



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

[Backyard Herbal Medicine-Awesome Angelica](#)

[Bountiful May Garden](#)

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

[40 Fruit Trees in 4 Days](#)

[Greenbelt Work Parties: April 29, May 9, May 12](#)

[Tree Planting Stats](#)

Amma's Coming!

Nature

[The Walking Tree](#)

Source Reduction

[Do You Want Plastic with That?](#)

[Cultivating Discrimination](#)

PNW Litter Project

[Litter Project and TerraCycle 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

Backyard Herbal Medicine - Awesome Angelica



Hi Herbal Friends, it's time again to practice gratitude for the amazing herb Angelica, whose Latin name is *Angelica Archangelica*. She is also known as the Holy Ghost. She is a relative to the popular traditional Chinese herb Dong Quai. (*Angelica Sinensis*) Angelica is in the carrot family. She has long been considered an important vegetable and medicinal herb. Norway, Iceland, Finland and Lapland all have numerous recipes for delicious ways to cook her and use her for healing.

Here in the PNW, it is EASY to grow Angelica. She needs lots of space, however, because she can grow up to 8 feet tall!. Her flower is unbelievable! She will have large bright green toothed leaves with clusters of greenish white flowers that bloom from June to October.

Her Healing parts: Roots, stem, leaves, seeds and also an edible stalk! In many traditions, a yummy candied Angelica stalk is made from the 2nd year's growth of the plant.

Magical Uses: It is said that eating a piece of Angelica root on a mid-summer's night will cure any ailment (I think you should try it!) Angelica has long been used to banish negativity and attract positive energy. She brings blessings to the home, especially from Archangel Michael, who appeared to monks in a vision showing the monks her use for healing from the plague. Each year, she blooms on or near the feast day of St. Michael, May 8th.

Angelica contains the constituent camphene. She also contains high levels of terpenes, coumarins and volatile oils.

PNW Gardening

Herbal Actions: Astringent, antioxidant, vulnerary, antirheumatic, circulatory, diuretic, bitter, warming, invigorating.

Herbal Actions Explained: Angelica is an astringent, which means she will help to strengthen and tighten tissues. She is vulnerary, which will help with wound healing. Antioxidant properties may help prevent cancer, and antirheumatic effects can help with arthritis. She helps with circulation and warms the body. Her diuretic property will help to keep urine flowing, flushing toxins from the body. Bitters aid digestion and stir the appetite. As far as being invigorating, we all know what that means.... more energy!!

Angelica is such an important herb for herbalists! Her functions include:

- digestive tonic
- cancer prevention
- diuretic
- general health tonic
- anemia treatment
- plague treatment
- bronchitis treatment
- chest complaints treatment
- compresses from the leaves are great for gout
- nervousness
- decongestant
- brings on menses

Here are **three quick easy ways to start using Angelica** intentionally and medicinally.

Before you gather the herb, please thank her before taking medicine, and always give something back to the plant. What you give back is up to you; a simple prayer of gratitude will do. Try to return any of the used portion of the herb back to the base of the plant. That is a loving tradition.

1. Angelica stem or stalk treat - you can eat the stem just like celery.
2. Angelica Tea - infuse two tablespoons of the dried root into 1 cup of hot water; after 15 minutes strain and drink.
3. Candied Angelica Stalk - blanch the stalks first, then soak them in a heavy sugary syrup. Boil in the sugary syrup and then soak/simmer again. Do this cycle several times until the stalk becomes translucent. Dry the stems and roll them again in some organic sugar. Serve when desired. This is a yummy way to have a dessert that acts as a digestive aid also!

PNW Gardening

as children under the age of two. People with diabetes should take special caution along with folks who have stomach ulcers or are heart patients.

If you want to start working with Angelica I am happy to give you some Angelica seeds to start your journey. Email me at vhohlbein@msn.com She is easy to grow and will return to your garden year after year!

Time to grow Angelica!

Peace and Happy Herbing!

