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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



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 karunap108@comcast.net

PNW Gardening

Maltby Gardens



PNW Gardening



PNW Gardening

Soil Inoculant for Fall Fertilizing by Lin

The first week of October I got my marching orders from Yasas: get three pounds of kelp powder, and two pounds of oats (and turn the oats into powder in my food processor). The goal was to make soil inoculant—something he'd learned in permaculture trainings with Elaine Ingham in San Ramon (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elaine_Ingham).

I was eager to start, so the following day Yasas arrived at my house bearing buckets of rotted wood chips, compost, and a sample of garden soil from the Maltby property's vegetable garden. The woodchips were teeming with healthy microbes, as verified by the Maltby permaculture team. Peering into their microscope, they'd been excited to see the right varieties of beneficial micro-organisms in abundance—the perfect thing for inoculating garden soil to enrich its nutrients. Yasas poured his buckets into my garden cart and mixed in the oatmeal and kelp powders, along with half a bag of last year's Hendrikus soil enhancer that I had on hand. I held the hose in "mist" mode to dampen the mixture while he mixed.

"Where's the best place to put this inside?" Yasas inquired as if this were an everyday kind of question.

"Inside? Inside where?"

"Your house. The micro-organisms need to be warm so they can multiply, and inside is the best place for that."

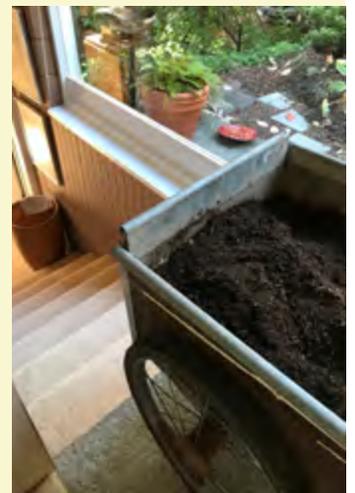
"Um," I hesitated, thinking of my carpet.

"It'll be easy. I'll just wheel the cart through your front door, and it can sit on the slate entryway for a couple of days. Just use the shovel every now and then to turn the mix—and keep the cart from rolling downstairs." Right.

"Ya know," I told Yasas, "in my twenties I was dying to join the backto-the-land movement. I never dreamed my wish would come true by having the land move into my living room fifty years later."

So the cart-load took up residence. Funnily enough, I began to feel affectionate toward these invisible little critters as I walked past now and then... it was sort of like having a newly-delivered box of kittens.

Wasn't it smelly? you might ask. Not at all. The mix was a gorgeous dark brown with a barely noticeable pleasant earthy fragrance. After all, it was soil, not dirt, as permaculturists like to say. Though on the second day, I have to admit, the aroma in my house was faintly reminiscent of a kelpy beach walk.



PNW Gardening

The next step was picking up a load of composted organic manure mixed with shredded yard waste from Bailey’s organic dairy farm in Snohomish. I rented a pickup truck from Bellevue’s Home Depot and, half an hour later, arrived at the dairy farm, just off Highway 9—on the edge of Snohomish’s greenly attractive flat farming valley.

I pulled into Bailey’s compost yard amidst towering black piles steaming in the morning sunshine. An enormous bright orange frontloader took a scoop of compost and dropped it into my truck bed—one cubic yard, the 3,000 pound maximum the truck would hold without an annoying buzzer going off. The tractor driver took my check, gave a friendly wave, and drove off on eight enormous heavily-treaded tires. If I’d known that getting compost would be so easy and inexpensive, I would have done this years ago. A cubic yard didn’t look like much in the truck, but it turned out to be more than enough for my vegetable garden and stock tanks, along with my yard’s landscaping front and back.



I backed into my driveway, dropped the tailgate, and Yasas arrived to shovel the load onto the tarp I’d spread out in advance. Next, he brought the garden cart outside and mixed the soil inoculant and compost together. Four hours later, the lush black soil looked beautiful spread throughout my garden and yard.

In case you’d like to do this yourself, the price tag broke down approximately as follows:

Organic oats 2 lbs.	\$ 5
Kelp powder 3 lbs.	\$ 10 (Keep It Simple organic farm, Redmond https://www.kisfarm.com)
Hendrikus soil enhancer	\$ 18 (1/2 bag, https://www.hendrikusorganics.com/organic-fertilizers/soil-enhancer-2-13-0/)
Pickup truck rental	\$ 70 (Home Depot, 3 hours, including \$27 for gas)
Bailey compost	\$ 27 (one cubic yard, 3,000 lbs – max truckload, http://www.baileycompost.com)
Total:	\$130

I can hardly wait for spring to find out the effect on my plants and vegetable starts.

