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
May 6th was our sale in Port Townsend. We were lucky having had such great success and sunshine. We sold mostly ornamental plants, some edibles, donated glazed pots and, just for fun, cookies!

The preparations started in March with two work parties at someone’s garden. The weather was cold but, even so, we managed to prepare many flats. This gave the plants time to establish and thrive. To much surprise of everyone, we had collected about 700 plants of 45 varieties. This meant a lot of tags to write! Surprise plant donations showed up the day before the sale and brought more color to our inventory. Even friends of Satsang members and neighbors dropped off goods. Help was also needed to prepare and distribute signs for the day of the sale. Advertisement online and in the form of printed flyers was another component.

Well equipped with saw horses and boards, folding tables and tarps, we set up on a lively street corner in town at 8 a.m. and were open for business by nine o’clock. Sun umbrellas kept the cashier and cookies in the shade and drew attention to the scene. By 2pm we went half price. The Seattle Satsang graciously took our left over inventory and sold it at their garage sale.

The combination of group effort, upbeat energy, good weather, and Amma’s grace made it a fun event and successful fundraiser for our Satsang.

Please contact Vandya or Nika if you have any questions about planning a sale for next year and if you have ideas from your own experience to help us along for our next sale.
Hi Friends, it is that exciting time again! Time to practice gratitude for the very powerfully nourishing and useful herb RASPBERRY.

The Raspberry plant is very easy to grow and she is a perfect choice to cultivate here in the Pacific Northwest because she makes a wonderful cup of tea on a rainy Seattle day. Raspberry plants are in the Rose family and, just like Rose-Hips, they contain tons of Vitamin C. Raspberry plants grows well in full sun to partial shade. Once you plant Raspberries, you'll have them forever because they will send up small baby basal shoots that are easy to pull out and share with friends. These shoots grow underground extending out from the mother plant.

It is the leaf of the Raspberry plant that is the focus of this article. While the roots and berries are also both edible, nutritious and delicious, the leaves have the highest concentration of nutritive herbal gifts. They contain calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese and potassium. These are nutrients that are all especially helpful for women's bodies. Other vitamins and minerals in Raspberry leaves include vitamins A, B1, B2, and B3 as well as C and E, niacin and selenium.

**Nutrients found in one ounce of raspberry leaf:**

- 408 mg calcium
- 446 mg potassium
- 106 mg magnesium
- 3.3 mg iron
- 4 mg manganese
The leaves are easy to harvest. Try adding a few to a salad or soup: very healthy! They also make a very healing and restorative tea. If you take time this summer to dry some leaves, you'll have tea all winter long even when she isn't available in the garden. Why buy tea when you can grow your own organically?

Raspberry Leaf Tea (RLT) Medicinal Benefits

- the iron content in the leaves can assist those with anemia
- can treat diarrhea and nausea
- the high amounts of manganese supports healthy connective tissue and joints
- astringent properties help tone and tighten lax tissues in the body
- can be applied as a poultice to skin irritations, canker sores, and sore gums
- soothes menstrual cramps
- tones the muscles of the uterus
- helps the uterus contract effectively during childbirth
- enriches breast milk
- reduces symptoms of menopause

Take the time to talk to Raspberry and listen to what she is saying to you! Sing to her! This is a superb herb to plant in a neglected parking strip or alley. This unloved portion of Mother Earth could soon become a frequent gathering spot for neighbors, especially in July when her berries are ready. One of my favorite things to do is to pick some of the leaves and make an herbal bundle to share with a friend. Everyone loves the gift of a sweet bundle of fresh RLT! This is especially easy to do if you have shoots that come up where you don’t want them. Besides, they provide another opportunity for harvesting and drying the leaves.

Here are three quick easy ways to start using Raspberry intentionally and medicinally. Remember to thank the plant before taking any of its medicine, and always give something back after taking it. What you give back is up to you: maybe a chant, song or a simple message of gratitude, or you can return the used portion of the herb back to the base of the plant. That is also a loving action.

1. HERBAL TEA: Cut off small pieces of Raspberry to make a tea. (4-5 leaves) Cut the small pieces up in order to release more of the magical herb. Boil water, remove from the heat, and drop the leaves in. Let her infuse 10 minutes before drinking. You can either strain the herb out, or just enjoy the pieces when you drink the water. After all, it is edible. Herbal water is much better tasting and healthier than just plain water. It tastes as great cold as it does hot. Think about filling your water bottle with some cooled RLT. It is amazing how fresh and stimulating she is!

2. HERBAL INFUSED SALAD: Cut a few sprigs of Raspberry and gently add her to your next salad or smoothie. Enjoy the benefits!

3. POPSICLES: My new favorite! Make RLT popsicles for that hot summer day! Add a couple of berries to make
the flavor just a bit stronger. Healthy and yummy.

Always remember herbs are medicine, so please use with care! Pregnant women should use special caution with herbs.

Raspberry is such an important herb for backyard herbalists! It is very easy to get a start of her from a friend who will be happy to share! She will transplant easily. This herbalist is happy to share. If you’d like some, just ask!

I hope you will take time to build and reflect upon a new connection to this plant and ultimately to your Mother Earth by experiencing her herbal leaves and drinking the infused tea water consciously and intentionally.

Happy Herbing!
From Lalita on Lasqueti Island, BC:
From Karuna's Garden in Seattle:
Vegetables, strawberries, flowers, and two columnar apple trees are growing beautifully this spring in the stock tanks I installed last summer.