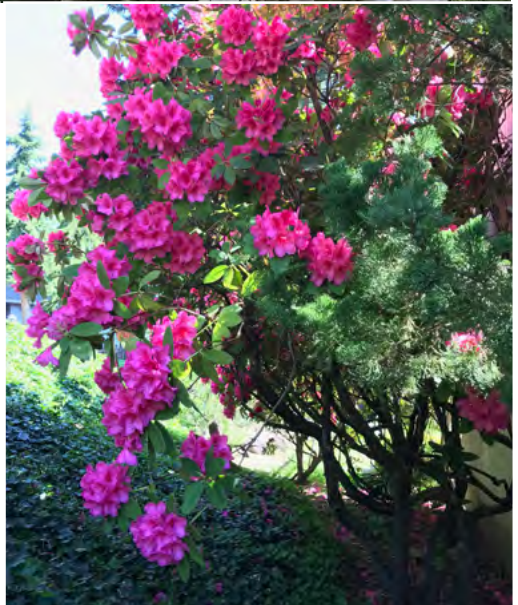
Visala



Photo Credit: [Wikimedia](#)

PNW Gardening

Bountiful May Garden in Bellevue by Kothai



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Tree Planting: 40 Fruit Trees in 4 Days by David Muncaster

Last summer, on her summer tour, Amma encouraged us to plant trees. When I went up for a hug, I passed her a note asking her what I should do to help the world prepare for the difficult times ahead. She gave a long answer in Malayalam, and the translation I received was simply this: “Plant trees”.

That fall, I planted a pear tree in my mother’s yard, and with the help of satsang friends I also planted a maple tree in my neighbor’s yard, a native oak tree at a local art school, and some fir trees on a barren hilltop by the highway. But then I stopped planting.

I had two problems: first, I had nowhere to plant trees. I live in BC, and there are trees growing everywhere. It is different than places like California, Ireland, or even India, where the landscape used to be forested but has now become mostly grass or farms. Our issue in BC is that we clear-cut old forests and replant them as if they are “tree farms”, which means losing healthy biodiversity.

My second problem was how to get trees cheaply, so I could afford to plant lots. At the local nursery, most fruit trees and even evergreen trees cost \$20-\$50 each.

In the winter, I contacted a local farm that housed and employed homeless people as part of their project. They told me I could come and plant trees, but on the day before I was scheduled to plant, they announced that they were closing. So, I prayed about what to do next. A few weeks later, I decided to try to contact small farm owners online.

I wanted to plant mostly fruit trees, because they will help the city become more self-sustaining. And I wanted to plant mostly on farms, because fruit trees need a lot of sun and space, and I wanted to plant more than just one or two trees in each location that I went to. I posted a free ad, on a local Craigslist-like site (called UsedVictoria), titled “Free Fruit Trees, if you have acreage”, and included a photo of the pear tree that I had planted at my mother’s house. Within one week, I received almost 100 replies! Now, I had plenty of places to plant trees! The only problem was that I did not actually have any fruit trees.

After doing a long search online, I found a nursery on Denman Island called Tree Eater Nursery. The nursery sold apple tree roots (called “rootstock”, of a variety called mm106 which grew fairly large semi-dwarf trees) for less than \$3 each, and some little plum trees for under \$15. Shipping was fast and cheap.

I ordered 40 apple tree roots and a few plum trees, plus some native crab apple tree seeds, and they arrived in a box within days. I grafted baby branches from my sister’s apple tree on to the apple roots that I bought (it was easier than I expected!). I then heard about a local “community orchard” that was selling bare-root fruit trees. Fruit trees are cheaper if you buy them in the early spring as “bare-root” trees, before they get put in pots. I told the orchard staff about the tree-planting I was doing, and about Embracing the World, and they agreed to sell me their beautiful

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

2-year old heritage apple trees for only \$25 each. I bought a few of them as well and stored them temporarily in my mother's garden.

Now, I was able to reply to the emails I received, and tell them what day I could come, and what trees I could bring. I started with the farms that responded first, or were the most enthusiastic, or which seemed unlikely to be able to buy or transport their own fruit trees.

Our first tree-planting day was very successful. We went to 4 farms and helped plant 17 fruit trees. There were just four satsang members on this trip (Chris, Vijaya, John, and myself), and we were quite tired by the end of the day.



Chris at a small farm outside Victoria



David with a heritage apple tree we planted on a small acreage



Baby Hemlock tree we planted at a honey bee farm.

