

# May 2026 Newsletter

Happy May Day!

## The Trees

The trees are coming into leaf  
Like something almost being said;  
The recent buds relax and spread,  
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again  
And we grow old? No, they die too,  
Their yearly trick of looking new  
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh  
In full grown thickness every May.  
Last year is dead, they seem to say,  
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

Philip Larkin (1922-1985)

## MAY GARDEN CLUB MEETING:

**Date:** May 13, 2026 (Last regular meeting until September)

**Time:** 9:30 AM - Set-up

10:00 AM - Meeting

10:45AM - Social Time and Snacks

11:00AM - Speaker

12:30 - Clean-up

**Horticultural Corner:** Parsley by Nancy Gunderson

**Program:** Debbie DeFillips will do a hands-on workshop where we will learn the materials and steps needed to sand cast a leaf print. We will all create small leaf prints that we can take home.

**Location:** Our Savior Lutheran Church  
745 Front Street South  
Issaquah, WA

**Snack Crew:**

Hostess: Joy J.  
Crew: Gloria W.  
Marie W.  
Helen S.  
Joanne W.  
Cynthia

**LETS SAVE ON KITCHEN SUPPLIES:**

Please remember to bring your own plate, napkin and silverware so we don't deplete the club's supplies and reduces our garbage footprint! And, attention coffee and tea drinkers - remember to bring your own cup (THANKS)

**DO YOU HATE YOUR PICTURE IN THE GARDEN CLUB YEARBOOK?**

At the May meeting you will have an opportunity to have your picture re-taken. If you want this done come with your best outfit on, your hair and make-up done and we will make it happen. This is a chance for a "new you" in the 2026 - 2027 yearbook!

**YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED:*****APRIL Meeting:*****HORTICULTURAL CORNER:**

\*\* Georgann L. presented about Cilantro. It originated over 8,000 years ago and is actually two herbs in one. The dried seeds are Coriander and the leafy greens and stems are also known as Chinese Parsley. In fact it is related to Parsley.

\*\* Cilantro is one of the first plants to be domesticated and has actually been found in King Tut's Tomb. It's a very popular ingredient in Mexican food and it has been noted that there has been a decrease in use in Europe.

\*\* It has been known to have some medicinal uses such to treatment of digestive issues.

\*\* Cilantro is an annual that is easy to grow.

**TREASURERS REPORT:**

\*\* We have \$1937.00 in checking and \$3050.00 in savings. We made \$135.00 from auctioning off Jon's arrangements he did at the last meeting. The checking total also includes an additional \$325.00 that has been donated along with dues payments.

\*\* Dues for next year is due. Everyone who can financially handle an extra donation is encouraged to do so. This will keep the annual dues amount low so as to not exclude anyone. Extra donations will help us avoid needing to have a fundraiser.

\*\* Donation basket for 'Plant A Tree' was passed. Sandra reported that a check for \$150.00 was sent to help reforest public land.

**GARDEN THERAPY (JOAN H.):**

\*\* The next flower arranging session will be after the May 13 meeting.

Everyone is welcome! Remember to bring clippers and a few greens from your yard.

\*\* Joan has received a \$350 grant (Thank you Joan!)

**BELLEVUE BOTANICAL GARDEN (GALE):**

\*\* It's spring so there is a lot of activities happening at Bellevue Botanical Gardens. Gale suggested that everyone visit their website for a detailed list of all activities.

**POST OFFICE (GEORGANN):**

\*\* Everything looks good except the cypress is getting a bit large. There will be a workday on April 24 when a group of youth from the Issaquah School District are available (per their teacher - Connor Jones) and interested in having them do community projects and learning about conservation.

\*\* Sign-up was done for watering and maintaining the trough through the summer months:

April: Joan F.

May: Debbie D.

June: Helen S.

July: Lexie D. And Sandra R.

August: Deb M.

September: Maura E.

**BLUE STAR MARKER (DIANNE):**

\*\* \*\* We have received two grants for maintenance of the Blue Star Marker and to use during celebrations for Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Veterans Day. One from Washington Federation of Gardeners for \$1000 and one from Plant America for \$500. Thanks you Dianne!

\*\* Sign-up sheets for several work days and preparation for Memorial Day were passed around. The first work day is April 29 at 10:00AM. The next one in May.

