

## **Harvest Horseradish – zoo garden (2 volunteers)**

*Supplies: large shovel, spade, pruners*



Ideally done in late fall. Dig down around the horseradish plant as far as you can and then with your spade, gently lift the horseradish root out of the ground. Harvest main root and set aside offshoots for replanting (about 6” – 8” long and a finger-width in diameter). Roots not harvested become woody and have no culinary use. Remove rocks and amend soil with compost, if available, prior to replanting offshoots. Replant three offshoots in the zoo garden about 1 foot apart with the large end up. The top should be about 4” below the soil surface. Volunteers are welcome to take any extra offshoots to plant at home.

## **Path Maintenance (4+ volunteers)**

*Supplies: spray bottles full of vinegar, weeding tools, mulch shovels, wheelbarrows*

1. Remove weeds: Dig up large weeds, spray small weeds with vinegar. Be careful to keep vinegar on weeds only since it will harm any plant.
2. Rebury any exposed landscape fabric.
3. Apply fresh woodchips.

## **Clean Bird Feeders (2-4 volunteers)**

*Supplies: 2 large buckets, liquid soap, scrub brush, hose, vinegar*

1. Empty bird feeders and scatter seed away from other work areas.
2. Squirt a bit of liquid soap into one bucket and fill with water. Add equal parts water and vinegar to other bucket.
3. Submerge feeder in soapy bucket and scrub.
4. Rinse thoroughly with hose.
5. Place in vinegar bucket to soak while the next feeder is cleaned.
6. Rinse thoroughly and return to Habitat.
7. Do NOT refill feeders until they are completely dry.

## Clean Out Birdhouses (2 volunteers)

*Supplies: ladder, screwdriver, brush, paper and pen for noting contents*

Open each box in early spring and late fall. Note the type of nest inside, if any. Remove old nesting material and any new house sparrow nests, including eggs. House sparrows are a very aggressive non-native species. Besides competing for food and nesting sites, they actually evict and kill native birds and build their nest on top of the previous nest. Below is information regarding the nests most likely to be found in the Habitat birdhouses.



### **Bluebird**

A neat nest made of fine grasses and sometimes a feather or two, leaves and thin bark. It has a fairly shallow cup. Eggs are blue.



### **Tree Swallow**

Similar to a bluebird nest but typically contains a lining of large white feathers. Eggs are white.



### **House Sparrow**

A loose jumble of odds and ends, including coarse grass, cloth, feathers, twigs and sometimes litter. Usually domed and sometimes fills the entire birdhouse. Eggs are cream, grayish or greenish with brown speckles.

## **Prepare Planting Mounds (2 volunteers)**

*Supplies: garden rake or hoe, container for mulch if there isn't room in the garden to rake it aside*

A planting mound is a large hill of soil pulled up from the surrounding area to create a raised planting environment. Traditionally, mounds are used for growing big and sprawling vegetable plants such as zucchini, cucumber, summer and winter squash, pumpkins and melons.

**For 2011 we are making mounds about 18” high and spaced 4’ apart. Each grade level garden should have 1 mound and the “stink-o-lantern” patch should have as many as possible.**

Remove mulch from the planting area. Mark a midpoint for each mound. Then using a garden rake or a hoe, pull soil from the surrounding ground until a pile is formed. Be sure you take soil away evenly so there are no big dips around the mound, although a shallow moat at the base of each mound does help retain water in dry weather.

Flatten the pile a little on top and smooth the sides so the soil is evenly spread all the way around. Replace mulch, leaving the tops of the mounds bare. Seeds or seedlings are generally planted in a circle or a triangle on the mound.