One interesting thing happened that I did not really expect. When you give someone a gift, they usually want to give you a gift in return. At one farm (actually just a regular property with a big, forested front yard), the owner told us that we could have as many fir and hemlock seedlings as we wanted, for free, from her land. There was a big patch of bare soil by her new driveway, and hundreds of baby trees were coming up. We took a few and will likely return for more.

Another farm was a permaculture demonstration farm. They gave us four dozen eggs plus an offer to come back anytime for a longer tour and discussion about permaculture.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Vijaya and Chris with the Gary Oak we planted at an art school

Another farm was essentially a farm animal refuge with ducks, chickens, geese, sheep, etc. They offered us a variety of seeds and taught us some permaculture techniques including the idea of piling stones around the base of young trees (but without letting the stones touch the tree) to conserve moisture. These gifts were all given to us on our first day!

We have since been on 3 more planting trips and have planted about 40 trees. I hope that some of these ideas will be useful to you in your own tree-planting efforts. Feel free to contact me anytime if you have questions: ons108@hotmail.com.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Greenbelt Restoration Work Parties: April 27, May 9, May 12

April 27



On Friday, April 27, DocuSign corporate group employees returned to help at our Greenbelt site. We had a group of 21 participants plus our staff- Karuna (GreenFriends and Green Seattle Partnership, Anavadya (GreenFriends), and Jeb (Forterra).

Team 1 spread wood chip mulch around plants. The mulch helps prevent weed growth and holds in moisture, making it more likely the plants will survive the summer months.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Team 2 removed the shoots of blackberry, ivy and bindweed vines that were popping up throughout the site. This group weeded more than 13,500 sq.ft. of land.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Team 3 cleared blackberry vines and ivy from the ground, dug out blackberry root balls, and made survival rings around four big cottonwood trees. [Note: A survival ring is created by removing ivy from all sides of a tree starting at ground level and going to shoulder height. Cut off from their roots, the rest of the ivy on the tree will die.]



Before



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

After



May 9

This work party was led by Karuna and Susan Zeman, another Green Seattle Partnership Forest Steward. Seventeen students from the University of Washington's Introduction to Environmental Science course participated.

Team 1 started the process of removing invasive blackberry vines and holly from a part of the site where we have done very little prior work. While it will take many work parties to free the area from invasive plants, this group made a lot of progress during the three-hour work party. They were even able to dig out a huge clump of bamboo.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Team 2 removed blackberry vines, bindweed and other weeds growing in many of the areas where we planted native trees, shrubs and ground covers this year. The students also removed wood chip mulch that had fallen close to the base of the approximately 500 plants. (We attempt to keep the area around each plant clear. That area is referred to as the “donut hole.”)



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

May 12



The May 12th work party was a collaborative effort between GreenFriends, Green Seattle Partnership, Bridge2Beach, students from the UW Introduction to Environmental Science class and neighbors. Our staff consisted of Karuna, Sarva and Haley from GreenFriends and John and Jason who are neighbors. Chaitanya helped by signing in people and Marine, another neighbor, took photographs. Twenty-five volunteers in addition to the staff “rolled up their sleeves” and began to work.

Team 1 formed a bucket brigade to carry wood chip mulch from the city street into the Greenbelt and placed new mulch around approximately 300 plants that had been planted and mulched in October or November of last year.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Team 2 removed a dense cover of invasive ivy, blackberry vines, and holly from an area on the eastern border of the site, one that we are just beginning to work on.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Before

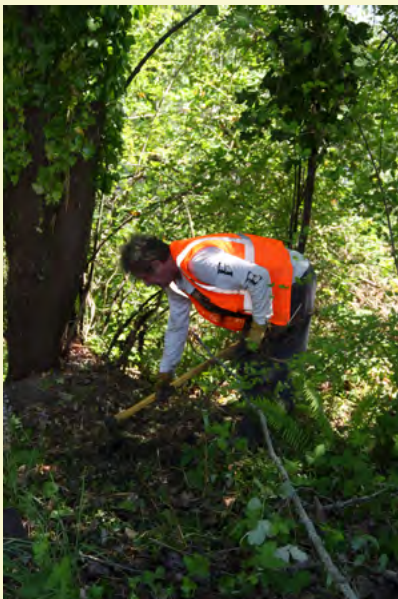


Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

After



Team 3 worked in the Greenbelt site that is just north of ours. During the three-hour work party, they cut survival rings around eleven trees! In addition, they began to remove ivy and blackberry vines from the surrounding ground.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Watching the miracle of forest restoration unfold:

This photo was taken on March 15. It shows what one planting area looked like two weeks after trees, shrubs and ground covers were planted in it.



