.com](mailto:BRRAlliance@outlook.com)

or post them on:

[Facebook.com/BRRAllianceSunflower](https://Facebook.com/BRRAllianceSunflower)

Also, if you have seeds please save them so we can do it all again next year. At this time of year we all get ready for our inside projects but we

all know come spring we will all be itching to get into the gardens again. If you have any suggestions or would like to participate more actively in any way please just drop us a line. Can't wait to see what we can make happen next year!

Mary Ann Kedron



### Excerpts from: Western New York Guide to Native Plants for your Garden

If you are looking for some late season bloomers for your gardens, then maybe something just a little different could fit the bill. New England Asters, which are natives to our area, have a number of lovely cultivars. They come in various shades of purples and are lovely low maintenance additions to the garden

A popular choice for perennial gardens, wildflower meadows, cottage gardens and rain gardens. Blooms with showy purple and yellow flowers in late summer.



New England Aster - *Sympytrichum novae-angliae*  
Full sun to part shade  
Attracts Butterflies  
3ft tall

**Qtr. 4 - 2017 7th edition**

### Autumn-Time Blooms



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## Garden Patch Pg. 2

### “Putting the Community Gardens To Bed”

By Ignacio Villa

As we head into fall it will be time to put our four community gardens to bed for the winter. The focus of the work will be to put the gardens to bed. However, the gardens have lots of life in them yet, and we really should think about this season as an opportunity for the garden to rest. We may be able to coax a few fall greens out of the garden yet, depending on what the weather brings us. Even though we have shortening days, we may yet have temperatures that allow us to grow greens into November. It is worth a try.



We are also trying out an old farmer's tradition of growing a winter cover crop. Many farmers plant cereal rye on their fields in the fall. Like winter wheat, rye grows in the fall and keeps growing right under the snow if the ground does not freeze. Then in the early spring it is ready to go and competes very well with the weeds. As it grows in the fall and through the winter, it is



capturing soil nutrients that would otherwise leach out of the soil and keeping them in its vegetative tissue. The roots of the plant are also tunneling through the soil, creating air spaces and providing nutrients to the soil organisms that are a critical component of good garden soils. In the spring, this green cover crop is turned back into the soil and the new crops benefit from the nutrients gathered, and from the enhanced biological activity in the soil.

The only problem with cereal rye is that it can be fairly aggressive in the spring, and it can turn into a problem if it is not tilled under properly. So we are trying another crop that performs the same function, but dies off in the winter: oats. Oats is a grass like wheat and rye, but it does not have the winter hardiness of rye and winter wheat. As it dies, it leaves a mulch on the soil that keeps weeds from sprouting, as it feeds soil organisms.



This cover crop is easier to till under in the spring. While it may seem that our gardens are going to bed for the winter, much will happen underground in preparation for next year's work. The livelier and healthier the soil, the better our garden will be next season.

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### Nature Almanac for the Northeast

#### October

Wood frogs return to the pond. Bluebirds flock to sumacs for farewell dinner. Winterberries are bright red now!



#### November

Milkweed pods hang open and empty. Snakes all into hibernation. Canvasbacks arrive in sheltered coves.



#### December

Jays dominate the bird feeders. Goldfinches lose their bright color. Red squirrels store spruce cones.



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### Garden Patch Pg. 3

#### Bringing Plants Indoors for Winter

By Sharon R. Adler

To bring houseplants indoors after full outdoor sun, gradually move them into the shade for a week, and then gradually into your house; a rapid change of sun magnitude can cause them to turn yellow or drop leaves.

When nighttime temperatures drop below 45 degrees F, move tender plants indoors. Move tropical plants indoors when nighttime temperatures drop below 40 degrees.

When evening temperatures are below 50 degrees for more than a few hours a day, it's best to move the plants indoors. Plants, such as orchids should be moved indoors when temperatures start reaching the 55-60 degree range. Gently shower the plants with the garden hose to dislodge any bugs and dust off the leaves before bringing them inside. Scrub pots. Trim up the plants and replant them in fresh potting soil. The plants will also have to prepare for changes in humidity, air circulation and temperature. Reduce fertilizer since plants receive less light indoors, they grow more slowly, and they go into a semi-dormant state over the winter. Wait to fertilize until you see signs of new growth.

You may add grow lights and a timer to give the plants more light to mimic sunlight. Rotate the plants, since they will grow toward the light.



Humidity levels in homes are less, partly due to furnaces. It may be helpful to mist the plants often or to set them on a tray filled with water and pebbles. Overwatering is the fastest way to harm a houseplant; it doesn't need as much water when indoors. Put your finger down in the soil a few inches and determine if it needs more water.



If plants have outgrown their present pots or the soil is becoming hard or encrusted with salt residue, it is time to repot. Tall, "leggy" plants should be removed from their pots and crowns and roots trimmed in equal proportions. Old pots should be scrubbed clean and the soil replaced with commercial potting soil. New pots should be only 1-2 sizes larger than the previously outgrown pots.

For unique problems you may experience, ask a fellow gardener or Cornell Cooperative Extension representative, or look online, where there are a multitude of resources, including "how to" videos.

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#### Farmer's Calendar Circa 1800

**October** – Finish housing your potatoes, in order to have more time to attend to your apples. If you wish to have cider of a superior quality, lay by some of your best apples in a cool dry place to grow mellow- you may keep them as long as the frost will permit- the later you make the cider the better it will be.

**November** – The sharp winds which now come whistling from the northwest remind you it is time your broken windows are mended- that the flaw in your house, barns and sheds are mended. I conclude your potatoes have all been put in the cellars now, add carrots, parsnips, turnips and cabbage to follow.

**December** – You will now have time to attend to the education of your children to settle your accounts and to recollect that the state of the world would be a better place than it is now if no man would owe another.

#### Upcoming Events

**Adult Coloring and Project Nights** - Throughout the Fall we will hold coloring nights every other Tuesday, start October 10th at 6:30pm

**December 2nd and December 3rd** - Holiday celebrations will occur on the 2nd in Black Rock and the 3rd in Riverside. You can find out more information about each event and find our fall schedule at [BRRAlliance.org](http://BRRAlliance.org)

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