



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

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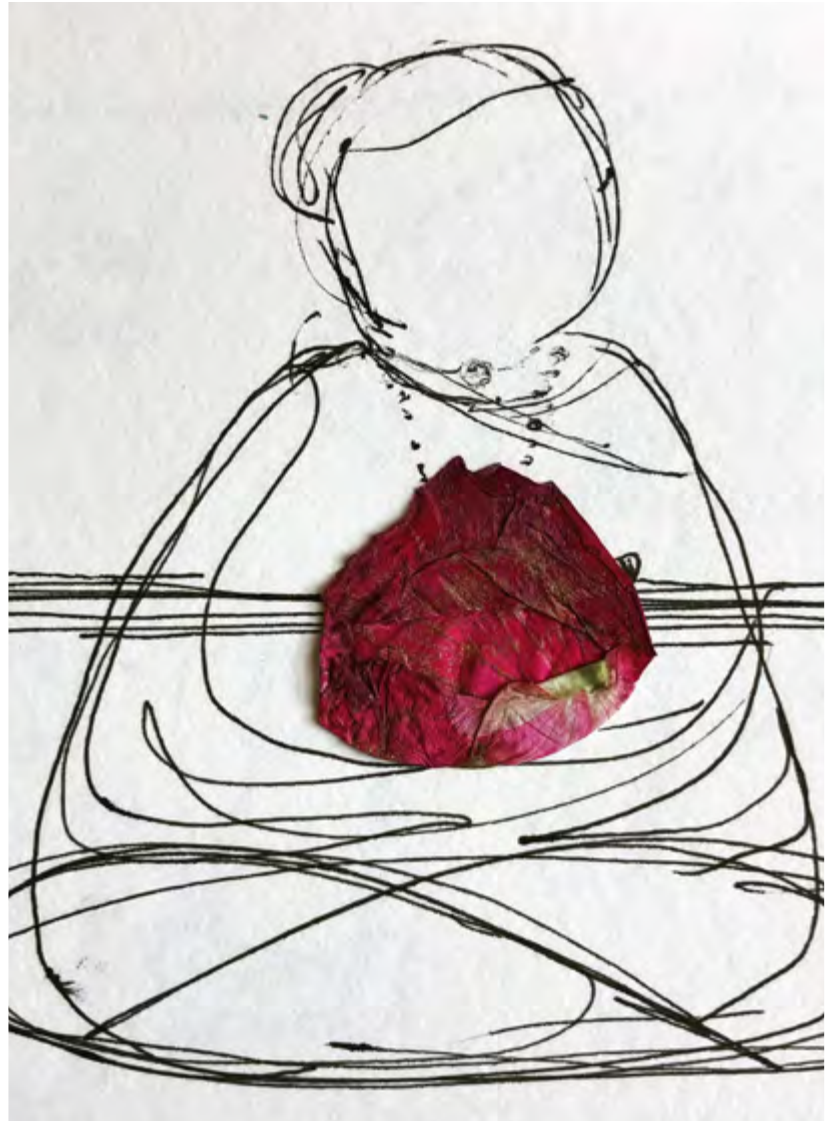
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GreenFriends is a global grassroots environmental movement which promotes environmental awareness and local participation in conservation efforts throughout the world.

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

PNW Gardening

The Garden that Keeps on Giving by Kristin



Nature

Snoqualmie and Multnomah Falls in Fall by Kothai



Nature



Nature



Below freezing temperatures at Multnomah Falls - Late October 2019

Nature

On a Walk by the Swamp by Shawn

Every winter I visit my mom who lives in southern Florida. It's always exhilarating when I spot one of these beautiful alligators on my walks along the nearby mangrove swamp. This is because these large reptiles are stunning with their repetitive scaly patterns adorning their tough-as-nails looking skin. Also, I imagine that if I get too close the alligator might streak lightening-like towards me and snap onto an arm or leg with 1,700 pounds per square inch. Per square inch! I admire these magnificent creatures who survive in spite of human encroachment, droughts, and drainage projects.