This is what part of that same area looked like on May 11.



Tree Planting Stats

May 2018 Planting

Trees: Victoria Satsang members planted 40 trees; Jayanand and Surabhi planted a vine maple in Pt. Angeles; Mechas planted 3 filbert trees in Maltby; and Rajeswari planted 33 trees in Quebec. Rajeshwari will provide more detail and photos on her project in the next newsletter.

Shrubs and Ground covers: Sushanta planted 2 rhododendron, 4 rosemary, 25 ground covers and 3 raspberry bushes in Maltby

Donations: Sumati from Portland donated to Friends of Trees so that 20 seedlings could be planted.

Total: PNW devotees have planted 500 trees (plus 700 shrubs and groundcovers) since our Tree Planting project began the last week of September 2017. [Note: Donations to organizations were not counted in these statistics. We may make a separate section to track those.]

Please send reports of any trees, shrubs and ground covers you plant to karunap108@comcast.net each month so your numbers can be counted. Send pictures and what you planted if possible.

Amma's Coming Soon!

Green Team Volunteers Needed

The Green Team Coordinators are looking for late evening/early morning support with recycling and kitchen compost. Do you support Amma's call for us to create a beautiful green world free of unnecessary plastics and needless waste? We need your enthusiasm and leadership! Contact Diya Heal directly at ammasdiya108@yahoo.com

Source Reduction Booth Volunteers Needed

The Source Reduction Team Coordinators are looking for sevites to help at the Source Reduction booth. The booth will have the Plastic Challenge poster, samples of alternate products that can be purchased at the bookstore and a tablet with Footprint Calculator and Pledge Form. Do you have a passion for the environment and plastic reduction? If so, we need your help! The seva would entail answering questions, directing people to the bookstore and helping them enter their footprint on the tablet if they need it. This is a SITTING SEVA so it's great for sevites who are unable to stand. If you are willing to help, contact Diya at ammasdiya108@yahoo.com.

Nature

The Walking Tree by Kothai

Trekking through the Amazon rainforest in Manaus, Brazil, I came across a tree of which I had never heard before, the Walking Palm (*Socratea exorrhiza*). This tree has complex roots and according to the locals the tree uses its multiple roots to move towards sunlight. This theory is debated but nevertheless I found it very fascinating.



Source Reduction

‘Do you want plastic with that?’ – Avoiding plastic in food and drinks by Tirtha

*“Nature is the wish-fulfilling tree that gives humanity all abundance.
But today, our situation is like that of a fool sawing off the very branch upon which he is sitting.”*
– Amma

The Plastic Challenge asked us all to become a little more aware of our use of plastic. Although it has wrapped up for now, there are many good reasons to keep reducing plastic.

Our constant contact with many kinds of plastics may be one of the causes for increasing rates of autism, childhood and adult cancer, much earlier puberty, ADHD, allergies, sensitivities, respiratory problems, etc.

<https://myplasticfreelife.com/2012/07/why-chemicals-in-plastics-may-have-worse-effects-at-lower-doses>

<https://www.naturalnewsblogs.com/toxic-bpa-used-two-thirds-food-packaging-says-new-report>

<http://toxins.news/2018-02-04-store-receipts-have-toxic-chemicals-that-promote-disease-autism-cancer-diabetes.html>

<https://www.alternet.org/personal-health/toxic-traps-when-these-7-types-plastic-are-dangerous>

Even the plastics that are considered safe can leach chemicals into our food and liquids. Plastics used for food containers may also be treated with antibiotics, which increases our exposure to them and can reduce their effectiveness over time. <https://myplasticfreelife.com/2010/03/spring-clean-carnival-get-the-antibacterials-out-of-your-plastic>

And plastic is terrible for Mother Earth. Although plastic falls apart, it does not biodegrade for an estimated 500 to 1,000 years!