PNW Gardening

2018 Harvest by Sarah



Tree Planting

Amma's Birthday Gift: Update from GreenFriends North America

Trees Pledged by September 27 deadline: 1060

Trees Planted so far: 2026

If you, or your group, have planted trees for this campaign, but haven't reported them yet, please report them on this [link](#).

If you plant more trees later, you can also add them at the same link. We can report trees planted up until March 31st, when the campaign ends.

Thanks so much for planting trees!

Tree Planting

Johnny Appleseed – An Awesome Tree-Planter by Tirtha



JOHNNY APPLESEED.

Photo Credit: [Wikimedia](#)

Johnny Appleseed was not just a mythic figure, he was a real person who planted apple trees throughout his entire adult life. It's estimated he raised about 300,000 apple seedlings in his nurseries in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana and Illinois, and as far north as Ontario, Canada.

His real name was John Chapman. He was born September 26, 1774, in Leominster, Massachusetts.

In his 20s, Johnny was deeply affected by the writing of a Swedish mystic named Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg taught that humans are spirit in material bodies, and that one should do good and spread the word of God's goodness and bounty.

Swedenborg argued against the prevailing thought, at the time, that faith alone could bring salvation. He said faith must be acted upon by doing acts of charity, to earn God's favor. He said, "The purpose of faith is to lead a person to live according to the truths of faith, which is charity." Swedenborg's writings influenced

many well-known writers and thinkers, including Carl Jung, William Blake, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Helen Keller, D.T. Suzuki, W.B. Yeats and Honoré de Balzac. Johnny reportedly carried Swedenborg's books and a Bible with him all his days, preached about Swedenborg's Church of the New Jerusalem, lived a very simple, frugal life even when he could afford luxury, and was known for his acts of kindness and generosity.

At 21, Johnny went westward, first to New York and Pennsylvania, and then on to Ohio. He was described as 5 feet, 7 inches tall—with large bones, and a strong and muscular build that was thin from all his walking.

Johnny didn't sprinkle apple seeds randomly. He planted apple nurseries, fenced them to protect them from animals, left them in the care of a neighbor, and returned every couple of years to check on them.

He sold young trees for about six and a half cents to settlers moving west. Many land-grant companies required settlers to plant 50 apple trees on their new land within one year. When some didn't have the cash, he would also accept used clothing, a meal, a place to sleep, food for his travels, or a promise to pay in the future.

In the fall, he would walk east to the cider mills to stock up on apple seeds, then carry them back west in burlap sacks by horse, raft, and canoe. He often slept outdoors and loved the wilderness. By 1815, he owned 640 acres of land, and had sold thousands of trees to settlers who were migrating west.

Although he was not a poor man, Johnny wore castoff clothes, and a shirt made of a coffee sack. He was said to

Tree Planting

wear a tin mush pot for a hat, and to go shoeless even in snowstorms.

He became a vegetarian, was kind to animals, and it was said he would put out his campfire rather than let mosquitoes be harmed by flying into it. He was friendly with both the settlers and the Native Americans, had learned enough of some Native American languages to be able to communicate, and sometimes was able to help settle differences between the two groups. Native Americans said he had been touched by the Great Spirit.

It was said he helped to heal a wolf's injured leg, and from then on, the wolf followed him and protected him. When he saw a sick horse that was going to be put down, he bought the horse as well as some nearby grassy land, where it was able to recover. When it was better, he gave the horse to someone needy, asking that they treat it well.

Johnny was knowledgeable about the medicinal uses of herbs, and also planted herb seeds wherever he went. He didn't believe in grafting apples, so all the apple trees he planted were grown from seed. Apple seeds are heterozygous, so they don't necessarily grow 'true to type' – each seed can grow into a tree with fruit very different from the parent tree.

In his book, *The Botany of Desire*, Michael Pollan said the apples Johnny Appleseed planted were likely small and bitter, and were probably used to make hard cider. "In rural areas, cider took the place of not only wine and beer but of coffee and tea, juice, and even water," Pollan wrote. They may also have been used in jams, jellies or baking, and to feed livestock.

