

SEPTEMBER GARDEN 'TO DO' LIST

By Claudette Sims, Halton Master Gardener

- Perennials** – Divide or transplant spring and early summer flowering perennials, e.g., iris, peony, phlox, native [Wood Poppy](#) and [Canada Anemone](#) as the weather cools. Water the new divisions well into the fall. Other perennials can be transplanted or divided if needed when flowers fade. This is a great time to add plants to fill in any gaps. Consider adding [native sedges](#) to give your garden texture and winter interest. Sedges are valuable [host plants](#) for caterpillars of over 36 butterflies and many moths.
- Veggies** – Remove any plants that have stopped producing. Sow cool weather seeds, e.g., lettuce, spinach, arugula and radishes. As the weather cools, harvest green tomatoes & ripen indoors, freeze or use in recipes. Collect and save seeds from [veggies](#), dill, [native plants](#). Cut herbs such as parsley, thyme, mint, rosemary and dry them [in your microwave](#).
- Trees** – Our [hot, dry summer](#) has been a tough one for our trees. Watering at soil level with a slow trickle from your hose helps water to penetrate to the roots. Planting trees and shrubs in cooler September weather gives them plenty of time to form roots before the frost sets in. Here's a [great way to water](#) new trees and shrubs!
- Houseplants** – Start to transition houseplants to a shadier location and monitor weather forecasts. If temperatures fall below 10°C bring them inside. Inspect them for pests and disease by lifting the plant out of the pot carefully and inspecting the soil. If pests are present, wash the plant with water or a commercial insecticidal soap solution (some plants are sensitive, so test a leaf if you are not sure). Plants can also be soaked in a large tub of water with a tablespoon of concentrated insecticidal soap (about a 1% solution is desired). Read detailed information about bringing in houseplants on our [blog](#).

“ **LIGHTS OUT FOR FALL MIGRATION!** ”

Birds have started their fall migration. Please turn off non-essential lighting and close curtains and blinds to keep them safe!



More info at [Bird Friendly Hamilton Burlington](#)

Prune back woody tropicals such as **hibiscus** once they are moved inside. **Phalaenopsis orchids** may benefit from a drop in temperature (to 17°C) to encourage flowering. Once inside, 8 to 12 hours of light is optimal for flowering. Continue to fertilize orchids to encourage healthy foliage.

- Lawns** were hit really hard by the drought and may need more extensive repair. Choose a rainy day to overseed the lawn, then cover seeds with a top dressing of fine compost or manure. Half the height of the blades of grass should still be visible. Fall feeding with a slow release mineral or organic fertilizer will increase root growth for an early spring green up. Fall is a good time to aerate lawns (sandy soils do not usually need to be aerated). Pull or cut off weeds at ground level. Rake fallen tree leaves into flower beds. More lawn care suggestions from [Landscape Ontario](#).
- Diseased foliage** – Prune out and remove any diseased foliage. Dispose of diseased plant material in the garbage. Removing branches to improve air circulation can help reduce the spread of disease.
- Get outside!** – There are **36 Conservation Authorities** in Ontario. Plan to visit these natural treasures with family or friends.