Here are some suggestions for reducing plastic in your life. No need to do it all at once – just try a few, at least some of the time:

- If you like to **buy coffee or tea to go**, carry a travel mug or thermos with you in your car or backpack.



Photo credit: [Wikimedia](#)

Source Reduction

- Did you know many kinds of **teabags** are made with polypropylene? Yes, they are heat-sealed with plastic, so they don't fall apart before you've drunk your tea... That's why they live forever in your compost! (You would probably need to email or tweet the company to find out if your favourite teabags contain plastic. But many people find loose tea and a strainer make a better-tasting cup anyway!)
- Did you know most **chewing gum** is made with plastic? (Polyethylene or polyvinyl acetate.)
- When buying new **reusable grocery bags**, look for cotton instead of synthetics, which can release microparticle pollution into the ocean when washed. Carry bags with you all the time, so you can use reusable bags for all your purchases, from drugstores to clothing and technology.
- Try glass jars, tiffins, or bento boxes for **food storage** instead of plastic. (Many foods come in glass jars that are handy to keep for re-using, such as honey, mayonnaise, pickles, and peanut butter.)
- Bring your own container to use instead of a restaurant doggy bag, or **takeout container**. Instead of keeping food in shrink wrap or plastic bags, try covered containers, cotton bags sold for this purpose, waxed paper, or even a bowl with a saucer on top.
- If you buy **meat, fish, or poultry**, consider buying it at a butcher or supermarket that will allow you to bring your own container, or will wrap it in butcher paper, instead of selling it prepacked with shrink wrap on Styrofoam.
- Don't buy **bottled water**. Bottled water is a huge cause of plastic pollution. It also takes 3 litres of water to make a 1-litre water bottle... A recent report found that 64 per cent of bottled water is tap water being sold for a 2,000-per-cent mark-up!



Photo Credit: [Wikimedia](#)

Source Reduction

- Buy more food from **bulk bins**, in your own container or in a plastic bag you can re-use, instead of individual plastic packages. Cereal, rice, pasta, nuts, snacks, teas, chocolates, and much more are available in bulk.
- Ask your grocer to take back plastic containers ("clamshells") that **fruits and vegetables** such as berries and tomatoes may be packed in. Or buy more produce at farmer's markets where it is not packaged, or they will allow you to return plastic for re-use.
- Try buying **milk** in glass bottles, instead of plastic. Try making your own rice/soy/almond milks – they are surprisingly easy and tasty!



Photo credit: [Wikipedia](#)

- Buy **bread** in paper bags instead of in plastic. Keep it fresh by wrapping it in a tea towel and/or keeping it in a tight-fitting tin, bread box or container.

"We may doubt whether we have the power to restore the lost balance in nature.

We may ask, 'Aren't we human beings too limited?'

*No, we are not! We have infinite power within us,
but we are fast asleep and unaware of our own strength.*

This power will rise up when we awaken within."

