

Should You Keep a  
Garden Journal?

# 7 Ideas to Include in Your Garden Journal

## 1. Site Characteristics (the Land Before Plantings)

- Locate North and track sun/shade patterns
- Note **Soil** (attach your soil report!), slope, drainage, predominant winds, tree roots. Document soil amendments, fertilizer amounts & application dates. Include brand names, nutrients and distribution amounts (i.e., Acme GrowFast 10-10-10, perennial border 5 pounds).
- Consider that your home “plat plan” and a GIS map (available free online) may be useful.

## Site: Sun/Shade Patterns

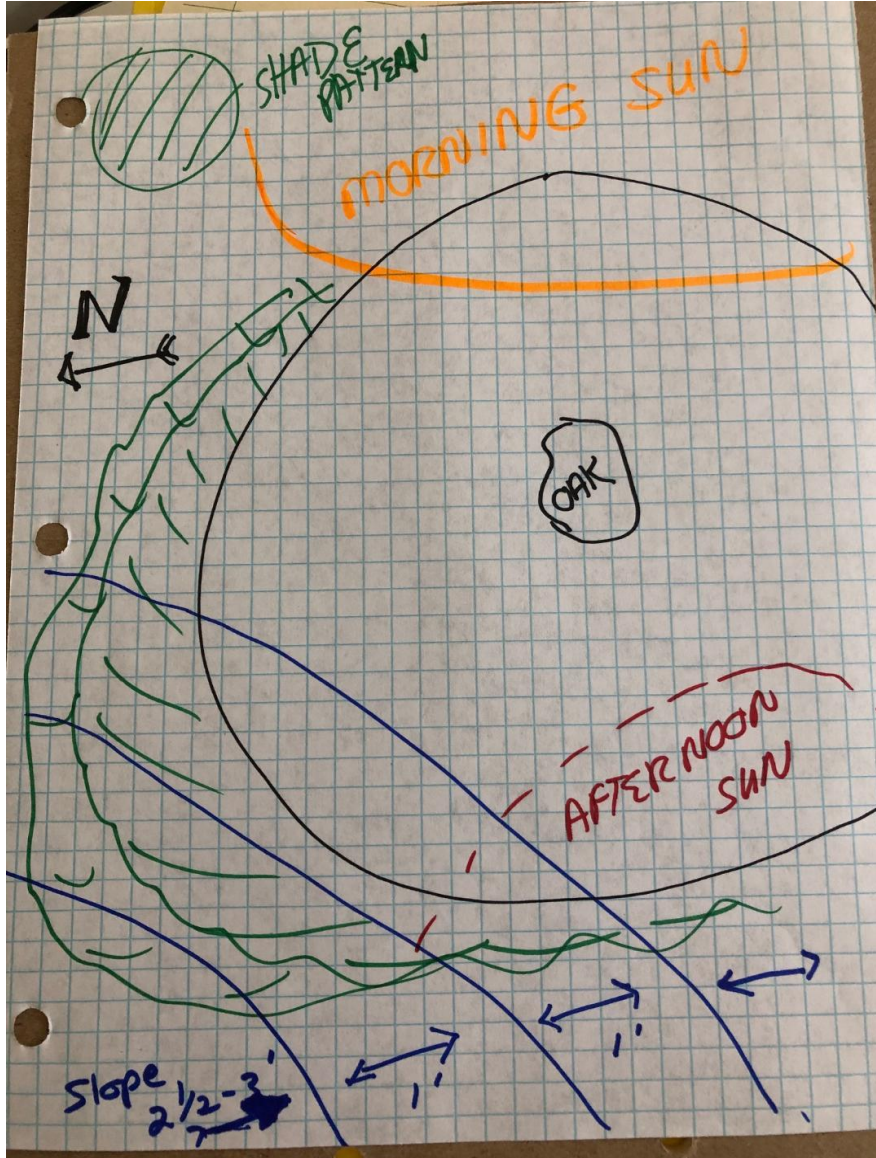
- Sun at 10AM
- Aug 7
- Facing east





Sun/Shade – same day 12 noon & 2 pm





## Site: Noting Slope

- Existing tree noted with canopy
- North identified
- Slope noted with 3' drainage towards tree
- Shade estimated
- Morning & Afternoon sun noted for future planting requirements
- Oops: Did not note the dominant wind direction!



## 2. Seasonality

- **Weather** and weather patterns (i.e., wet winter, dry June/July), first and last frost dates, major storms
- Calendar **chores** (i.e., prune the rosebushes in Feb, apply pre-emergent in March)

## Calendar Chores – where to find ideas:

- Check local sources, such as nurseries, for ideas on **WHAT** to do in your garden and **WHEN** to do it.
- BE AWARE that retail nurseries are in the for-profit business.
- **DO** create your own garden chore calendar!