Pollan also credits Johnny's widespread planting of apple trees grown from seed with the development of new varieties such as Delicious and Golden Delicious apple trees. Grafting ensures that the apples will be the same variety as the grafted variety, but each seed is different. Many of the trees may bear fruit that is bitter. But by planting many seeds, conditions were created for new varieties, some of which were very tasty.

Johnny planted and cared for his apple trees until the end of his life. It was said he died peacefully about age 70 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, possibly of pneumonia, when he became ill after walking through a snowstorm. By that time, he owned more than 1,200 acres of orchards, with 15,000 apple trees and 2,000 seedlings. Everything he owned was left to his sister.

More info:

https://web.archive.org/web/20060905033519/http://www.in.gov/ism/Education/Johnny_Appleseed.pdf

<https://mentalfloss.com/article/62113/9-facts-tell-true-story-johnny-appleseed>

<https://bestapples.com/resources-teachers-corner/johnny-appleseed>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emanuel_Swedenborg



Photo Credit: [Wikimedia](#)

Tree Planting

Victoria Satsang Tree Planting

On November 17th, several Victoria satsang members participated in a tree planting event. This community event was part of a larger, city-wide tree appreciation day. It was held at Newman Farm where local volunteers, along with tree planting experts, gathered to plant fruit trees and native shrubs.



Tree Planting

Thinking Outside the Box by Clara



Planting Trees! A cause that's close to the hearts of many people, and most especially those of us who follow Amma's teaching about being kind to Mother Earth.

Thinking outside the box is very helpful when planning a project to plant trees within the city. Even more helpful is perseverance, especially in dialogues with Municipalities, as I learned last year. After contacting three different City Halls and being told a variety of reasons why I couldn't be helped, my last (and what would have been my final call) was to one that was looking to build its volunteer base for their Parks Dept. In return for our participation, they were willing to provide us with trees, tools, the right space and their guidance. What a blessing!

Another tactic I will try for next year, is to ask for the name and phone number of the City arborist and contact this person to see what they might be willing to do to help us with planting more trees.

I also figure that NGO's in the city, whose mission statement centers around greening the environment, should be very helpful too.

Tree Planting

Free Trees (Part 2 of 3) by Sri Lakshmi

To read Part 1 go to [page 14-15 in Issue 88](#).

Pulling baby tree seedlings from the mossy ground cover of my neighbor's field was an easier task than we thought. My family and I were able to quickly transplant them, mostly with our bare hands. The ground was soft and it was a beautiful sunny and warm day. We worked until sunset. By the end of the first session, we had planted 46 native evergreens. Most of these trees were planted in a slippery slope near the back of our property. By the end of our tree planting, we had totally filled in any bald or sparse areas, greening as much as we could.

It was our goal to plant 108 + 1 in the back area, like an Archana. We easily surpassed that when my husband and son and I planted 54 trees in one day. After that, I went back again and again to my neighbor's field, pulling and planting up to 50 trees a day. Two weeks after Amma's birthday, our count was up to 340 planted trees—so many that we had to stop, as the trees need adequate room to grow and we had run out of space.

The need to find planting space for more trees brought my attention to the front of our property that was heavily layered in non-native Himalayan blackberries.

Before we can think about planting trees there, we must clear 1/4 acre of densely entrenched blackberries, some over 10 feet tall, and remove their root balls. My neighbors have agreed to help by bringing their goats over to eat the blackberries.

To be continued...



Forest and Habitat Restoration

Green Seattle Day: November 3, 2018

Each year, the Green Seattle Partnership sponsors a Green Seattle Day. On that day, work parties are held in parklands all over Seattle. Sarva and Karuna volunteered to be team leaders at Cheasty Mt. View Park. Haley, Emma, Perry and two of their friends also participated in the three-hour work party.

The number of people who registered for this work party was amazing. There were seven in our GreenFriends contingent, but 126 volunteers in the whole group.

