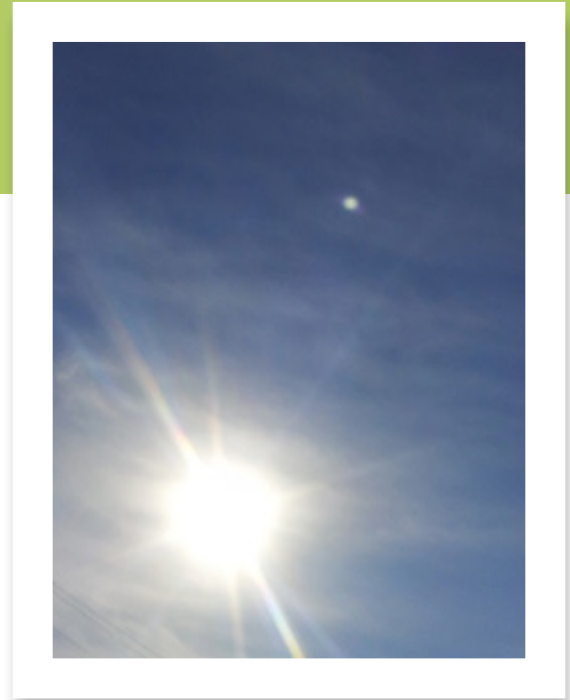




Nature on its own is indeed beautiful and clean. The hills and rivers do not need us to clean them. In fact it is nature's water which cleans us; it is trees which purify air for us. Because we have littered, we have spoilt its pristine beauty.

Amma



Adulation (haiga)

***Breakfast for the soul
exhaled love, she winked at me
Mother Nature smiles.***

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Poem and picture used with permission

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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

For Organic Gardening and Permaculture write Maheswari at: PNWGreenFriends@google.com

For The Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project write:

Ananya ammasananya@comcast.net and Kalavathi annecrory@gmail.com

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project

Work Party Invitation

Celebrate Earth Day a little early by working to restore the urban forest! Amma's GreenFriends Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project will join the next restoration work party at the Warren G. Magnuson Park - Forest Remnant Zone on Saturday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Work may include removing invasive plants such as bindweed or blackberry, spreading of wood chip mulch, and planting native plants and trees. There will also be a chance to learn a bit about native plants while working. Dress appropriately in layers. You may register at the website below if you like.

Meet in Magnuson Park at the trail end the west side of Sports Field Drive NE which is about 500 feet north of NE 65th St. and near baseball field backstops. This is the northeast end of the trail which runs through the wooded area located north of NE 65th Street from a point about 300 feet east of Sand Point Way NE.

For more detailed information, please e-mail Ananya at ammasananya@comcast.net or PA at drsail53@gmail.com.

Hope to see you there!

<http://seattle.cedar.greencitypartnerships.org/event/5092>

From Swami Dayamrita Chaitanya in San Ramon

"When we bow down to the entire creation, God's grace will flow through us" - Amma

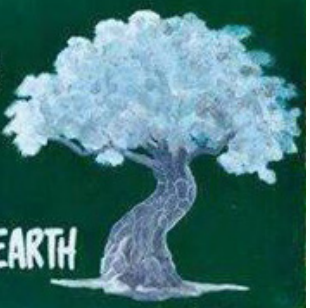
Of concern to all!
A tree is worth
\$193,250

according to Professor T.M. Das of the University of Calcutta. A tree living for 50 years will generate \$31,250 worth of oxygen, provide \$62,000 worth of air pollution control, control soil erosion and increase soil fertility to the tune of \$31,250, recycle \$37,500 worth of water and provide a home for animals worth \$31,250. This figure does not include the value of fruits, lumber or beauty derived from trees. Just another sensible reason to take care of our forests.

From Update Forestry
 Michigan State University

THE VALUE OF A TREE

SAVE OUR MOTHER EARTH





CELEBRATION!

PNW Litter Project surpasses the 5000 hour mark

The Pacific Northwest Litter Project began in July 2011 with 10 members.

By March 31, 2014 351 people had participated in some way. Members who are willing, report the number of minutes and hours they spend picking up litter each month. (Thirty-five to forty-five people report regularly.) Others participate by helping with the work parties or by picking up litter in a way that works for them.

On March 31, our accumulated total of litter pick up hours reached 5072 !