Nature

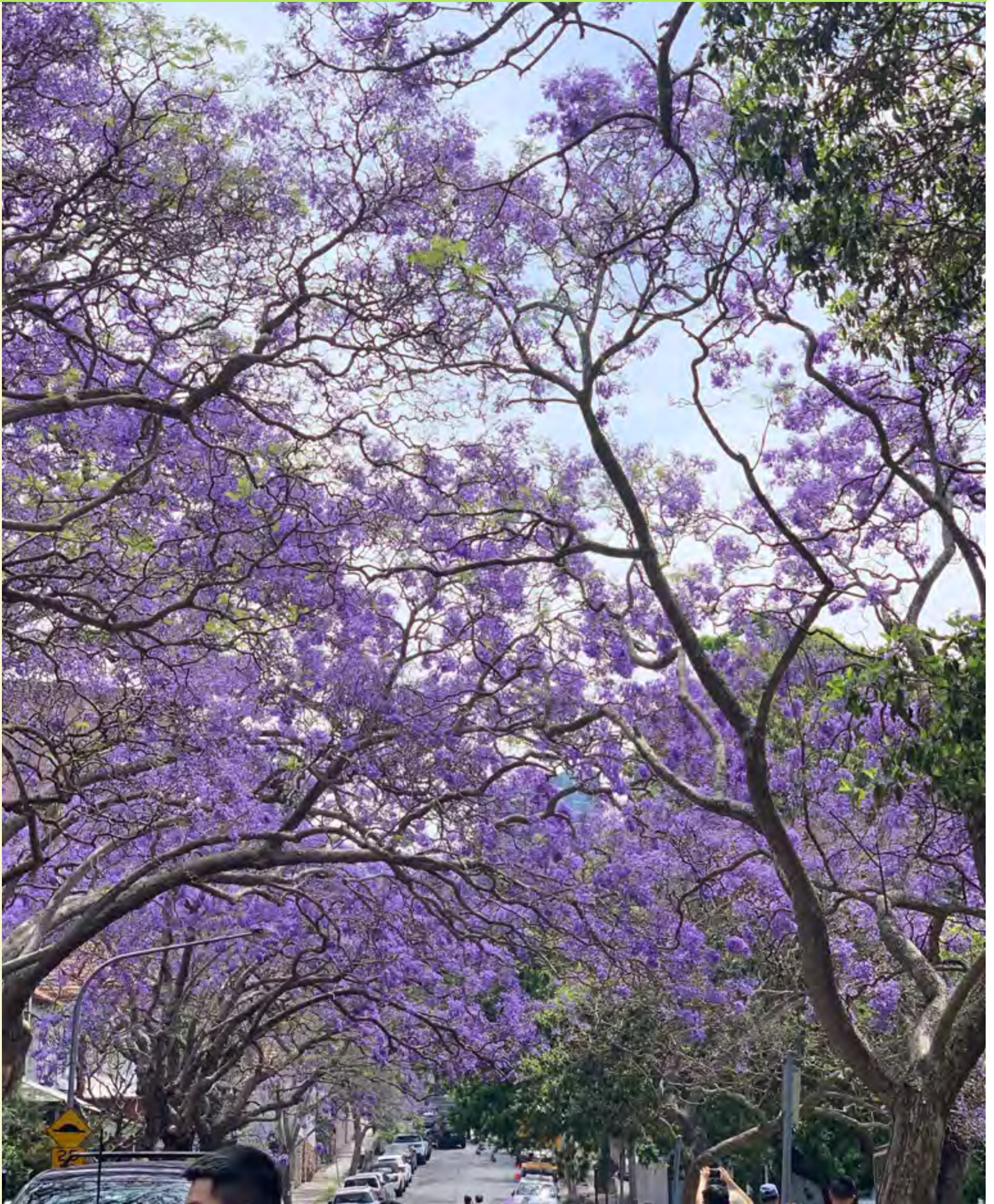
Spring Photos from Sydney, Australia by Nitya



Nature



Nature



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Greenbelt Restoration Project: Service-Learning by Karuna

This quarter, we had students from the University of Washington's Service-Learning program (Carlson Center) helping on our site. The Carlson Center's service opportunities are tied to academic courses. Two of the students were from an introductory level course in the College of the Environment and four were from an English composition course focusing on social issues. The service-learning students worked in our forest restoration site every week for seven weeks. Each session lasted three hours.

Session 1: October 8

Our forest restoration project gives everyone who participates the opportunity to practice flexibility, especially the leaders. That was certainly true of the day the service-learning students came to our site for their first session. In the week that led up to the first session, the weather forecast changed many times; in fact, sometimes it changed several times a day. Often the weather during our work parties is better than the forecast, so we hoped Mother Nature would support us in that way again.

On the day of the event, the weather changed even more often. An hour or two before the event, there was some lightning. (We could work in rain but wouldn't work in lightning.) As I was doing the final setup for the work party, the rain was pouring.