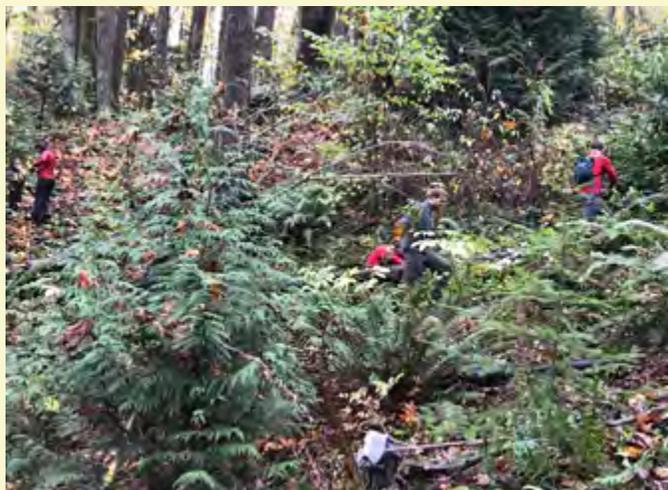
One of the leaders encouraged the participants to plant from a place of gratitude. She suggested that the volunteers name their trees ... and that they talk to the trees as they put them into the earth.

After Haley planted the tree in the photo below, some of our GreenFriends group decided to give it a kiss. The 126 volunteers planted 800 trees, shrubs and ground covers during the first hour of the work party.



We spent the rest of the time removing invasive blackberry and ivy vines. Again, it was phenomenal to witness how much can be accomplished in a short period of time.

Forest and Habitat Restoration



Before long, the work party was over and we prepared to leave. What a wonderful morning it had been. The work party was such a good example of the adage “Many hands make light work.”



From Green Seattle Partnership

We still can't believe the community support we saw last weekend at our 13th Annual Green Seattle Day! 1,145 volunteers came out to 15 parks throughout the city, planting 8,431 plants in just three hours! We hope you feel a lot of pride for making a difference in your neck-of-the-woods. By showing up and digging in, you showed us what it means to make a positive change for our city. The numbers speak for themselves and show just how much of an impact we can make when we all come together. The smiling faces captured in our [Green Seattle Day photos](#) also show us just how much fun it can be to work alongside our neighbors, dig in and plant our future forests!

Forest and Habitat Restoration

Greenbelt Restoration Site: We Are Almost Ready!

The Greenbelt restoration articles which have been included in the PNW GreenFriends newsletter in the past have been about our work parties. This article will be different in that it is about preparation work that occurred in-between our October 21 and November 10 work parties.

The GreenFriends Greenbelt team has spent months preparing for our fall 2018-19 season planting day. We've done that by 1) putting a three-inch layer of wood chips on the paths that run throughout the site, 2) clearing new planting areas, and 3) weeding the existing planting areas.

In mid-October, Karuna started making "plant signs" by writing the name of each plant we had ordered from the Seattle Parks Department on a popsicle stick. The "signs" would be put into each of the pots once we received the plants. After each tree, shrub or ground cover has been planted, the volunteer who does the planting will push the sign into the ground next to the plant.



Each year, Seattle Parks Department staff have us use flagging tape to tag the new plants, so it will be obvious what year each of them was planted. Blue and white checkered tape was used throughout the 2017-18 planting season. During the 2018-19 season, the tape will be red with black polka dots.



Forest and Habitat Restoration



The normal practice is to tag each plant after it is planted. This year, we planned to tag the plants before the planting day. That would ensure that each plant is tagged and would allow us to tag the plants in a more leisurely manner.

If the stems are sturdy enough, the tags are put directly on the plant. Small plants are often not able to be tagged in the same way, since they may have fragile or tiny stems. In the past, we have picked up a dried branch from the ground, put the flagging tape on one end and then inserted the branch the newly planted plant.

This year, the flagging sticks were prepared ahead of time too. Sixty-five flagging sticks were made from the few branches shown in the first photo below.



Our plants arrived on October 30. When they were delivered, they had no labels and were not sorted.



Forest and Habitat Restoration

It turned out to be easy to identify, label, and sort through them, thanks to last years' experience with the same types of plants. Jayanand, a member of the OlyPen satsang, helped with a few that we were unsure of. Soon, the plants were sorted and ready to be tagged.



In the weeks following our October 21st work party, Sarva, Anavadya and Karuna picked out locations for the 33 trees, and 220 shrubs and ground covers that will be planted on November 15th.

On November 4th, Kavita performed a puja asking Mother Nature to protect the plants and to help them to grow.



