



Trees, animals, birds, plants, forests, mountains, lakes and rivers — everything that exists in Nature are in desperate need of our kindness, of the compassionate care and protection of human beings. If we protect them, they in turn will protect us.

- Amma

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*Photo taken October 2015!*

GreenFriends is a global grassroots environmental movement which promotes environmental awareness and local participation in conservation efforts throughout the world.

GreenFriends is one of the projects of [Embracing the World](#), a not-for-profit international collective of charities founded by internationally known spiritual and humanitarian leader, Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma)

To join the Pacific Northwest GreenFriends Litter Project, write Karuna at [pnwgreenfriends108@gmail.com](mailto:pnwgreenfriends108@gmail.com)

For The Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project write: [Ananya\\_ammasananya@comcast.net](mailto:Ananya_ammasananya@comcast.net)

## PNW Gardening

### Bhuvaneshwari's Prasad



Aum Amriteshwaryai Namah

Dear Green Friends,

Harvest season is upon us—a time for thanksgiving when we remember the bounty of the earth. Often associated with the history of European settlement of this continent, gardening brings to our present experience awareness the abundance of the Earth's gifts.

Amma teaches that everything in life is a gift. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the garden. Even the most skilled gardener is awestruck with the wonder of the miracle of life, for all we can do is assist, cultivate and steward. We cannot create the magnificent diversity of life on our own.

If we contemplate where our food comes from, the intricate ways that substances are converted in plants, soil, light, air and water, we glimpse a world of divine harmony of which we are part. Our very existence is evidence of the unity in all things. Much closer to home than any abstract spiritual concept, we can see for ourselves that the whole of nature is the cause that results in our conscious existence. This is why we hear this wisdom spoken from native elders the world over.

Harvest is the fruit of our actions, a short cycle of karma where we see both cause and effect in a short time span. Many subtle insights are revealed through the simple acts of sowing, cultivating and reaping. There is deep comfort and empowerment that comes from experiencing the benefits of simple work: grounding, integration and healing

## PNW Gardening



flows like water from these gifts of the earth, so needed in this time. What a joy to gather prepare, eat and share the food that we have grown in our own backyard. Our attention is drawn to witness the perfect beauty of each leaf, seed and fruit.

All these benefits and more come from gardening and living close to the earth. It is daily darshan with the Divine Mother.

Om Hrim Bhuvaneshvaryai Namaha



## PNW Gardening

### Wooly Lamb's Ear



#### **Wooly Lamb's Ear (*Stachys byzantina*)**

**Family: Mint (*Lamiaceae*)**

**Hardiness: -20 degrees F**

This plant is an evergreen perennial with soft and downy leaves. I have noticed that plants with smooth skin (unless it be dry and leathery) are often quite frost sensitive, while wooly plants tend to be frost hardy, and this is so with wooly lamb's ears. The downy leaf also makes the plant exceptionally drought tolerant, looking healthy and unlikely to droop even if water supplies are thin, and sun is intense.

The plant has two growth phases, one in which it spreads horizontally to form a cushy mat, and the other when it sends up its stalks and flowers in handsome spikes. It is mainly used as a container plant in the city, as it does well in planters along the sidewalk and is easy to upkeep while providing texture and color along what might otherwise be a drab and angular walkway.

When I first obtained this plant a couple of decades ago, I thought it was wood betony, and according to the way that plant is normally used, proceeded to make a tea out of the leaves. The tea of the fresh, undried leaves sliced into thin slips for better extraction actually turned out very nice—green and pleasantly tannic, not unlike green tea. Later

## PNW Gardening

I found out that true wood betony is *Stachys officinalis*, and that this wooly betony had little or no history of use as a tea herb. But I liked it, anyway.

Wooly lamb's ears are good for dressing a wound. They stop up the blood and soothe. The plant can be considered to be one of the woundworts, which were of great help in days of yore, when dragon hunting and castle wall climbing often resulted in lots of gore. Those who knew the ways of healing employed the plant with good results, and the fighters always asked for more.

The plant prefers full sun and is not particular about soil. Sow it in pots in the spring and work up seedlings to the second set of leaves before transplanting out to 1-foot spacing. The plants will soon cover the area and self-mulch.