The pictures gives a glimpse into the experiences we have had during the last three years





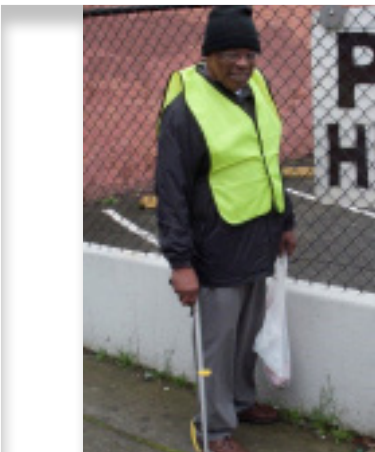
Kick Butts Day 2014



This was the third year that the PNW Litter Project participated in Kick Butts Day. Kick Butts Day is a day of national activism, teaching youth to stand out and speak up against tobacco use. On Kick Butts Day, teachers, youth leaders and health advocates organize events to:

- Raise awareness of the problem of tobacco use in their state or community;
- Encourage youth to reject the tobacco industry's deceptive marketing and stay tobacco-free; and
- Urge elected officials to take action to protect kids from tobacco.

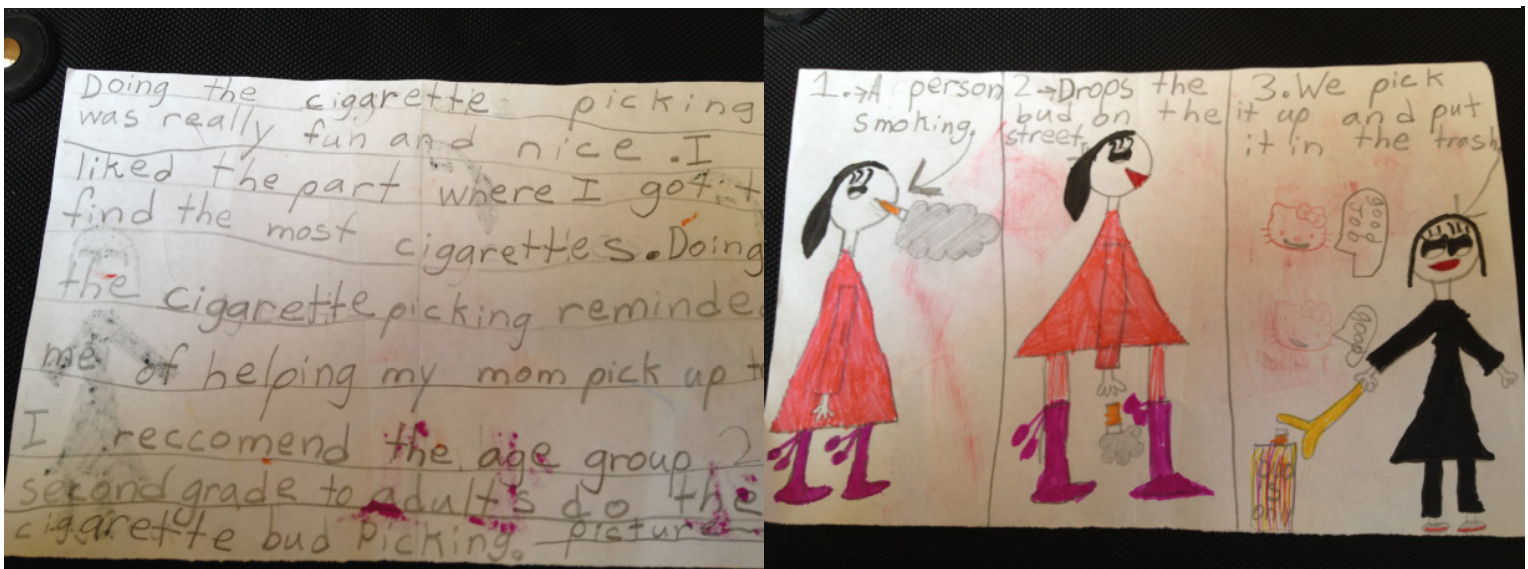
Our way of supporting their project is to organize and hold a cigarette butt clean up work party. On Sunday March 2, 2014 a small but enthusiastic group met at Hing Hay park in the International District of Seattle. The fourteen of us picked up cigarette butts for about an hour and a half and ended up with a bag of butts that weighed more than 11 pounds! Litter Project members in Tacoma, Washington and Neskowin, Oregon also picked up butts during that time.



Kick Butts Day (cont.)



From Aparna in Redmond



Kick Butts Day (cont.)



From Shuba in Neskowin, Oregon

Three of us went outside to pick up cigarette butts and litter last Saturday during a rain and wind storm. My two friends had never picked up litter or cigarette butts before and kept exclaiming how fun and rewarding it was, even though they got thoroughly soaked. We planned to work longer but only lasted for one hour due to the extreme weather.