The only problem is the squirrels that are digging holes and uprooting everything. Besides, they and the birds would clean out my strawberry harvest if I didn’t take action.

The solution is a handy collection of six bamboo poles joined at the top by a rubber disc. I think a double layer of yogurt container lids with holes punched in them would work just as well, or maybe an old Tupperware lid.

Once the poles were positioned, I draped bird netting around the bamboo like a teepee, letting it overlap to form a secure closure that would be easy to push aside when harvesting berries. I’m rather proud of such a simple and rather attractive solution. What the squirrels think is another matter.
Gardening
Farming at MA Center- Chicago
July was a big month for our Greenbelt project. We held four work parties!

**July 2**

On the 2nd of July, nine volunteers picked up trash, laid burlap on the areas that had previously been cleared (to minimize new weed growth) and put dried blackberry canes, which we usually refer to as debris, on top of the bags. Both the bags and debris will decompose over time and enrich the soil. The group also dug out blackberry root balls.

This work party was particularly exciting because three members of Redmond satsang’s newly formed AYUDH chapter came. Some of their parents participated as well.
July 9

At this work party, eight students from the University of Washington’s Introduction to Environmental Science class, one student from Garfield High School, one neighbor and three GreenFriends members came together to do the restoration work.

They cut blackberry vines, dug out blackberry root balls and bindweed (morning glory vines) …
Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

picked up trash and freed ferns...
and moved cut ivy, bindweed and blackberry root balls to the rack zone to dry out.

July 16th

Five GreenFriends members, two students, and a neighbor participated in the July 16th work party. They focused on picking up trash and dismantling the piles of debris that had been raked up during previous work parties. The debris was placed on burlap bags that had been spread earlier in July. They moved any blackberry root balls they found in the piles to the rack zone to dry. They also spread burlap bags over land that had been cleared in the past.

Trash

It is always interesting to see what kind of trash we find. At this work party, a student found a tube of lotion that had an expiration date of 1989. The student had been born in 1997! Sarva found this treasure:
Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Moving rootballs to the rack zone

Spreading debis on burlap

One of the highlights of this work party was that we turned in the certificate for the prize we had won at Rainier Chamber of Commerce’s Bridge2Beach Seattle clean up event in March. The certificate was for $50 of Full Tilt ice cream. Needless to say, we enjoyed that part of the work party.
July 23
The July work parties were scheduled in a way that would support the University of Washington Environmental Science students. Their volunteer hours and reports were due on July 27th so the July 23rd work party was in high demand. Twenty-one students and two of their friends, a neighbor and three GreenFriends members participated in this work party. Since Karuna and Ananya were unable to lead that day, Susan, a Green Seattle Partnership Forest Steward who has been doing this work for more than a decade, volunteered to coordinate the work on the day of the event.

The participants were divided into various groups. One group carried burlap bags from an area near the street to our Greenbelt site. Other groups looked for and removed bindweed, or in-between bindweed and ivy; removed ivy; or dug out blackberry root balls. As various jobs were completed, participants continued the ongoing work of laying down burlap and covering it with debris.
Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Attendees of this work party also had the opportunity to eat Full Tilt ice cream!
It is amazing how much we accomplished during the month of July. Every work party was a confirmation of the saying, “Many hands make light work.” And besides that, it was fun to work together.

It was also interesting to see how much trash there still is on the property. These photos show a portion of the trash that was removed this month.

Everything we do takes us a step closer to planting trees, shrubs and groundcovers this fall. It also moves us towards restoring this land to the beautiful forest it was meant to be; one that provides homes to birds, butterflies, bees and many other forms of wildlife.
Interesting Facts About Horsetails

- Horsetails are native to every continent except Antarctica and Australasia.
- Horsetails date back to the Palaeozoic era which lasted from 541 to 252 million years ago. That means they were around before the dinosaurs!
- Horsetails are related to ferns.
- Equisetum is the only remaining species of horsetail.
- Equisetum is sometimes called a living fossil.
- Equisetum is also called horsetail, snake grass, scouring rush and puzzlegrass.
- Eating too many horsetails can kill horses.
- Horsetails evolved from plants that were 98 feet tall. Today’s horsetails are usually 1-2 feet although there is one in South America that grows to 32 feet.
- In many places, horsetails are considered invasive plants.
- Horsetails can be used to scrub metal.
- Horsetails were used to treat a variety of ailments during the Greek and Roman days.
- Some people use it to stop bleeding, as a diuretic or an astringent.
- Horsetails reproduce via spores rather than seeds.

For more information:
Equisetum, Horsetail, Horsetail Benefits, Horsetail Facts, Horsetail Plant Genus, Horsetails- a Modern Herbal, Paleo-zoic
PNW Litter Project

PNW Litter Project Stats

In July, 33 Litter Project members and their friends picked up litter for 80 hours. (Average 2.4 hours; Median 1 hour; Range 1 minute to 16 hours) We have picked up litter for 8827 hours since the project began in July of 2011.

TerraCycle Stats

TerraCycle is an organization that recycles items that are normally considered unrecyclable. They have credited us with turning in 321,224 cigarette butts since 2013. We have also sent them 394 Drink Pouches, 732 Cereal Bag liners, and 2,997 Energy Bar wrappers.

Interesting Information from Our Readers

From Poornima in Shoreline:
This ‘tree’ has the environmental benefits of a forest

From Ananya in Seattle:
Hansen’s Northwest Native Plant Database

From Arati in California:
Comedy Wildlife Photography