Hort Report October 2017

Maintaining the Barns Brinton Herb Garden

Besides weeding the bed, pinching, shearing, or careful pruning needs to be done. If it’s your first time on maintenance, ask an experienced member to go with you if you’re unsure of what needs to be done. Here are a few tips to help you get started.

Plants want to reproduce; don’t let them go to seed! Pinch out the blossoms from basil and oregano.

Clip the spent blossoms off the Calendula. Cut the spent blooms from the Monarda down to right above the next set of leaves. New flowers will emerge from the leaf axils.

Remove the rotten leaves from the bottom of the Comphrey, and deadhead.

The mint grows rampant, and will take over if not contained. Yank up all but one small clump. The Hops also need vigorous pruning; cut everything that has escaped from the trellis.

Take cuttings home with which to cook.

The root vegetables such as carrots, onions, and beets need to be thinned enough that there’s room for the roots to develop and grow. Lettuce can be more thickly planted, and cut for micro greens. If thinning is needed, grasp the seedling just above ground level, or cut with scissors.

Maintaining the Waywood Bed

The Nepeta blooms can be sheared, but the Goldenrod should be cut back just to the foliage. I was going to say leave the dried Echinacea seedheads for the goldfinches, but it’s probably not safe for them to fly to that bed.

The older Winterberry stems can be cut to the ground, and the newer stems can be pruned and shortened before they flower in the spring.

The Knockout Roses don’t need to be deadheaded, but they can be for a neater look, and to control the size. Cut back to a new shoot, or just above a five petaled leaf. If you want to get fancy, you can shape the roses by cutting above an outward facing shoot.