Our last preparatory work party will be on November 10th. Five days after that a corporate group will be coming to plant the new trees, shrubs and ground covers!

Forest and Habitat Restoration

GreenFriends Greenbelt Restoration Work Party: November 10



The November 10th work party was one of our biggest. Six team leaders, four of which were Green Friends members, four volunteers who live in the neighborhood, and 29 students from the UW Introduction to Environmental Science class participated.

After an initial orientation, we split the group in half and ran two bucket brigades at the same time. One spanned the distance from the wood chip piles located at the top of the Hanford Stairs and the Greenbelt. The second bucket brigade started at the wood chip piles at the bottom of the Hanford Stairs.

These bucket brigades had two purposes. The first was to create new piles of wood chips throughout the restoration site for use during our November 15 planting work party. That's when each newly-planted tree, shrub and ground cover will get two buckets of wood chips placed around as mulch to reduce weed growth and to hold in moisture. The second purpose was to add three inches of wood chips to the paths that snake through the site. We anticipate that having a thick layer of wood chips on top of the paths will prevent them from getting muddy and slippery during the winter rains.



Forest and Habitat Restoration



After finishing that work, we divided the volunteers into four teams. These teams focused on getting areas ready for the upcoming planting event. One team moved dried branches and blackberry canes out of what will be a new planting area. That group also spread dirt in an area where a compost pile had been taken apart during previous work parties.



The second team cleared the ground around two sides of a red twig dogwood patch.



Forest and Habitat Restoration

The third team pulled out blackberry root balls and raked out a section of land north of the Hanford Stairs.



One of the neighbors volunteering that day cut down blackberry canes and dug out blackberry root balls and weeds from an area just across the stairs from the third team.



Prior to this November 10 work party, we had separated the potted shrubs and ground covers into ten groups (with trees in a separate group).



Forest and Habitat Restoration

The fourth team carried those trees, shrubs and ground covers to the areas where they will be planted.



After the work party was over, three of the team leaders walked around the site placing every plant in the spot where it will be planted.



Thanks to the effort of these team leaders, neighbors and students, the site is ready for planting. We are excited to see what the land will look like once the trees, shrubs and ground covers are settled in their new homes and begin to grow!

Forest and Habitat Restoration

GreenFriends Greenbelt Restoration Work Party: Planting Day!



The November 15th planting day work party was the sixth forest restoration event we had held in six weeks. The first five work parties focused on preparing the site for the 33 native trees and 220 native shrubs and ground covers we would be planting. This was our fall 2018 plant list:

<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>Grasses, Ferns and Sedges</u>	<u>Trees</u>
Baldhip Rose	Dewey Sedge	Douglas Fir
Evergreen Huckleberry	Slough Sedge	Red Alder
Indian Plum	Spreading Woodfern	Red Cedar
Pacific Ninebark	Sword Fern	Sikta Spruce
Pearly Everlasting		
Red Elderberry	<u>Ground Covers</u>	
Red Flowering Currant	Kinnikinnick	
Red Huckleberry	Piggyback	
Salmonberry	Trailing Blackberry	
Tall Oregon Grape		
Twinberry		
Vine Maple		

Last year, on November 15th, a corporate group from [DocuSign](#) came to work at our restoration site. The event was held on their Global IMPACT Day. At that time, Karuna looked up the philosophy behind Impact Day and found this statement:

Forest and Habitat Restoration

We believe character is defined through action. With DocuSign IMPACT, we are committed to putting this character into action by harnessing the power of DocuSign's people, products, and profits to make a difference in the global communities in which our employees and customers live and work.

