

# Upper Deerfield Township Environmental Commission

## Topiary: Creative Pruning

Add a little fun to your yard! Convert that plain old green bush into a clever topiary. It will make you smile every time you look at it—and it's not difficult. Fortunately, the evergreens that adapt well for this kind of creative pruning are plentiful in our climate. Boxwood is the most popular choice, offering lots of small green leaves that give your shape a fullness. And there are several types of ilex shrubs that are similar to boxwood.

To make it easy, start with a small, young plant that can be slowly shaped as it grows. You can use a mature plant, but it's a fussier process. Using a frame makes the job easier, especially if you are trying to create a pair of topiaries that match. You can craft a frame using wire and ties. However, if you're trying something simple, like a cone or a ball shape, you can probably do it freehand.

To start the process of shaping, you need to have a vision of what you're trying to create. A little patience also helps. Then follow these basic rules: 1. Use sharp shears. 2. Start by trimming off just a small amount and never trim off more than three inches or you'll risk killing that part of the shrub. Take your time and work slowly. 4. Train and prune the shrub though the growing season by clipping a bit here and there and making sure it stays healthy. 5. Stop trimming your topiary two months before a frost is expected. It may look a little shaggy in the winter, but cold weather is not a good time to prune. Year by year, you'll move closer to the image you have in mind.

*Pictured topiaries are all from yards in Upper Deerfield.  
Information source: Gardening Know-How.com.*



# HELP OUR POLLINATORS: PLANT A FLOWER

To create a pollinator-friendly garden and yard, follow these tips from the Honeybee Conservancy:

1. **Rethink your lawn.** Replace all or part of your front lawn with flowering plants, which provide food and habitat for honey bees, bumble bees, solitary bees, butterflies and other pollinators.
2. **Select single flower tops for your bee garden.** Choose flowers like daisies or marigolds that produce more nectar, rather than double flower tops such as impatiens. Avoid highly hybridized plants which have very little pollen.
3. **Plant for blooms in spring, summer and fall.** In the spring, plant crocus, hyacinth, borage, and calendula that have spring blooms with lots of pollen. In summer, pollen is produced by bee balm, cosmos, echinacea, snapdragons, foxglove and hosta. In the fall, late bloomers include zinnias, sedum, asters, witch hazel and goldenrod.
4. **Build homes for native bees.** Uncultivated patches of dirt, piles of branches or hollow reeds, weedy hedgerows and sources of water and mud are useful to native bees.
5. **Use only natural pesticides and fertilizers.** Herbicides and pesticides can be toxic to bees and are not good for children or adults who visit your yard. Encourage ladybugs, spiders and praying mantises, who will naturally keep your pest populations in check.



## NJ HELPS POLLINATORS



New Jersey recently passed a bill restricting the use of bee-killing neonicotinoids, also known as neonics. These pesticides, which harm pollinators such as honey bees and monarch butterflies, are now limited in non-agricultural settings, including lawns, gardens and golf courses.

Did you know that it takes 60,000 bees to pollinate one acre of an orchard? Each year over 1 billion pounds of pesticides are applied to crops in the U.S. and over 20,000 farmworkers suffer pesticide poisoning.