- Amma

Source Reduction

Cultivating Discrimination by Tirtha

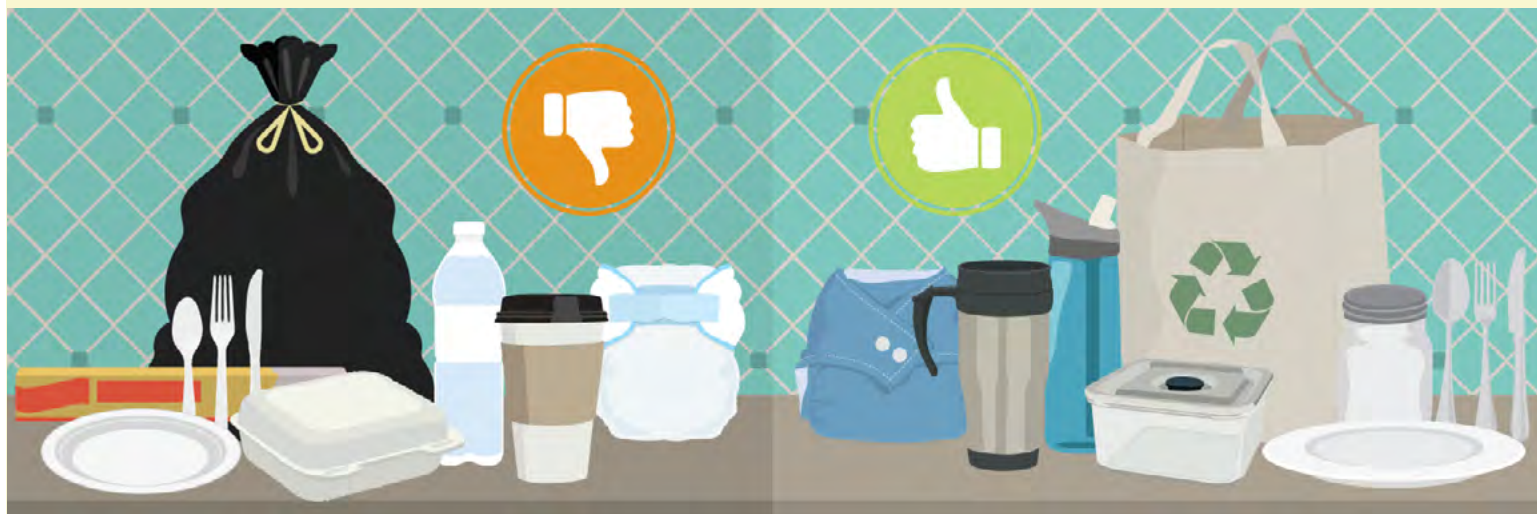
I was going to be hosting archana the next day—chanting of prayers, such as The Thousand Names of the Divine Mother. At the store I was looking for some prasad to offer. (Prasad is offered on the altar before the satsang or archana, and then is eaten by participants afterwards.) I noticed they had almond-date rolls -- healthy and sweet, and most people like them.

The store doesn't always have them, so I was smiling as my hand went out to pick up a package. Then my hand stopped dead in the air and the smile left my face, as I registered the fact they come in a plastic package.

Instead, I bought chocolate macaroons in the bulk section, putting them in one of my reused plastic bags. Unfortunately, I ate them all that evening! I asked a friend to bring macaroons when she came for archana the next day. She brought macaroon cookies... in a plastic package. Luckily, the package was available for re-use when someone wanted to take some pudding prasad home with them.

The next time I was going to have satsang, I bought fair-trade organic chocolates in the bulk section at the health food store. I used my discrimination to remind myself that these chocolates were not for me, and to feel grateful that I was living in a place where I could host satsang. I successfully did not eat any... however, when it came time to put them out, I couldn't find them! I thought, did I forget to bring them home from the store? Where could they have gone?

Immediately after everyone left, I found them hiding among my bulk foods (where I had looked quite thoroughly). Perhaps there was a need for me to exercise my discrimination for a longer period of time! I will take them to the next satsang, and meanwhile keep reminding myself who they're intended for.



PNW Litter Project

PNW Litter Project Stats

In May, 37 Litter Project members and their friends picked up litter for 99 hours. (Average 2.16 hours; Median 1 hour; Range 1 minutes to 15.5 hours) We have picked up litter for 9747 hours since the project began in July of 2011.

TerraCycle Stats

TerraCycle is an organization that recycles items which are normally considered unrecyclable. They credited us with turning in 2,850 cigarette butts in April. We have sent them 336,224 cigarette butts since 2013. GreenFriends has also sent them 394 Drink Pouches, 732 Cereal Bag liners, and 2,997 Energy Bar wrappers.



Interesting Information from Our Readers



Photo Credit: [Wikimedia](#)

From Jayanand in Pt. Angeles:

[Marine Debris in Coastal Parks](#) (Microplastics)

From Ellen in Seattle:

[World's First Collapsible, Reusable Straw Fits Right On Your Keychain](#)

From Tirtha in Victoria:

[How to Grow a Bee Friendly Garden](#)

From Aishwarya on Salt Spring Island:

[Trees have a "Heartbeat". Scientists Discover](#)

From Cassie:

Plantas Nativas <https://www.plantasnativa.com> is in Skagit/Whatcom. They specialize in native plants. Just got Berries/wildflowers.

From Susan in Seattle:

[Trees for All: Becoming Better Stewards of Seattle's Urban Forests](#)

From Poornima in Shoreline:

[She Painted Portraits of 'Overlooked' Women. Then She Made a Dress](#) (using copies of NY Times newspaper)