From Satyavati in Tacoma, Washington

You can add 2 hours of Kick Butt pick up from Tacoma to today's Seattle tally.

Basically, we have been picking up cig butts from TCC - Tacoma Community College for about a year. They have 3 Smoking Shelters which look like bus stops shelters on the campus. They have concrete buckets for the butts and there are usually many butts in them. There are often butts on the ground by the shelters and in the parking lot. One day when Sudha Borys and I were picking up the butts, a lady asked us what club we were from. We explained about GreenFriends and Terracycle. She seemed very interested. She is involved with the club counsel for the college. Wouldn't it be sweet if the college organized a butt pick up club?



PNW Litter Project Stats

As of March 31, 2014 we had 351 members.

Forty-nine members and their guests reported picking up 143 hours of litter during March 2014.

Those members average pick up was: 2.9 hours; the range was 3 minutes to 31 hours
and the median was 1.25 hours.

Members of the project have picked up litter for 5072 hours since the project began in July 2011.

TerraCycle credited us with turning in 13,954 cigarette butts in 2014. We have turned in 153,484 butts
since we started sending them to TerraCycle in January 2013



InDeed-Bug Hotels

by Karuna

Amma has asked us to join her InDeed Campaign for Nature. She requested we commit to do one or more of the following:

- **conserve water**
- **reduce your carbon footprint**
- **plant a tree**
- **grow your own vegies**
- **carpool**
- **build a house for birds or bugs**

(If you would like to make one or more of those commitments go to <http://www.embracingtheworld.org/indeed/>. When you do that, you will be sent related guides.)

In last month's PNW GreenFriends newsletter, Maheswari wrote about building bird houses. This month information about bugs and bug houses has been coming my way, so I will focus on that area. First of all, know that there are many pictures and ideas for building bug houses in the [InDeed Guide for Building Houses for Bugs and Birds](#). Most of it seems to come from Amma's GreenFriends programs in Europe.

Bug hotels are meant to provide insects a place to live. They can be home to bees, ladybugs, centipedes, butterflies, earwigs, beetles, spiders etc. Many of the insects will hibernate there. Others will pass through their whole life cycle in the hotel. The bug hotels promote pollination so are also a plus to gardeners.

I recently met Justine through the blogging world. I was excited to learn that she had interest in Bug Hotels. Justine first posted about the hotels on January 29 2014 in her blog [Living in East Sheen](#). The "hotel" she photographed and wrote about then is located at the Castelnagh Community Centre which is in Barnes, next to East Sheen. (East Sheen is a part of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames) The day Justine was there, volunteers were taking down the previous year's bug house and building a new one. The pictures below are from that event.

Building Bug Hotels (cont.)

“..... the straw layer was for bumblebees, bark chips for centipedes and millipedes. They also drilled holes in lengths of wood for leaf cutter bees to hibernate.”



Building Bug Hotels (cont.)

On March 26, 2014, Justine visited and wrote about the [Barnes Wetlands Centre](#). She said “The Wildfowl & Wetlands trust is the largest and most notable wetland conservation organization that works world-wide ensuring improvements and safety of the wetlands for wildlife and people. “While she was there, Justine took a picture of their incredible bug hotel, built from materials found in the wetlands.

I hope you consider making a bug hotel for your yard. If you do, write a paragraph or more about your experience and send pictures. It would be fun to have a follow-up article on this topic!

There are many articles about bug hotels on the web, although they may go by other names, such as insect hotels, wildlife stacks, etc.

For pictures of many beautiful insect hotels go to:

<http://www.inspirationgreen.com/insect-habitats.html>

For more instruction on how to make a bug hotel go to

<http://gardentherapy.ca/build-a-bug-hotel/>,

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/advice/gardening/insects/wildlifestack.aspx> and/or

<http://inhabitat.com/diy-how-to-build-an-insect-hotel-from-found-materials/>



Becoming a Bug Mother

From Kathie -SE 7th St. Bellevue, WA Game Warden

(title earned because I see and report on the coyote pack or herd of deer on our unusual street in the middle of Bellevue, WA)



My grandsons, Julius, now 10 and Luca, 7, received Giant Spiny Australian Leaf bugs as birthday gifts from their Auntie a couple of years ago. Being a good Grandma, when the boys showed me their new pets, I apparently raved about these bugs (in spite of my internal reaction--shaking, nausea, rapid heartbeat, etc. They really are creepy looking....at first.) So, believing my performance, my very generous Grandsons took it upon themselves to get Gramma some bugs of her own!!! (I also raved about the precious baby bunnies their Auntie was raising but did I get one of those?? No! I got

BUGS!) They saved their allowance and purchased two for me.

