

This year, we are featuring the planting strips between sidewalks and streets. This challenging environment is also known as the “hellstrip”. While not a location for plants that need tender care, it can be a showcase of tough, drought-resistant native plants. Even a small strip can be a haven for native bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.

Hosted Gardens

1 * Xin Peng
179 Edenfield Road

I transformed a sad looking lawn since I moved in three years ago, digging every hole and planting everything myself. Most plants are gifts from other gardeners. I feel blessed whenever a neighbor walks by and tells me how happy they are to see my garden. Friends and family tell me it shows my personality, which make all the sweat and digging so worth it.

2 * Carole Smith Berney
91 Standish Road

My front yard garden began years ago as a single small triangle. It continued to expand, taking over much of the lawn. I enjoy visiting with neighbors, onlookers, and children who stop to admire and at times to relocate the many figures that populate the space. I may not be able to be in the garden until about 2pm

3 * Henrietta Light & Dr. Ian Gorry
22 Grenville Road

This year an unprecedented number of our favorite, Queen Anne's Lace, throughout our half acre, symbolize our treating it as a meadow where native plants are encouraged to flourish and reseed. In the same spirit, seedling trees are taking their places in the middle of the large front flower garden, where there is room for all. The trees, pulling carbon from the air, join others which have started their life here.

On September 11, the gardeners featured in this tour will welcome visitors during the hours of the Garden Tour. After that, please be respectful, and view their gardens from the street.

To view an online map and read the full descriptions, scan the QR code.



To learn more about gardens in Watertown, please visit watertowncitizens.org and watertowngardens.org. Or email us at gardentour@watertowncitizens.org.

Welcome to Watertown's 24th
Life-Friendly
Garden Tour

Sunday, September 11, 2022
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm



4 * Sharon Bauer
62 Pearl Street

In this summer of heat and drought, the native plants in my hellstrip are surviving with only a little help. By adding some tough non-natives and spring bulbs, I offer pollinators something in bloom from March until November.

5 * Senior Center
30 Common Street

The pollinator garden at Watertown Senior Center has become a Rose Memorial Garden. We have included mostly native plants to promote the native pollinators and other friends in our local ecosystem. Watertown Community Gardens is helping weed and water and care for this area.

6 * Union Market Community Gardens
53 Irving Street

Many interesting growing strategies are showcased in the garden, from trellises to raised-height beds.

7 * Pam Phillips
132 Langdon Ave

Every year I add more native plants to my hillside garden, and the bumblebees love it!

8 * Melinda Dennis
4 Hosmer Street

In April, Watertown Community Gardens (WCG) friends and I laid down cardboard and 3" of compost and started turning my "bump-out" into an inviting space for pollinators. Most plants are natives chosen for their hardy, drought-tolerant qualities. Let's chat about how the DPW supports planting strips.

9 * Dawn Slaven
33 Dexter Ave

My objective is to attract pollinators and have something in vibrant bloom all spring/summer/fall. My garden features mostly perennials such as a lovely rose bush, wild sage, hydrangeas, lilies, and a few others. I also plant annuals such as sunflowers.

10 * Arsenal Park Community Gardens
485 Arsenal Street

Part of Watertown Community Gardens since 2017.

Planting strips, Bumpouts and Public Gardens

These gardens may be viewed from the street any time.

* Department of Public Works
124 Orchard Street

Friends of Bees and Watertown Community Gardens helped plant this garden in 2020 and help maintain it.

* Front Yard Gardens
Robbins Road

Many front yard gardens here are gardened organically. The neighbors have also organized and collectively planted 34 trees in two different time periods.

* Ellen Colton
30 Center Street

I plant the hell strip each year. A few years ago I sowed a wildflower garden, which had a lot of cosmos. I turned to Zinnias, which are great, colorful pollinators. At the end of the season, I collect the seeds and plant again.

* Deborah Peterson
9 Westland Road

Last summer I threw handfuls of a seed mix into the planting strip. The zinnias thrived the most. In the fall I pulled off all their flower heads. This Spring I watched the sprouts that came up, and threw in the zinnia seeds. I added Echinacea from a neighbor's garden, milkweed and Rudbeckia and let grow some curious flowers whose names I still don't know. Still the zinnias love it best.

* Susan Cooke & Victor Preston
30 Westland Road

Our bumpout surprised us with lovely volunteer plants we never knew existed. You'll see some zinnias, volunteer parsley (!), red coneflowers, a small volunteer boxwood, and more. We saw this year many gorgeous butterflies, more than we've ever seen here!

* Boylston Bumpouts
Boylston & Howe, Boylston & Chauncey

As part of a Safe Routes to School sidewalk project, MassDOT converted roadway into two bumpouts on Boylston Street near Hosmer Elementary School. One is on the corner of Howe Street and the other on the corner of Chauncey. They are designed for low maintenance – no mulching, only weed management and perhaps plant replacement. They are doing very well and the neighborhood seems to like them.

* Filippello Park
191 Grove Street

The butterfly garden at Filippello Park was planted in three raised beds surrounding the children's splash park. These native plants were selected to be host plants for butterflies, attract native bees, butterflies, and moths, and feed birds in the colder months.