

JULY GARDEN 'TO DO' LIST

By Claudette Sims, Halton Master Gardener

- ☐ **Keep Things Blooming** – Deadheading, pinching, cutting back and thinning are excellent [techniques](#) to keep flowers blooming longer, larger and healthier. Cut back early blooming perennials, e.g., [hardy geraniums](#), [coreopsis](#), spiderwort and delphiniums after the first flush of flowers to encourage new growth and blooms. Shorten stems of fall flowering plants like asters, mums, [Joe-Pye Weed](#) and [goldenrod](#) to keep them sturdy and compact. Trim just above a set of leaves.

- ☐ **Plants for a changing climate** – Consider adding some of these [drought tolerant plants](#) to your garden. Once established, they require little watering or care: [Butterfly Milkweed](#), [Nodding Onion](#), [Lanceleaf Coreopsis](#), [Hairy Penstemon](#).



Nodding Onion - C. Sims

- ☐ **Common Milkweed** – Trim back some of your Common Milkweed ([Asclepias syriaca](#)) stems the 2nd or 3rd week of July to [stimulate new, young growth](#) which is more attractive to monarchs for egg laying.
- ☐ **Veggies** – Water during dry or hot weather to avoid stressing plants. Do not over fertilize tomatoes, peppers or squash as this can lead to [blossom end rot](#). Snip herbs and chives to encourage new bushy growth. Extend the harvest of lettuce by [snipping greens](#) at soil level for continued growth.
- ☐ **Invasive Plants** – Be aware that invasive plants are still sold at nurseries, so make sure new purchases are not on invasive plant lists. Check this [Grow Me Instead Guide](#) for info on what is invasive as well as non-invasive alternatives.

“Garden problems? Perhaps writing a [Haiku](#) would help?”

The Bunny Ate My Plants

Rabbit sits munching
Suspiciously close to plants
Sporting new haircuts.

Lisa U. Phillips (Facebook)



Invasive Plant Lament

"No fuss ground cover"
they said. Now I weed and weep
On my hands and knees...

Claudette + ChatGPT



- ☐ **Summer Watering** – Water earlier in the day, and at the base of plants or using soaker hoses. Water spring planted trees and shrubs regularly and existing trees less frequently, but deeply. Potted plants may need watering twice a day in hot, dry weather. Stop watering Garlic 2-3 weeks before harvest (about mid-July).
- ☐ **Weeds** – Check this [Ontario Weed Gallery Guide](#) to help ID weeds & find management options. (Note that some native plants like Milkweed are included as "weeds"). Target removal of seedheads to reduce the seed bank for next year. Lawn weeds that are actively growing can be killed using an approved herbicide such as [chloroindole](#) (a naturally occurring organic compound) or [iron](#). Weeds in bricks/driveways can be cut using a line trimmer, solarized or sprayed with an approved herbicide (see links above).
- ☐ **Lawn** – Mow high (3"/7.5 cm) to shade out weeds. Leave the clippings on the grass to return nutrients & water to the soil. Let the lawn go dormant in dry hot spells (it may yellow) by watering only every other week. Water dormant grass if the blades don't spring back upright when you walk on it or if they fold to show their lighter blueish green underside. Learn more about [summer care of lawns](#).