\*\* Dianne and Gale will be going to the Seattle Flower Market to purchase supplies for the upcoming arrangements.

\*\* All celebrations will be at the Issaquah Senior Center with only flags being placed at the cemetery for appropriate holidays.

### **GROWING GREAT GARDENERS (DIANNE):**

- \*\* This program has run its course and is no longer an active program
- \*\* The shed is being used for general storage for the school
- \*\* Diane is working with Stacy Smith to locate tools that have been stored in the shed

### **MEMBERSHIP (MARIE):**

\*\* We have one visitor today - Peggy Watt. She found us on our website (Thank you Debbie D. and her daughter for revamping our website). We look forward to seeing Peggy again at a future meeting.

## **REPORT ABOUT POST OFFICE WORK DAY:**

On Friday, April 24 there was a work party at the Post Office for Spring Clean-up. Georgann, Joan H and Lexie were feeling a little overwhelmed with all the grass and weeds in the garden bed. Then the ACT students and their Para-professionals showed up in their van and came to the rescue. Dianne found some garden tools on 'Buy Nothing' and delivered them to the students with the supplies to clean them up. As a team they got it cleaned up. The Post Office supplies the bags for the disposal of the weeds and we had 2.5 huge bags full from only the front garden bed. The South Garden bed has been offered to the ACT students as an ongoing project for them. We are waiting to hear back on their decision. Pictures will be on the IGC Website.

## **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (GMM):**

**Date:** Monday, May 18, 2026

**Time:** Registration begins at 9:30AM with program starting at 10:00AM

**Cost:** \$10.00

**Location:** St. Andrew's Church - 2650 148th Ave SE, Bellevue 98007

As always there will be two program and lunch. The horticulture program will be a presentation by Emilie Castle on the topic of Herbs. Amanda (formerly a designer with Jon Throne) will be the afternoon speaker.

*If you are planning to attend, you must RSVP to Joyce*  
*at [javodal@hotmail.com](mailto:javodal@hotmail.com)*

**FREE WORKSHOPS AT BELLEVUE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN:**

May 23	Basics of Successful Vegetable Growing	Jim Olson
May 30	Garden Tool Sharpening	John Harmeling
June 6	Water Wise Gardening	Dawn Rubstello
July 11	Growing Garlic	Lory Armitage
July 25	Beavers: Ecosystem Engineers	Joe Mouser
Sept 26	Seed Saving	Colleen Donahue
Oct 3	Soil Nutrition	Karen Adams

All classes are held 10:00 - 11:30AM at Bellevue Demonstration Garden located at 15500 SE 16th Street, Bellevue.

For planning purposes please register at: [BIT.LY/4PFXDZZ](https://bit.ly/4PFXDZZ)

For questions please speak with Georgann L.

**BELLEVUE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN HOSTING ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE:**

Date: Saturday, May 9  
Time: 10:00AM - 2:00PM  
Location: 15500 SE 16th St, Bellevue

There will be a wide selection of 4-inch vegetable starts grown by King County Master Gardeners. The sale will feature a diverse assortment of ornamental plants suitable for garden beds, borders and containers.

There will also be a garden market offering gardening books, tools, pots and other treasures at bargain prices and Master Gardeners will be on site to answer questions and help with gardening challenges. Proceeds from the sale benefit WSU Extension Master Gardener Program.

**OUTING OPPORTUNITY:**

Pine Lake Garden Club is sponsoring a trip to see the Blue Poppy Garden  
Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2026  
Time: 9:00AM - 3:00PM  
Location: Rhododendron Species Garden in Federal Way  
Cost: \$25.00 which covers the cost of the privately hired bus to get you there and back, entrance fee and tour  
RSVP: Nancy Way at [nancyway77@gmail.com](mailto:nancyway77@gmail.com)  
Tell her your club affiliation

## **SAVE THE DATES:**

**May 2** - Pine Lake Garden Club PLANT SALE - 9:00AM to noon at Sammamish Presbyterian Church

**May 9** - Spring Plant Sale hosted by Bellevue Demonstration Garden at 15500 SE 16th Street, Bellevue. Time 10:00AM - 2:00PM.

