

# LAKE ERIE STARTS HERE!

## Putting Your Garden to Bed in the Fall

For maximum wildlife, water quality and soil health benefits, leave your flower beds and other landscaping in place this fall. When you do tidy up in the spring, consider trimming your plants down to ground-level but leaving the roots in place. Also, fall is a great time to test your soil and to start a new native plant bed from seed, such as a pollinator pocket garden. Check out [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org) for additional resources.

### Stalks and Stems

In addition to providing texture to the fall and winter garden, plants left standing are an excellent source of food and shelter for birds and other animals.

### Leave the Leaves

Leaf litter, grass clippings and other plant detritus supply nutrients and organic matter to the soil below. It is also habitat for critters such as firefly larvae. Finally it keeps the soil moist and helps to regulate soil temperatures.

### Roots Help Your Soil

Leave your plants in the ground through the fall and winter! Keeping the root system in place builds healthy soil structure that better infiltrates stormwater while providing much needed organic matter.