Article by Richo Cech, [Horizon Herbs](https://www.facebook.com/Horizon-Herbs-348837717347/timeline), Williams, Oregon

<https://www.facebook.com/Horizon-Herbs-348837717347/timeline>



## NATURE

### Seasons by Oliana



light drifts away so quickly now  
 how  
 Mother Nature transforms in mocking  
 locking  
 hues in shades of autumn's wistfulness  
 pensiveness  
 sets free dim melancholic mood  
 solitude  
 flirts with one of winter's new companions  
 phantoms  
 celebrate their life before that last breath  
 death  
 greets us in timely fashion for different reasons  
 seasons

© Oliana 2015/10/23

From: <https://tracesofthesoul.wordpress.com/2015/10/24/season-echo-verse>

# WILDLIFE

## All Things Connect by Sue Dreamwalker

*“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it.”*

*“Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.”*

*Chief Seattle*



Woven Web beneath the raspberries



How beautiful is this giant web strung across the flower bed.

# WILDLIFE



This one stretched right across the path to our neighbor's plot..



You have got to love the ingenuity of Spiders, they know flies love fruit what better place to have your home hiding under curled Raspberry leaves

## WILDLIFE



Some spiders spin tunnels, and others weave their blanket webs.



Each spider's construction is a wonderful engineering feat, built to withstand the rain, allowing the wind to blow through it.

To read the full post go to: <https://suedreamwalker.wordpress.com/2015/09/29/all-things-connect>

## WILDLIFE

### The Symbiotic Relationship between Ants and Aphids

by Karuna Poole



[Ant guards its aphids](#)

When I wrote about experiences I had with ants earlier this summer ([Watch, Wait and Wonder](#)), one of my friends told me that ants and aphids have a symbiotic relationship. I was fascinated by his description of the process so decided to learn more about it.

Ants play the role of protector in the ant-aphid relationship. They do that in exchange for the honeydew that the aphids express when the ants stroke the aphids' bodies with their antennae.

I also found some videos that show those behaviors.

In the first part of this video, you will see the ant stroking the aphid, the honeydew being expressed, and the ant drinking it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TJT90MjMqg>

The next video shows how ants protect aphids from lady bugs. I was surprised to learn that in other parts of the world lady bugs are called lady beetles, lady birds, or lady cows! Ladybugs is a North American term.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxkqj6RfNNE>

## WILDLIFE



Ant Feeding on Honeydew

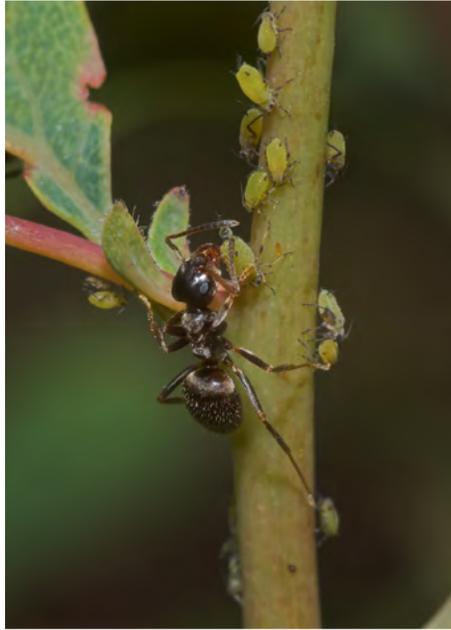
Besides saving the aphids from predators, the ants provide other services such as (1) moving them to parts of a plant that have the best sap; (2) moving them to a more sheltered place during a rainstorm; and (3) bringing the aphids back to the plant after the rain shower is over. Ants may even carry aphid eggs to the storage chamber of their own nest in order to help them survive a cold winter.

As I continued exploring the YouTube videos, I found an incredible one which shows ants protecting aphids from an aphid lion, which is actually the larva form of a [Green Lacewing](#). The video also reveals that there are some creatures which ants allow to stay near the aphids.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbRK6E5crbg>

The ants are very much in charge of the relationship—and their interest is not wholly benevolent. Some of the articles say that ants “farm” the aphids. When an ant finds a group of aphids, it leaves a trail of pheromones for worker ants to follow. The ants then enslave the aphids. They slow the aphids down by drugging them with a tranquilizing chemical from their feet. They may also bite off the aphids’ wings to prevent them from flying away.

## WILDLIFE



Ant Cultivating Aphids

Nature is so amazing. Both ants and aphids are such common creatures, but I would never have guessed that they were so interconnected.