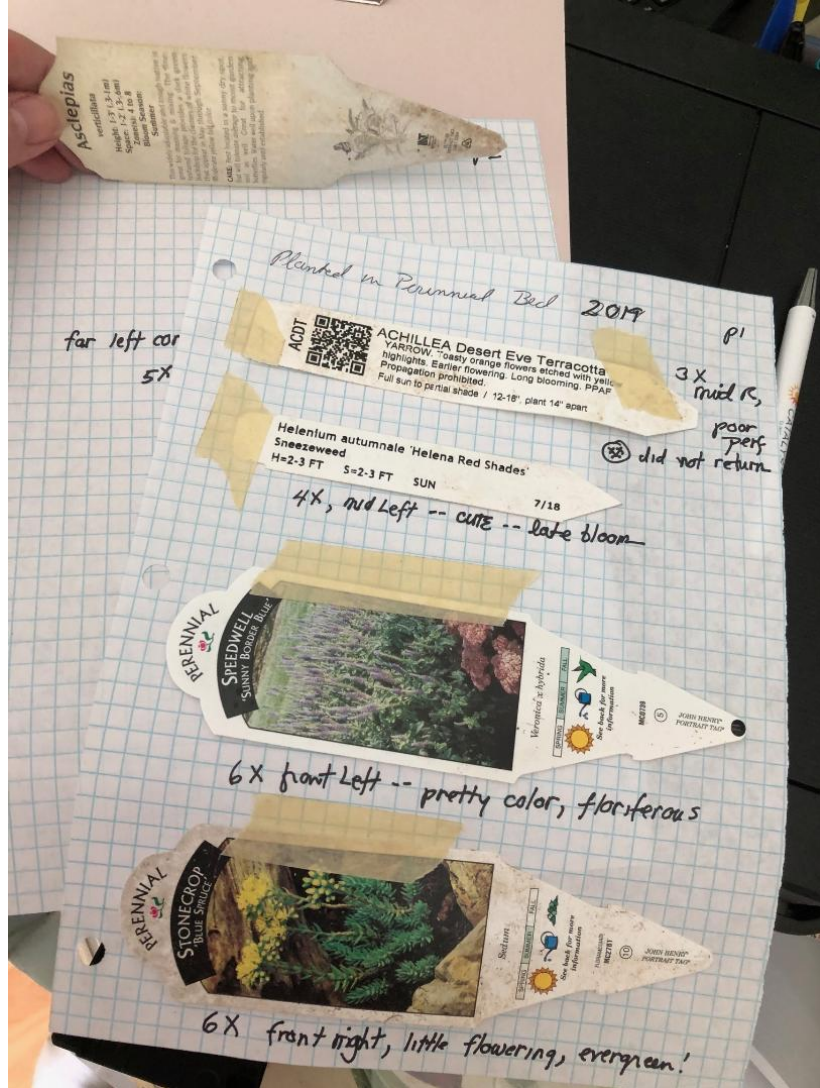
## [SAMPLE March Garden Tasks from a garden center]

Getting the garden and landscape ready for Spring success;

- **Fertilize** trees, shrubs and perennials with Holly-tone and Plant-tone.
- Pick up our **Mole & Vole Repellent**. 90% of our customers have great success. Learn how to tell the difference between a mole and a vole [here](#).
- Stop weeds before they start! We recommend Dimension by Hi-Yield or organic corn gluten. Applying **weed pre-emergent** now will prevent crabgrass & broadleaf weeds in all types of lawns for 6-8 weeks. Ask our staff about application rates and timing. We also have organic corn gluten as a pre-emergent for veggie gardens and other areas of your garden.
- Now's the time to **fertilize fescue** lawns. Ferti-lome Classic Lawn Food now has slow release nitrogen, allowing it to slowly feed your lawn for up to 2 months with just one application!