Sarva, who co-leads these sessions with me, and I had decided to hold the orientation in my house and to make it much more comprehensive than normal. When the students arrived, it was still raining, but the rain wasn't as heavy as it had been earlier. After the orientation, Sarva and I took them on a tour of the site. By then, the rain had changed to a light shower. And, by the time we were ready to do the restoration work, the sun was shining!

Because of the weather, we had changed the plan for the restoration work we would do numerous times over the preceding week. As we toured the site, we decided the five students and two leaders would break into two teams; we would cut back the blackberry vines that were shooting into the site from the blackberry barrier that goes along the southern border, separating our site from the neighbor's land.

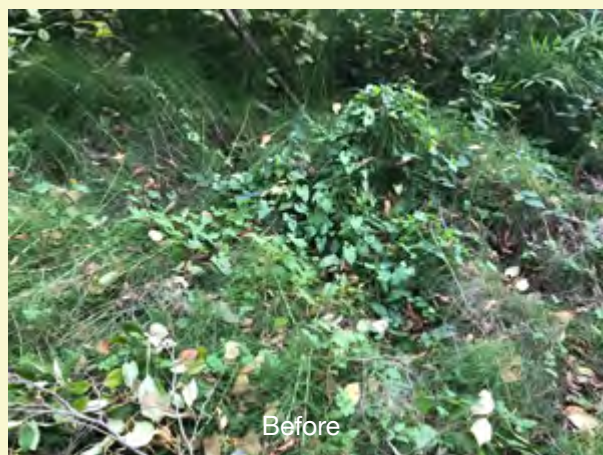
In the first two photos below, you can see some of the many loads of blackberry vines that were removed during that first session. The cuttings were carried on tarps to drying racks in other parts of the site. In the third photo, you can see what two of the border areas looked like when we finished that day.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Session 2: October 15

During the second session, we worked near the red twig dogwood area, an area that is very near wetlands. The land is full of horsetails, a native plant that is older than the dinosaurs. It also contained invasive bindweed, blackberry, nightshade and ivy vines, as well as other weeds. We removed the invasive vines and weeds but left the horsetails.



After taking a break, the students removed a big pile of dried blackberry canes and other weeds from one part of the site and took them to an area where they will break down even further. The cleared space will ultimately contain native plants.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Session 3: October 22

During this session, the students and leaders tackled an area that had been worked on twice during summer work parties. There was still plenty of clearing that needed to be done. Dried blackberry canes and branches covered the ground, as well as live ivy, blackberry vines and other invasive plants. Under the dried debris, we found layers and layers of ivy vines. They crisscrossed so much that they seemed woven. It is possible that these layers represented 50 years of ivy growth. The students carried many loads of invasive vines to drying racks that day. Native trees and shrubs would be planted in this area in November.

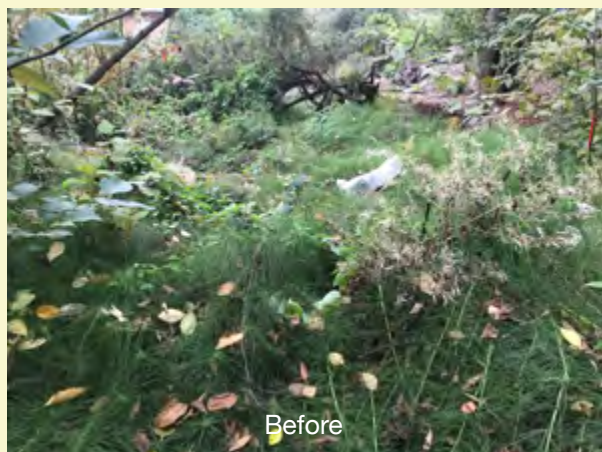


Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Session 4: October 22

During the 4th session, we worked in an area that was full of horsetails, bindweed, dried branches and other weeds. The horsetails had started to die down for the year, but there were years of dried stalks underneath the live ones. We left the live horsetails alone as much as possible. However, it often wasn't possible to remove the bindweed without removing the horsetail, because both break easily.

We hadn't planned to create a path that day, but it soon became clear that one would be helpful. Part of the group began to make a path while the rest of the group continued to remove the invasive vines.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Session 5: November 5

The primary task for the 5th service-learning session was to clear away the leaves, wood chips and weeds from all of the spots where new native trees, shrubs and ground covers would be planted on November 13th. Prior to the work party, Sarva and I had placed a green or pink flag at each of those locations.

Two staff members from Carlson Center, the University of Washington program that coordinates the University's service-learning programs, came to our site that day. They wanted to talk with Sarva and me about how the students were helping to meet Green Seattle Partnership's forest restoration goals, to see our site, and to watch and talk with the students. They stayed with us for about an hour.