**May 13** - Garden Therapy at Avamere Nursing Home (immediately after our meeting). *Remember to bring your clippers and greens from your yard.*

**May 15** - Work Day at Bellevue Botanical Garden. Remember to participate you need to have all your paperwork (including your background check) in place.

**May 18** - General Membership Meeting at St. Andrews church, Bellevue

**June 9 - 11** - State Convention at Icicle Village in Leavenworth. Registration must be in before May 6

**August 21 - 23** - Washington State Flower Show "Red White, & Bloom" (celebrating the 250th Birthday of the United States. This will be held at Bellevue Botanical Gardens.

# **13 Best Natural Pesticides For Your Garden**

Every garden is going to have pests; they're just part of the natural ecosystem. Sometimes they're a minor nuisance, but they can also destroy your crops and make you want to give up on gardening. When I started my gardening adventure, pest control was something that took me a while to get right. Ultimately, I found that the best solution isn't to use a powerful chemical pesticide or stick to one occasional approach. Instead, it's better to utilize several natural methods, incorporating them into

your gardening routine to protect your plants without ever needing to take drastic measures.

I've had years of hands-on gardening experience, which includes running my own gardening company. In this time, I've found the best way to control pests is to work with nature rather than trying to fight it. By using natural pesticides, you're protecting beneficial insects, keeping your soil healthy, and potentially saving money. Below is a roundup of 13 natural pesticides that have proven to be effective, but the right ones for you will depend on the specific issues you're facing. Whether you're dealing with aphids, slugs, or caterpillars, you'll find a solution here.

## **Natural Soap And Water**

In my experience, the best starting point for a natural pesticide is to use soap and water. While you can buy insecticidal soaps, you can also make your own at home. Thankfully, you only need to use mild liquid dish soap, so you can avoid any harsh detergents. The only potential issue here is that not all soaps are natural, so this is something you'll want to double check when choosing one. It works as a natural pesticide that's most effective against soft-bodied insects, such as aphids and whiteflies. The soap breaks down their protective outer layer, meaning they quickly dry out, dehydrate, and die.

This approach is neither powerful enough nor suitable for large-scale infestations. However, it's ideal if you want to keep on top of early infestations and prevent small problems from becoming bigger issues. Simply add a few drops of eco-friendly dish soap to a spray bottle filled with water, shake it, and apply directly to the leaves. Just remember to check the underside of the leaves, too, as that's where many pests hide. While it's hard to make a mistake with this solution, it's easy to overdo it. You only need to use a very small amount of soap, and you can always add a few extra drops if you feel your spray is too weak.

## Neem Oil

Neem oil is a versatile natural pesticide that every gardener should have on hand. The oil is extracted from the seeds of the neem tree, and it works brilliantly against soft-bodied pests. Besides aphids and whiteflies, [it's also effective against smaller caterpillar larvae](#). Neem oil also works as a mild fungicide against the likes of powdery mildew, and can even be [used to eliminate ants that are straying into your kitchen](#). You can buy ready-to-use neem oil sprays or create your own from concentrate.

Once an insect eats a part of a leaf covered in neem oil, its feeding cycle is disrupted. Neem oil doesn't kill pests on contact, but it still functions as an effective defense

mechanism. However, it's important to know that neem oil can also be consumed by beneficial insects if you're not careful. Therefore, it's best to apply it at the beginning or end of the day when pests are most active, but ladybugs and bees aren't. Neem oil isn't a one-and-done fix, but when used regularly, it can be a reliable remedy for pests.

## **Garlic Spray**

When it comes to natural, homemade pesticides, garlic spray is a brilliant option. Many pests rely on scent to find plants to eat, and garlic's notoriously pungent smell helps disrupt this. While garlic spray isn't a pest killer, it can help prevent infestations. The intense odor will confuse a wide range of insects, which are more likely to move on to an easier target -- hopefully a plant you care less about.

There are a few ways you can make garlic spray, but it's best to use fresh garlic because the smell is much stronger than that of garlic powder, granules, or oil. That said, I've found that powder can still be somewhat effective. Just crush a few cloves of garlic and let them steep in water. You can do this directly in your spray bottle, but you risk getting bits of garlic stuck in the straw -- it's best to use a separate container and then strain the solution into the spray bottle. You can also add a drop of liquid soap, not only for the reasons mentioned earlier, but

because it makes the solution stickier when applied to leaves.