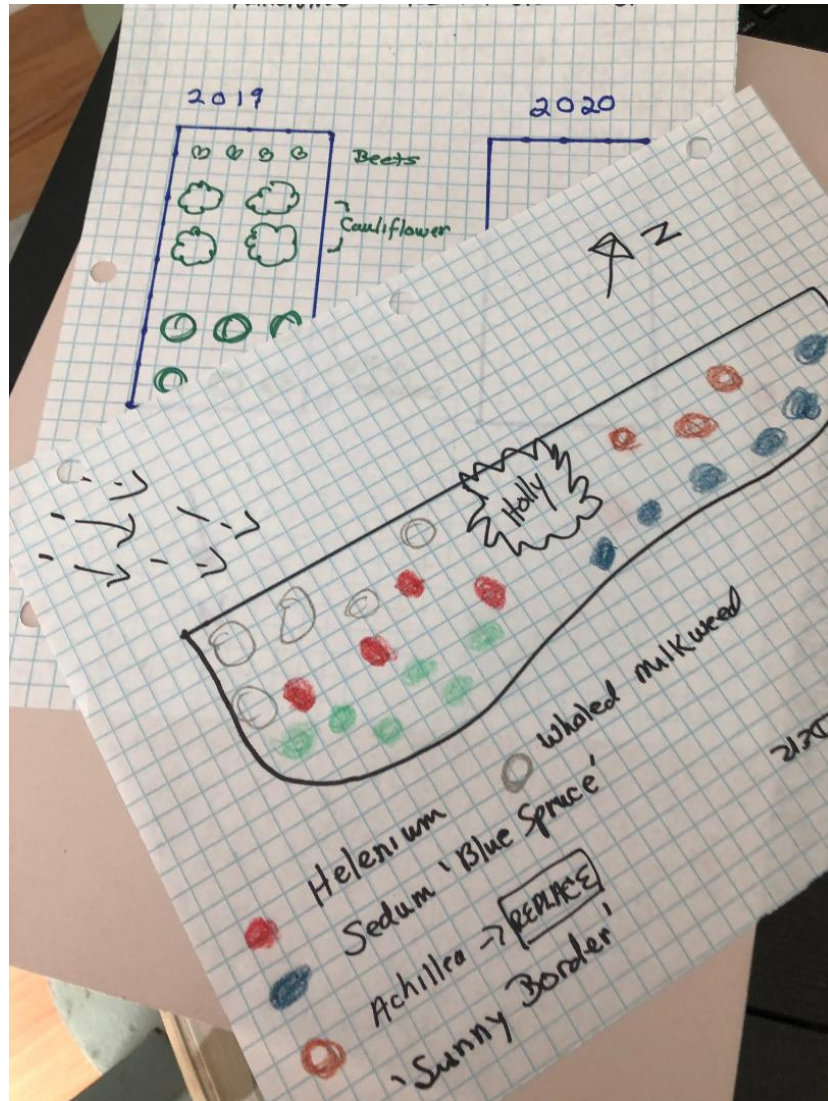
### 3. Plants

- Plant profiles
  - Name
  - Conditions needed – sun, water, soil
  - Height and width
  - Annual, perennial or biennial
- Images/Photos
- Harvests



Keeping it simple:

Track your plants using the plant identification tags on all plant purchases.



Drawing your garden beds.



# Photos are useful to track your garden's progress

**Before** --- expand garden bed 2017



**After** --- filled in 2020



Sample April 2020



# [Sample plant database – Nerd Version on Excel]

|    |                      |                  |  |        |          |    |                  |       |         |  |
|----|----------------------|------------------|--|--------|----------|----|------------------|-------|---------|--|
| 12 | Spigelia marilandica | Indian Pink      |  | red    | 2018 spg | 5  | Shade            | 1-2   | .5-1.5  | z5-9. clump, pt shade to full shade, June bloom, tolerates dry soil & drought, pref moist/rich |
| 13 | Podophyllum peltatum | May Apple        |  | white  | 2018 spg | 10 | Shade            | 1-1.5 | .75-1   | z3-8, Apr bloom, pt shade to full shade, rich/moist, edible fruit                              |
| 14 | Penstemon digitalis  | Beardtongue      |  | white  | 2018 spg | 3  | Bright           | 3-5   | 1.5-2   | z3-8, Apr-Jun bloom, full sun, medium moisture, no wet feet                                    |
| 15 | Lilium Superbum      | Turk's Cap Lily  |  | orange | 2018 spg | 2  | Pt Sun to Bright | 4-7   | .5-.75  | z5-8, bloom Jly, med to wet soil, BULB   |
| 16 | Liatris spicata      | Spike Gayfeather |  | purple | 2018 spg | 5  | Bright           | 2-4   | .75-1.5 | z3-8, bloom Jly-Aug, rich/moist soil, NO wet feet in winter                                    |

## **4. Pests**

- Identify
- Track arrival dates and preferred host plants
- How to fight them

## 4. Pests ?





#### 4. Pests – Red Velvet Ant → ouch!



## **5. Projects**

## **6. Budget/expenses**

## **7. Tips**

- Fact sheets
- Design ideas
- Anything that appeals to you for future reference



# The Garden Journal – A Tool for Success

<https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-gardener-handbook/appendix-a-garden-journaling>

“Garden journals are as varied as the perennials in a garden....Selecting a style is a matter of preference, choose a format you are comfortable with and committed to using on a regular basis. By recording information over a long period of time, you will create an invaluable source of information about your yard and garden that will guide you in making any future decisions about plants, problems, or design.

“Capturing information about the site, seasonal factors, plants, pests, projects, and expenses will provide the data necessary to make informed decisions and have a successful thriving garden now and in the future.”

# Your Garden Journal

This is a useful tool to track what you have planted.

Come spring, you don't want to pull out that gorgeous flowering perennial that was a show-stopper last year.

Make it YOURS. Make it simple. What do you want to record?

- **What** was planted
- **Where** was it planted
- **When** was it planted
- When does it bloom, or when are the vegetables/fruits ripe

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