I later inherited their original bugs when the novelty wore off and they became tired of the food gathering danger. You have to find blackberry vines for them.

And, this is irony... even though in their native Australia, these giant leaf bugs eat only Eucalyptus leaves, in the Northwest they have adapted to Blackberry leaves....of course it would be Blackberries, my nemesis for the 38 years I have lived in my house!! Once, the dang vines plaguing my property even grew down through my chimney and out of the fire place INTO MY LIVING ROOM!

These days, you might see me frantically cruising nearby yards (with scissors in hand). I'm not stealing flowers. I am food-hunting for my BUGS!

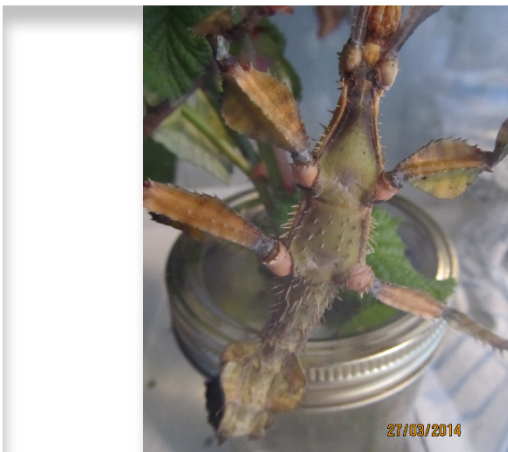


I had these original amazing creatures for longer than they usually live in captivity and I became inexplicably

Becoming a Bug Mother (cont.)

bonded to them. When their amazing bodies finally outgrew the strength of their tiny claws, they each died. I grieved their passing like all pet-holders do. Because these bugs were so fascinating, I read everything I could find on them and one article talked about how many eggs they lay (100's) but, how in captivity, they rarely hatch, and even if they do, it takes years. Best laid plans, huh? Fast forward 2 years. I came home from Spokane last summer to find bug eggs hatching all over my kitchen!! That sounds gross. There were actually only about 7 of them. But they have kept hatching. I gave 4 back to the boys, 5 to their Aunt (pay back?) and still have 19 bugs!!! (At this writing, several more found good homes. I now have 8.)

I love taking care of them and have even mastered the art of gathering blackberry vines unharmed. What a gift they have turned out to be...countless lessons in countless ways.



Becoming a Bug Mother (cont.)

Some interesting facts about Extatosoma Tiaratum

- They are harmless.
- They do not bite, pinch or sting.
- They are blind.
- They do not smell (except for a defense scent they can emit supposedly like peanut butter. Mine never have.).
- Their methods of defense and camouflage are so clever!
(Peanut butter? Curling their tails up to resemble a scorpion, etc.)
- The way the eggs are laid (in the wild) and hatched is truly amazing; the kind of story you'd see on a PBS Nature show! Actually, the way they hatched in Kathie's Kitchen is also amazing.

Read more if you like:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extatosoma_tiaratum

<http://www.keepinginsects.com/stick-insect/species/giant-prickly-stick-insect/>

<http://www.whisperofwolf.com/stickinsects.html>

[This week Kathie sent me, and others, an email about the bugs molting. Definition: molt (mōlt) To shed an outer covering, such as skin or feathers, for replacement by a new growth. Many snakes birds, and arthropods molt. I decided to include Kathie's newest email in this newsletter as well! Enjoy. Karuna]

Three times over these years I have come very close to removing a dead bug from the terrarium only to find out she is still OK!!! I'm talking about 3 days of no movement even when gently handled! Once, I discovered this after I had put one huge dead body in a display box to show the boys!!! Thank God I heard her scratching around in there. She didn't live a lot longer but she was the biggest I've ever had. I think she may have died because she had grown too big to hold up her own weight in order to climb and feed.

Becoming a Bug Mother (cont.)

I re-read some of the info online and was reminded how long they take to recover after a big molt... sometimes 3 or 4 days of looking DEAD!! I can only imagine what an exhausting process molting is. So anyway, I wanted us all to remember that the bigger they get, the more vertical room they need so they can hang high enough to drop out of that skin during molting...that's at least 2 lengths of their own bodies!

And also to let them rest after a molt (no handling) until you see them moving around again.

One more precaution. One of mine got speared by a thorn recently just right after a molt. I think normally they are agile enough to maneuver around thorns but she must have been tired still. It seems like she fell/slipped onto a big one. There was "bug blood", a hole in her abdomen, and everything.... She is still alive, but barely. I may actually start snipping the tips off the bigger thorns....but that's just me. And as James and our housemate will tell you, I am an obsessive bug mother!"