After a break, the students continued to clear the areas where native trees, shrubs and ground covers would be planted the following week.

Session 6: November 12

The 6th service-learning session took place on November 12, the afternoon before DocuSign, a corporate group, would be coming to plant everything. In between the 5th and 6th sessions, the plants had been distributed to the locations where they would soon be planted.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Every year, we mark each new plant with a piece of soft flagging tape. The color of the tape is different for each planting season. Blue and white checkered tape was used for the Nov 2017 to March 2018 planting season and red with black polka dots for 2018-19. This season, the tape is a light blue. You can see it on many of the plants in the photo above.



The flagging tape had been placed on all of the larger plants prior to the 6th session. When the plant is small, though, there may not be a branch that is strong enough for tagging. In those cases, we put the flagging tape on a stake and then put the stakes in the ground near the plants when they are planted. (The photo to the left shows one of the stakes.)

During the first part of the 6th service-learning session, three of the students made 100 of these stakes. While they did that, one of our staff members raked weeds off of some of the paths on the site and another student put the stakes in or near the pots that contained small plants.

After a break, the four students who were present that day divided into two groups. Each pair planted a hemlock tree. Once the tree was planted, they put a ring of wood chips around it. The wood chips help retain moisture and reduce weed growth.



After planting the trees, the students hunted for areas where flags had been placed since the previous session and cleared the ground around those flags.

By the time this service-learning session was over, the land was ready for the next day's planting work party!

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Session 7: November 19

November 19th was the last of this quarter's service-learning sessions. We were lucky to have Dave, one of our regular team leaders, join us for the first time. Antje, another team leader, who has helped throughout the quarter, also attended. We divided into two teams. Dave and Antje worked with three of the students and the other two worked with me.

My team started the session by planting 4 Roemer's fescue and 5 tall managrass plants. That was a task that is easier to say than to do, because the students were planting in the old house foundation that we'd formerly used to hold drying racks. Earlier in the year, we had disassembled the racks and spread the dried debris within the foundation. While the debris will continue to compost, and in time will become dirt, at this point we were planting primarily in dried blackberry canes and branches. (We will not be planting other plants in the foundation until the debris has broken down further, but we decided to experiment with these 9 plants.)

The students dug holes in the debris and then added dirt to the hole. Then they planted the plants, continuing to add dirt in the space around the plants until the hole was filled



Once the students had planted the Roemer's fescue and tall managrass, they reinforced a stretch of path by adding a 2-4-inch layer of wood chips to an already existing path.

While those students were planting and reinforcing the path, the other team cleared blackberry and ivy vines, buttercup, grass and other weeds from an area near the entrance to the site.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

This is what that area looked like before we worked on it back in April.



Even though the area had been cleared before, the weeds had come back; and the shrubs had formed a thicket that hung across the sidewalk. By the time the first team finished their work, the clearing of this area was well underway. The two teams joined together and cleared the rest of the weeds. While the students were weeding, Dave cut down the dead laurel trunks that surrounded a pine tree. Then he and I pruned the shrubs. Once the invasive plants were gone, we all covered the area with wood chips.



This was one of those weeks that I got so involved in the work that I, for the most part, forgot to take photos. The photo on the right will have to represent all of the students and staff who were working in that area.

The transformation in the space was remarkable. The shrubs need more pruning, but they look so much better; and they are no longer hanging over the sidewalk.

This was the last session for these service-learning students. They each have made a significant contribution to this site and they all seemed to enjoy their time here. I feel so grateful for their presence and their help.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Greenbelt Restoration Work Party: DocuSign Planting Day

November 13, 2019



On November 15, 2017, a corporate group from [DocuSign](https://www.docuSign.com) came to work at our restoration site for the first time. The event was held on their Global IMPACT Day. At that time, I looked up the philosophy behind Impact Day and found this statement:

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 also worked in our site on April 2018, November 2018, April 2019; and on November 13, 2019, they returned to do our fall planting. DocuSign has become a valuable part of our restoration team.

Prior to the event, the spots where the trees, shrubs and ground covers would be planted were cleared and marked with green or pink flags. The pots containing the plants were put next to the flags a day or two before the work party



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

When the big day arrived, 21 DocuSign employees and 2 students from Seattle Central Community College participated. Our staff consisted of Karuna, Anavadya, and Sarva from GreenFriends; Susan, a Forest Steward from another Cheasty Greenspace site; John who is a neighbor of Karuna's; and Antje, one of our team leaders.