## Chili Pepper Spray

Chili pepper spray is another effective natural pesticide that you can make from household ingredients. [Peppers are one of the most rewarding crops to grow](#), and you can use the excess to make one of these sprays. This spray works against pests for the same reason that some humans can't handle eating hot chilies: capsaicin. This is the compound that gives chili peppers their heat, so when pests consume it, they can be deterred from any further feeding.

A great feature of this solution is that it works on some mammals too, such as rabbits and squirrels. It doesn't harm larger animals in the long term, but it gives them enough of a reason not to revisit the sprayed plants again.

Unlike garlic, chili powder is just as effective as using fresh peppers, as it still contains that capsaicin kick. Again, steep the chilies in water before transferring the solution into a spray bottle, adding a drop of soap if you wish. I've found that you can even use a solution of both chilies and garlic, as they're effective against pests for different reasons and don't conflict with one another. You

get the best of both worlds in a completely natural solution.

## **Diatomaceous Earth**

Diatomaceous earth is an intriguing pest control solution because of how it works. It's made up of fossilized microscopic organisms, and it's effective against pests due to its physical properties rather than its chemical composition. For humans, diatomaceous earth is soft to the touch. However, for insects at a microscopic level, it's a different story. What feels like a powder to us is incredibly abrasive to tiny pests such as aphids, ants, slugs, beetles, and fleas, and it will scratch their exoskeletons. When this happens, the insect will begin to lose moisture and gradually dehydrate. Rather than relying on a chemical reaction, it's purely mechanical.

To use diatomaceous earth, lightly dust any areas that require treatment -- thin soil coverage typically works best. While it can be used on leaves, I tend to avoid this approach. There are better solutions for leaf application, and diatomaceous earth can also harm beneficial insects. It's more suitable for targeting crawling pests and [improving your overall garden health](#). You should be aware that when diatomaceous earth gets wet, the particles clump together, reducing its effectiveness. You'll

need to reapply it as and when needed, usually waiting until your garden is dry.

## **Bacillus Thuringiensis (Bt)**

While diatomaceous earth works mechanically, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) is a biological countermeasure against pests. While other methods listed can tackle a range of different pests, this solution is specific to caterpillars. Bt is a naturally occurring bacterium, and when it's ingested by caterpillars, it releases toxins inside their bodies that stop them from feeding. This is quickly followed by death. Due to its extreme effectiveness, you may want to save using Bt until other attempts to control your caterpillar population have failed.

You can generally buy Bt as a ready-to-use spray or a concentrated solution. Either way, it needs to be sprayed onto your plants, covering all parts of the leaf. It will gradually break down in sun and rain, so you'll need to reapply it regularly until you've got a handle on the issue. The best part about using Bt is that it only affects caterpillars, so you don't need to worry about its interaction with humans, pets, or beneficial insects.

## **Nematodes**

Of all the methods for dealing with pests, this is the one that sounds the most brutal. Nematodes are microscopic worms that work under the soil surface to attack larvae of pests that damage roots, as well as slugs and vine weevils. They

## **BONUS RECIPE (THANKS TO LEXIE):**

### “Lemon Brownies”

#### Lemonies

Lemonies

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (1 stick) butter, softened

2 large eggs

2- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons lemon zest

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees

2. Spray an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with cooking spray and set aside

3. Zest and juice two small lemons; set aside

4. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat

the flour, sugar, salt, and butter until combined

5. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, lemon zest, and lemon juice until combined

6. Pour into flour mixture and beat at medium speed until smooth and

creamy, about 2 minutes.

7. Pour into baking dish and bake 25 minutes, or until just starting to turn

golden around the edges and a toothpick inserted into the center of the

lemonies comes out clean

8. Allow to cool completely before glazing

## Lemon Glaze

½ cup powdered sugar

1 tablespoon lemon juice

2 teaspoons lemon zest

1. Make the glaze by whisking together all three ingredients.

2. Spread over the totally cooled Lemonies with a spatula

3. Cut into bars and serve

Cooks notes:

- You can also cut into different shapes with cookie cutters before

frosting

- Make sure you do not get any of the white bitter part of skin mixed in

with the zest

Recipe Source: Pinterest-- Rita's recipes