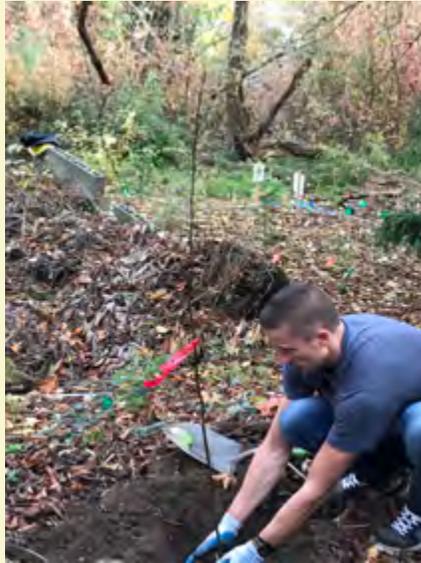
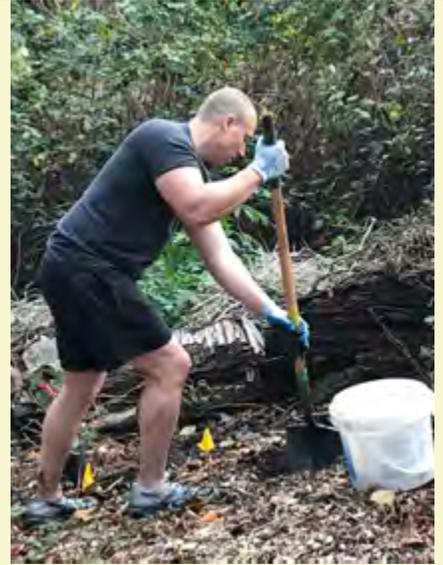
Employees from DocuSign returned for another IMPACT day on April 27, 2018. We were delighted to have them come back again. This year the autumn IMPACT day was again on November 15th and DocuSign chose to return to our site. They would be the group doing our autumn planting!

Planting day finally arrived. Twenty-two DocuSign employees participated. Our staff consisted of Maya from Forterra; Susan, a Forest Steward from another Cheasty Greenspace site; and Anavadya, Sarva and Karuna from GreenFriends.

After a brief orientation, we got to work.



Forest and Habitat Restoration



Forest and Habitat Restoration



Once again, the DocuSign employees did amazing work, and everyone seemed to have a good time. Rumor has it that they may come back again in April 2019. That would be wonderful!

Nature

Touching Earth by Cindy Knoke

*Soaring Eagles
touch earth for a time
but never really
leave the sky.
Their home is always
in the clouds.*



Photo Credit: cindyknoke.com

Nature

From Karuna in Seattle:



Nature

From Kathie in Bellevue: Photo of the east side of the tree in the morning.



Nature

The tree photo on the previous page was taken as the sun was rising. The photo below shows the opposite side of the same tree, this time taken as the sun was setting.



Nature

From From Vandya in Maltby:



Nature

Where There's Smoke, There's Trouble by Lin

This summer there were wildfires burning again in the forests of British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. Like the prior summer, shifting winds sent smoke to blanket the Puget Sound and other parts of Washington.

Haze hung in the tall fir trees like fog, and the sky was gray overhead with no sign of blue. The acrid smell tightened my chest and kept me indoors.

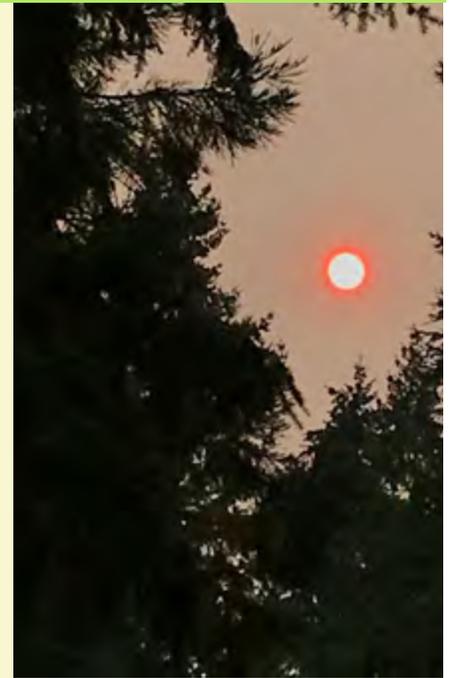
What was really surreal was the sun. It was a bright red orb glowing in the ashen air. My phone's camera, without a filter, couldn't capture the intense red, but you get the idea. It was only half past five on the evening when I took this photo.

In my yard in Bellevue, the birds and squirrels began disappearing around five o'clock, much earlier than usual—even though it didn't really get dark until about half past eight.

My feeders and patios were empty and quiet, just as they were last August during the 2017 total eclipse of the sun that was visible across a limited swath of the U.S. In the Seattle area we didn't get the amazing sight of total darkness that Oregon did, but the light dimmed and the foliage on trees and bushes took on a strange cast. The wildlife headed for their beds as if it was nightfall. The silence was eerie. And that's what happened again this summer with all the forest fire smoke in the air.