Following an initial orientation, everyone divided into four teams and got to work. After each plant was planted, the volunteers put a ring of wood chips around it. The wood chip rings help in retaining moisture and reducing weed growth.



Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



One hundred and sixty-seven trees, shrubs, and ground covers were planted that day. In the photos below you will see 7 of the 15 species we planted.



Oregon Sunshine

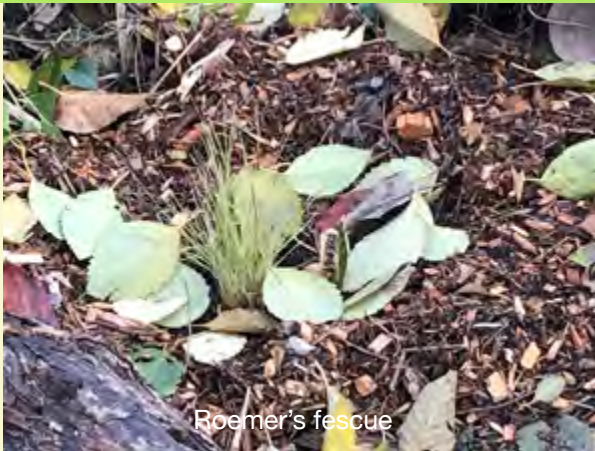


Piggyback



Bald hip rose

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration



Roemer's fescue



Snowberry



Managrass



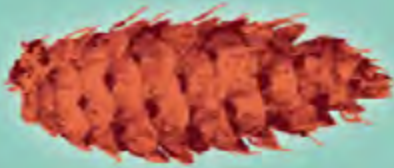
Indian plum

The DocuSign employees, students, and team leaders did amazing work and I think everyone had a good time. Rumor has it that DocuSign may come back again in April. I sure hope that is the case!

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in our November 2019 planting day and to those who helped prepare for it. Each person made a significant and important contribution to the goal of returning this stretch of Seattle's Greenbelt to a healthy forest.

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration

Green Seattle Day: Saturday, November 2



PLANT A FOREST - GROW COMMUNITY

GREEN SEATTLE DAY

2019 by the numbers:



14th

8700

Native Plants
Planted

Annual Green
Seattle Day

1170

Volunteers

17

Parks

Thank you
volunteers, sponsors,
and partners!

3602

Volunteer
Hours



GREEN SEATTLE PARTNERSHIP



Designed by:
FORTERRA

PNW Litter Project

Litter Stats

In November 2019, **27** Litter Project members and their friends picked up litter for **48.9** hours. (Average **1.8** hours; Median **1** hour; Range **2** minutes to **10** hours) We have picked up litter for **10,987** hours since the project began in July of 2011.

TerraCycle Stats - We had a big month!

We have sent TerraCycle **355,724** cigarette butts, **394** drink pouches, **1,748** cereal bag liners, and **6,747** energy bar wrappers since we started sending items to them in 2013. [TerraCycle is an organization that recycles items which are normally considered unrecyclable.]



TerraCycle Update

As many of you know, our satsang is collecting and recycling:

- **Granola/Energy Bar wrappers**
- **Plastic Cereal Bag liners**
- **Toothpaste and Toothbrushes as well as Dental floss containers.**

BUT... now we have added another category.

We now recycle pens, markers, and glue sticks.

Please bring them with you to satsang and we will make sure they don't go to the LANDFILL.

Thanks for your care for the planet.

Visala

PNW Litter Project

Musings of a Trash Collector by Willy



Every day I walk my little dog, Rosie, around the neighborhood. I also take a bag and gloves and pick up any trash I see in the streets. After a few months of observation, I have noticed a few things. Litter blaming is not an exact science, but we go with what we have. The culprits tend to be in three categories.

One: Birds... specifically crows. The crows look for overflowing trash cans and peck accordingly. They are the cause of the weird stuff being in the middle of the street.

Two: Kids. I know it's a cheap shot. But I got my proof the day after Halloween. Candy wrappers, soda cups, STRAWS, at regular intervals—especially on the streets that lead away from the convenience store down the road. Older kids leave beer cans in little piles near bushes on hidden lawns. Midnight rendezvous?

Three: Garbage trucks! What? you say. How can that be? Well, watch the truck empty the cans. If the trash isn't bagged, some of it falls out on the street—and heads for the storm drain. I once was passed by a truck, and paper trash was literally wafting up from the opening in the back of the truck. So, there is my proof.

Rosie and I will continue to do research and make observations. And, of course, we'll pick up the nasty stuff.