I adapted this article from a post I had originally published on: <https://livinglearningandlettinggo.wordpress.com/2015/08/27/the-symbiotic-relationship-between-ants-and-aphids>

### References:

[Ants Farm Aphids in a Symbiotic Relationship](#)

[Defensive Symbiosis](#)

[What is the Symbiotic Relationship between Aphids and Ants?](#)



## WILDLIFE

### The Fascinating Fruit Fly by Karuna Poole



Photo Credit: [Wikipedia](#)

I do my best not to kill spiders, bugs, and insects, but fruit flies can be so overwhelming. Perhaps because the summer was so warm this year, there were more fruit flies than normal. Even when I put my fruit in the refrigerator during the summer, fruit flies seemed to show up at some point. Once, when I opened my outdoor compost bin, the swarm that emerged was so huge I could barely breathe. And, when I visited a friend's house I found a big swarm of fruit flies in her kitchen, even though there didn't seem to be anything present there to draw them.

During the last few months, I have posted interesting facts about ants, aphids and slugs on this blog. I decided to do the same for fruit flies. I was astounded at what I learned about them.

- Fruit flies have red eyes and tan bodies. On their abdomens, there are black bands.
- Fruit flies become .098 inches in length.
- They flap their wings 220 times per second.
- Their eyes have 760 individual lenses. They use 2/3 of their brains for visual processing.
- Fruit flies live 8 to 10 days. During that time females may lay 500 eggs. (One article said they may lay up to 2,000!)
- Fruit flies are drawn to decaying fruits and vegetables, as well as greasy items, in garbage dumps, trash cans, restaurants and homes.

## WILDLIFE

- They are also drawn to anything that is fermenting. They love beer and wine.
- They are considered nuisance pests, but they can transmit diseases.
- Do not eat fruits that have rotten parts as they may contain fruit fly eggs and disease.
- People who have pet geckos, chameleons, frogs and praying mantises often breed fruit flies to feed them. They must also be a food source to many creatures in the wild.
- Fruit flies have only four chromosomes, but those four are similar to human chromosomes.
- Fruit flies are used in genetic research and also for studying evolution and neurobiology.
- Seventy-five percent of genetically linked human diseases can be induced and examined in fruit flies.
- Fruit flies are used in research for Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, aging, cancer, immunity, alcohol and drug abuse.
- Fruit flies originated in West Africa and then spread to Europe. They probably arrived in North America on slave ships.
- In 1995 three scientists who used fruit flies in their experiments won the Nobel Peace Prize!

Here is an interesting video of the developmental stages of a fruit fly's life:

<https://youtu.be/DsK9R-yfgF4>

Well, the fruit fly may be considered a nuisance pest, but I can see that they provide important services to this world.

I will never look at them the same again!

References:

[5 Things You Didn't Know about Fruit Flies](#)

[Drosophila melanogaster: Common Fruit Fly](#)

[Basic Fruit Fly Facts](#)

[Fruit Flies](#)

[Top Ten Fascinating Facts about Fruit Flies](#)

# PNW Litter Project

## PNW Litter Project Stats

Forty-five litter project members and friends reported picking up **101.44** hours of litter in October 2015. The average pick up time was **2.25** hours; the range was **1 minute to 16 hours** and the median was **1** hour.

Members of the project have picked up litter for **7002** hours since the project began in July 2011.

TerraCycle credited us with turning in **139,534** cigarette butts in **2013** and **55,200** in **2014**. Our **2015** count stands at **60,900** butts, bringing us to a grand total of **264,624** butts since we started sending them to TerraCycle in January 2013. (In addition to the butts we turned into TerraCycle we also have a 5 gallon jar of cigarette butts we use for the litter project display)



# PNW Litter Project

## October 7 Work Party at the Future MA Center-PNW

by Yashas Renn



Rain was in the forecast, but Karuna assured everyone that at litter pickups it nearly always ends up being dry. Then, the day before, she sent word that heavy rain was now in the forecast. She said that she would be at the property anyway and if there were any hardy souls who wanted to work regardless of the weather, they were welcome to come. She also suggested to everyone it would be good to have rain gear as well as a set of dry clothes to change into afterward. Uh-oh.

Ten intrepid Green Friends members (from Snohomish, Bellevue, Renton, Redmond, Seattle and Vancouver, BC) arrived at the site of the future MA Center-PNW. As the group set out, the rain began—gradually at first, then picking up until it was a downpour. Wouldn't you know, that was just when more litter was discovered. Soon all thought of staying dry was abandoned. Using a machete to get through the brambles, a dozen large bags of rubbish were collected, along with pieces too large to bag. In the end, it was a full truckload, one carrying 750 pounds of trash!

# PNW Litter Project



## PNW Litter Project

### We are in the “Box that Rocks” Finals!

For the last three years, we have submitted a display for TerraCycle’s Box that Rocks contest. The task is to make a creative and inspiring recycling collection station. This year the display that Satyavati created on behalf of the PNW Litter Project is in the finals! If you look below you will see more information about the contest and a list of the top 15 contestants. Ours is #11.