I wonder whether the animals were confused with their new time schedule. And I wonder if the smoke irritated their lungs just as it did ours. Poor things, they couldn't retreat indoors to filtered air.

After higher than usual summer temperatures, our area breathed a sigh of relief when we finally got a couple of cleansing and restorative rain storms that cleared the air. Ironically, while we in the PNW prayed for rain, the Indian state of Kerala got drowned in August and Amma had to send out emergency relief teams to flooded areas.



PNW Litter Project

PNW Litter Project Stats

In November 34 Litter Project members and their friends picked up litter for 56.9 hours. (Average 1.67 hours; Median 1 hour; Range 2 minutes to 12.5 hours) We have picked up litter for 10,180 hours since the project began in July of 2011.

TerraCycle Stats

TerraCycle is an organization that recycles items which are normally considered unrecyclable. We have sent them 341,224 cigarette butts since 2013. GreenFriends has also sent them 394 Drink Pouches, 732 Cereal Bag liners, and 2,997 Energy Bar wrappers.



PNW Litter Project

An 8,000 Mile Litter Adventure by Willy Gibboney



Every day she would look up at me and stare. No bark, no growl, just a steady gaze... Yes, I would say, you do need a walk. And off we would go. Always, I would pick up litter along our walks—with my partner Deepthi there supplying labor and motivation. Rosie took all those multiple stops along the way as an opportunity for nose work.

Then I planned an adventure for us, one in which Rosie's walks would take place all over the country during a marathon trip around the good ol' US of A. Twenty-five states, and 8,000 miles, all in two months. Rosie and Deepthi were raring to go.

Every day the three of us went on our walk. I began to notice an abundance of detritus along the various paths and roads we walked on. Naturally, the 'Boy Scout' in me said, PICK IT UP..... and I did. Soon, I was out of the little plastic poop bags that you get to, well, you know, clean up after fido does her thing.

Deepthi and I were multi-tasking to beat the band. Cigarette butts, gum wrappers, bottle caps, you name it. It was all there on the ground waiting for us. And this was not some urban atmosphere. This was America's national park system. I noticed there was less litter in areas with bear problems. But even then, I found those little plastic envelopes of ketchup, and honey! Not even opened!

America has become the equal opportunity dumping ground for litter. From the ubiquitous cigarette butt to full black plastic bags of full-on trash, we witnessed it all. It seemed that the litterers didn't care if it was a sacred site, a Walmart parking lot, or anything in-between.

After completing our epic trip, we figured we had removed a conservative 50 pounds of trash. I did indeed earn my Boy Scout merit badge for Litter Pickup. Deepthi and Rosie earned theirs, too.



Amritapuri Ashram Saraswati Garden

The gardens in Amritapuri grow so fast. These photos, taken in 2016 and 2018, show the transformation that has occurred. The garden has always been beautiful but now it is so lush. Some of the plants that were 18-24 inches in 2016 are now over 6 feet tall. And there are many new plant varieties.

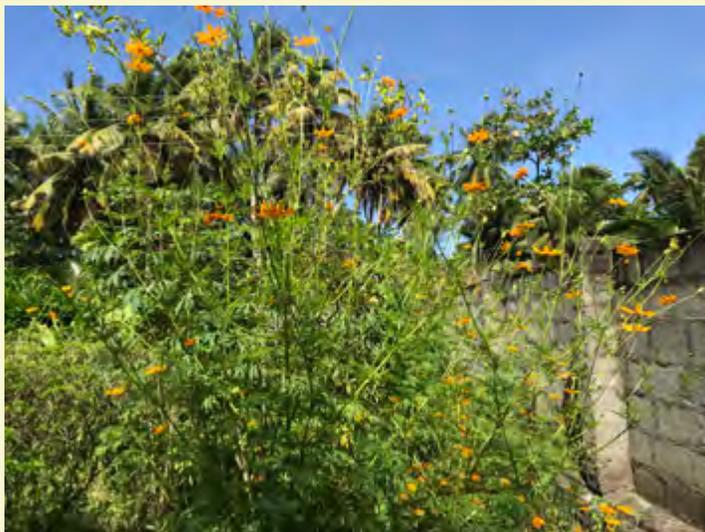
November 2016



Amritapuri Ashram



September 2018



Amritapuri Ashram

