



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

Contents

PNW Gardening

The Beautiful Amla Tree

Saving the Earth's Resources

Let's Help the Bees

Nature

Life After Ice

Sunday's Concert

Wildlife

Fastest Animal in America

PNW Litter Project

Stats

Interesting Information from our Readers



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

The Beautiful Amla Tree



Have you ever noticed that plants provide the most consistent friendship one can find anywhere? They don't even mind if you don't notice them for a day or two, remaining rooted and receptive. But if you do notice them, well, they respond with a gentle energy, giving selflessly. In this, they have perfected a quality to which we can all aspire.

Amla (*Emblica officinalis*)

(Emblic Myrobalan, Amalaki)

Family: Spurge (*Euphorbiaceae*)

Hardy to about 30 degrees F. Protect from frost, but if frost occurs and leaves fall off, this is a normal seasonal occurrence. Trees that are subjected to too much cold may die back to the root, then regrow from the root months later. Do not prematurely discard Amla trees that have no leaves—this happens to them in nature!!!!

Evergreen, or briefly deciduous, tree native to India. Amla trees are beautiful, with feathery-leaved branches and a holy presence. Amla bears a fruit that is among the highest in Vitamin C among all fruits worldwide. This fruit is one of the ingredients of the GI fortifying formula known as Triphala, probably the most used and most useful and most

PNW Gardening

well-known formula from the Ayurvedic tradition. This formula has a profound normalizing effect on the digestion, expels toxins from the body, and can create an ironclad foundation of health. I have fielded reactions from people taking this formula: their complaint being that it caused diarrhea. Well, how do they think the toxins will otherwise leave their body? Would they prefer the toxins left through their skin? I think not. Diarrhea means the formula is doing its work.

The plant prefers regular soil and water, sun to part shade, and does well at elevation, as long as it isn't too cold. They do well in pots, placed on the patio or in the greenhouse during the summer and brought inside in the winter. The seed is dependable but germination is spotty. Normal greenhouse technique gives results in a few weeks.

Article by Richo Cech, [Horizon Herbs](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Horizon-Herbs/348837717347?fref=nf), Williams, Oregon

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Horizon-Herbs/348837717347?fref=nf>

<https://www.horizonherbs.com>

Photos below: credit [wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia)



Saving the Earth's Resources

Let's Help the Bees by Candice Elmore

In the Pacific Northwest it is getting pretty chilly and the rainy season has begun. Winter is definitely here so the bears are off to hibernate, the birds are beginning to fly south to warmer climates, and the honeybees are heading back to their hives to keep the queen warm and healthy.

As we all probably know by now, our bee population has declined dramatically and researchers are scrambling for answers. Joachim Hagopian from the Center for Research on Globalization reports that “in the last half decade alone... 30% of the national bee population has disappeared, and nearly a third of all bee colonies in the United States have perished.” This is definitely something to pay attention to! In fact, Albert Einstein once prophetically remarked, “Mankind will not survive the honeybees’ disappearance for more than five years.”

This is shocking news and I immediately started to wonder what we could do to help save the honeybee. As it turns out, there are many things we can do to help save the bees. Here are some ideas:

1. Plant flowers in your garden, yard, or in a planter. This will help provide bees with forage. Planting early blooming flowers helps the bees that have been in the hive all winter long. When they venture out, they need to find pollen sooner rather than later to help them get started and survive the daily trips.
2. Avoid chemically treating your flowers. Chemicals can leach into pollen and negatively affect the bees' fragile body systems. New scientific studies indicate that bees that feed on neonicotinoid-contaminated pollen and nectar forage less and produce fewer offspring. So if you have a hive, don't treat the bees with any insecticides—even for bee mites. The bees will have a better chance at life without it.
3. Put a little water basin out in your garden. Something as simple as a plate with some stones that rise above the water line will attract thirsty bees, and the stones provide a safe place to rest while getting a drink of fresh water. Place the plate by your potted flowers, and birds and bees alike will be visiting often. Also, a birdbath with stones added works equally well.

Saving the Earth's Resources



4. Plant a clover lawn. Unlike grass lawns that need many chemicals and frequent tending, clovers are both beautiful and easy to care for. If you think about it, a lawn full of clover and dandelions is not just a good thing—it is a great thing! Wildflowers, many of which we might classify as weeds, are some of the most important food sources for native North American bees.

5. Buy local. Be on the lookout for local organically grown fruits, vegetables and honey that help support beekeepers in your area.

6. Donate. The Pollinator Partnership is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated solely to helping protect and promote pollinators like bees.

7. Sign petitions like this one: <http://save-bees.org> and get involved!

With a little help, our bees just might be able to make it!

Information for this article came mostly from the website for the movie QUEEN OF THE SUN. The movie is a must see for more information and ideas.

Happy planting!

NATURE

Life After Ice by Kothai



Toe of the glacier

We know that glaciers are receding, but it is interesting to watch the transition the land goes through once the ice has melted. You can witness this near the Exit glacier in Kenai Fjords National Park in Alaska.

Inside the park you can see signposts with year markings showing us where the glacier was that year. In parallel you can see the shift in vegetation growth in the surrounding area.