If you would like to vote, go to: <https://terracycle.wufoo.com/forms/2015-box-that-rocks-voting>



## 2015 Box that Rocks Finalists

Vote for your favorite!

### 2015 Box that Rocks Voting

TerraCycle has chosen the top finalists and now it's your turn to vote for the winners. Get your friends and family to vote for their favorite box, too!

Voting closes on November 6, 2015.

The top 10 winners will be announced on November 13, 2015.

**Grand Prize:** 50,000 bonus points

**Second Place:** 25,000 bonus points

**Third Place:** 10,000 bonus points

**Fourth through Tenth:** 5,000 bonus points

# PNW Litter Project



## 2015 Box that Rocks Finalists

Vote for your favorite!



1 Catherine E. Doyle Elementary  
Woodbridge, NJ



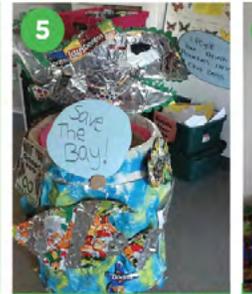
2 Smith School  
Winterport, ME



3 Minds in Training  
Miami, FL



4 Manatee Elementary School  
Viera, FL



5 Peasley Middle School  
Gloucester, VA



6 Adventure Subaru  
Fayetteville, AR



7 Donaghue School  
Merrimac, MA



8 Northern Elementary  
Lexington, KY



9 Pinecrest Elementary School  
Bremerton, WA



10 Frontier Elementary  
Loxahatchee, FL



11 PNW GreenFriends Litter Project  
Seattle, WA



12 Davis Drive Elementary School  
Cary, NC



13 Old Richmond Elementary  
Tomball, TX



14 Overland Elementary School  
Los Angeles, CA



15 St. Thomas Nursery School  
Fayetteville, NC

## Interesting Information from Our Readers

### From Nika on Bainbridge Island:

My German friend Kirstin in Bremerton built this bug house.



### From Iswari in Edmonds:



Photo Credit: [Mr.Trash Wheel Twitter](#)

This water wheel has removed 331 tons of trash from Baltimore's city harbors since May 2014. This includes:

- 1,248 sports balls
- 3,760 glass bottles
- 105,170 grocery bags
- 162,159 chip bags

## Interesting Information from Our Readers

- 189,180 plastic bottles
- 6,546,000 cigarette butts

To read the whole article go to: <http://www.aol.com/article/2015/10/13/this-incredible-contraption-has-removed-more-than-6-million-ciga/21248603/?ncid=txtlnkusaolp00001348>

### From Rosemary in New York City (but a previous Seattleite):

Just wanted to share this article with you from my food co-op in Brooklyn where Vanamali and I are members. I try to represent Seattle and Amma's GreenFriends here in NYC. [The article credits Rosemary for hooking them up to TerraCycle! Karuna] [http://www.foodcoop.com/files\\_lwg/lwg\\_2015\\_10\\_01\\_vJJ\\_n20.pdf](http://www.foodcoop.com/files_lwg/lwg_2015_10_01_vJJ_n20.pdf)

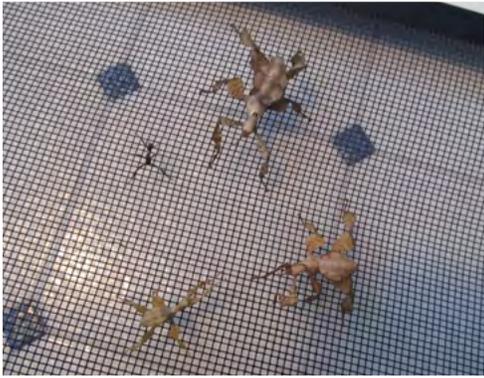
### From Nika on Bainbridge Islands:

These photos are of trash bins I found in Twisp and Winthrop!



## Interesting Information from Our Readers

From Kathie in Bellevue (also known as the Bug Mama!):



I've had 21 of the eggs from my last family of Giant Spiny Australian Leaf Bugs hatch! They are providing a whole new bunch of miracles to care for and learn from.

Some are green and some are brown.



The picture below is the molted exoskeleton from one of the older bugs. It comes off completely intact, right down to the antennae!!!



I'd sure love to share these amazing critters so if anyone would like to have this experience also, please contact me at [karcide@msn.com](mailto:karcide@msn.com) right away. This is an especially big treat for kids (old enough to understand about not squishing them).

Come and get 'em. They are growing so fast!!!