Once the ice has melted, plant life takes hold initially in the form of lichen. Lichens are formed from a symbiotic partnership of two separate organisms, a fungus and an alga.



Lichen & Moss on hard rock exposed by glacier

NATURE



Close to the glacier - Early plant life



Fireweed grows out of moss and lichen and is one of the earliest to colonize the land. Soil begins to form though poor in nitrogen. As we walk further away from the glacier we can see a few other plant life such as Sitka Alder.

Pioneers such as Alder, are able to survive here because they are “nitrogen-fixers.” They do not need nutrient laden soil to obtain their nitrogen. They have a symbiotic relationship with bacteria in their roots, which take nitrogen from the air and turn it into nitrates. This not only enables the plants to colonize recently glaciated areas, but also to create soil through the buildup of nutrients and organic matter.



The pioneers - Sitka Alder - The soil is not deep here

NATURE



The glacier was here in 1961 - The glacier is now almost a mile away



Alder and Cottonwood enrich the soil

Further down, the leaves are thicker, greener and the land is dense and the soil underneath is deeper. As they take hold, Sitka Alder enrich the soil for larger trees to follow. Dominant species begin to replace the earlier ones. Cottonwood, Spruce and Hemlock are the next to thrive in this plant succession.

Learn More -

<http://www.nps.gov/kefj/learn/nature/plant-succession.htm>

<http://www.alaska.org/guide/exit-glacier-guide>

http://www.nps.gov/kefj/learn/education/upload/teachers_guide_web2.pdf



What was a glacier in 1926 is a full blown forest now!

Nature

Sunday's Concert (Haibun) by Tournesol

On her walk Sunday, she was attracted by the sounds of hundreds of birds chirping in several trees. Her head up she sees flocks of birds flying south. What were these birds doing in the trees. It was nippy that day as well with very cool winds. She regretted not having brought an extra sweater to put under her spring coat, better still, her winter coat would have been a much wiser choice.

So many birds were flying past this tree filled with birds. "Perhaps they are resting before flying further south," she thought. She stopped to take in the concert and listen to the birds harmonize. Such wonder to stop for a moment and breathe in nature's richness, even in a big city!



© Cheryl-Lin '15

*A collective
birds plan their long journey
gathered together
gathered together
sort out their pecking orders,
sing in harmony
sing in harmony
she listens with reverence,
nature's grace*

©Tournesol '15/11/24

<https://cheryllynnroberts.wordpress.com/2015/11/24/sunday-conference-haibun>

WILDLIFE

Fastest Four Legs in America by Cindy Knoke



Everyone knows the fastest land animal in the world is the cheetah, but not everyone knows the second fastest animal in the world is the North American Pronghorn Antelope. Pronghorns can run up to 55 mph for .5 miles. They can run 35 mph for up to 4 miles. In fact, they can run at high speeds for more sustained periods than African Cheetahs.

This is a puzzling ability because no predator in North America can run fast enough to catch a pronghorn, so why is it necessary for pronghorns to run this fast? Biologists believe that pronghorns evolved to run these speeds in order to evade the now extinct American Cheetah.



During the Pleistocene era, there were twelve species of pronghorns in North America. By the time humans settled on the continent there were five. We are now left with one remaining species. Pronghorns are in fact not antelopes at all but a unique species named *Antilocapra Americana*. Handsome creatures aren't they?

WILDLIFE



Pronghorns range all over the American west, into Canada and northern Mexico.

They have the longest land migration of any species in the continental US.



You can find more information and pictures at: <http://cindyknoke.com/2015/10/17/fastest-four-legs-in-america>

PNW Litter Project

PNW Litter Project Stats

Thirty litter project members and friends reported picking up **65.5** hours of litter in October 2015. The average pick up time was **2.2** hours; the range was **2 minutes to 10 hours** and the median was **1** hour.

Members of the project have picked up litter for **7068** 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)



Interesting Information from Our Readers

From Karuna in Seattle:

SYGW (Seattle Youth Garden Works) is a program sponsored by Seattle Tilth that gives homeless and underserved youth employment and experience in urban agriculture. Through the program they develop leadership and life skills as well as create a personal connection to the food system. Read more at <http://www.seattletilth.org/sygw>.

And here is information about Amma's water management programs in rural India: <http://www.amritapuri.org/50142/15-water.aum>

From Kenna in Amritapuri:

<http://www.amritapuri.org/50371/15-houten.aum>

“On her way out of the hall after the first day programme, Amma discovered a beautiful table full of the first harvest from the garden of Amma's Center in Netherlands. Devotees working in the garden had set up a table with vegetables and fruits that had been harvested from the garden that morning, as well as jam and chutneys made with the harvest. Amma always teaches the importance of producing our own food and loving and respecting nature. The first harvest of the Amma Center in Holland was a testament to this, and consisted of beets, three types of kale, carrots, potatoes, green salad, beautiful wildflowers, chestnuts and much more. Amma stood at the table for some time, interacting with the volunteers and encouraging them to keep growing.”

More information about the new center can be found at <http://www.amritapuri.org/18054/14macenter.aum>.

