

## 10 Minutes For The Planet

### Love your garden without using pesticides ©

by Sarah Heath and Catherine Balter-Kendall

Stressed syllables are underlined and in **bold**.\*

#### A Happy Garden

Hello! I'm Sarah Heath and you're listening to 10 Minutes for the Planet on EnglishWaves.

As spring evolves into summer, **green-fingered** members of the **community** are hard at work in gardens across the country as Mother Nature **bestows** rain and sunshine in equal measure to a point where plants – and **weeds** – seem to grow in front of your eyes. The **pleasure** of the **appearance** of new life is equalled by that of **toiling** in the fresh air with the **knowledge** that nature's gifts will soon be your reward, whether a beautifully flowering plant or freshly grown **vegetables**.

For the **environmentally aware**, there are lots of ways to **tend to** the garden which can achieve a glorious result with the added benefit of being kind to **nature**. The stresses of **pollution** and use of **chemicals** can be somewhat **counterbalanced** by a number of **eco-friendly** gardening methods and creative recycling.

Monsanto's **infamous** weedkiller, RoundUp, has **made headline news** for a number of years and many gardeners have since **taken heed of** the **message** that its active **ingredient**, glyphosate, can **cause harm to** flora and fauna which are not **deliberately targeted** but **fall victim** nevertheless. More **natural** alternatives are cheaper and largely made from items found at home.

But **prevention is better than cure**, so taking **measures** to stop the **dreaded** weeds growing in the first place can save time later on. Spreading mulch on **flower beds** can help **prevent** weeds **from** growing by blocking their **source** of light. Mulch is usually made from **shredded** leaves, **wood chippings**, old **newspaper**, **compost** or even **grass clippings** as it decomposes – a **win-win**!



**green-fingered** (adj.) good at growing plants  
**to bestow** (vb.) to give  
**weed** (n.) a wild plant growing where it is not wanted  
**to toil** (vb.) to work  
**environmentally aware** (exp.) understanding and caring about ecological issues  
**to tend to** (phrasal vb.) to look after  
**counterbalanced** (adj.) compensated for  
**eco-friendly** (adj.) ecological  
**to make headline news** (exp.) to be a top story in the news  
**to take heed of** (exp.) to listen and pay attention to  
**to cause harm to** (exp.) to damage  
**to target** (vb.) to have as an objective  
**to fall victim to** (exp.) to die  
**prevention is better than cure** (exp.) it's better to prevent the problem in the first place  
**dreaded** (adj.) regarded with fear or apprehension  
**to prevent sth. from doing sth.** (exp.) to stop sby. from doing sth.  
**shredded** (adj.) cut into rough pieces  
**wood chippings** (n.) very small pieces of wood  
**compost** (n.) decayed organic material used to fertilize plants.  
**grass clippings** (n.) grass that has been cut  
**soil** (n.) layer of earth in which plants grow  
**win-win** (n.) a situation in which both sides gain sth.

Adding **edging** to **borders** with natural **materials** such as wood can prevent weeds from spreading to **unwanted** areas and planting **ground cover** which will take up space will also push unwanted plants out. **Mowing the lawn** earlier on in the spring can prevent the **onslaught** of weeds although keeping the grass a little bit on the long side will **ensure** weeds will **struggle to get through**. Some people employ the use of nature's four-footed **lawnmower** and keep **goats**!

But if weeds do, inevitably **poke** their heads **through**, vinegar is an efficient natural **weedkiller** as it contains acetic acid. A **horticultural** version has a higher 20% acetic acid content and is even more potent. Boiling water also **does the trick**. But don't be too severe on all weeds – many of them are **edible**! Dandelion leaves are great in a salad; Chickweed is full of **vitamins** and **minerals** and Red Clover flowers can be eaten as they are or used to make tea.

Growing your own food is a big **tick in the box** for the **environment** but for fruit and **vegetable gardeners**, **bugs** can be enemy number one! However, there are ways to remove pests from your **veggie patch** without the need for **noxious** substances. The Treehugger website suggests a home-made soap spray **insecticide** which is very effective at killing mites and aphids without being any danger to humans. Add **raw** garlic or chilli to the mix and it **repels** bugs from the **outset**.

A method called **companion planting** is a **tried-and-tested** way to repel pests and can also be mutually **beneficial**. French marigolds are known to **give off** a strong odour which is disliked by greenfly and blackfly thus **discouraging** them from invading tomato plants. Carrots and leeks make an efficient team: leeks **ward off** carrot fly and carrots, leek moth. And planting horseradish near potatoes will increase **disease** resistance.

Native wildflowers in areas of the garden will provide bees and butterflies with a source of pollen. Bees in particular love lavender and thyme.

For garden **features**, **sustainability** can be achieved either through the use of recycled materials like old bricks or clay pipes and avoiding the use of cement, whose **production accounts for** 5% of global carbon **emissions**. **Hedges** make homes for birds and insects where walls cannot and berry-producing plants such as hawthorn will **encourage** wildlife into the garden.

**edging** (n.) sth. forming an edge  
**borders** (n.) forming an edge along sth.

**unwanted** (adj.) undesired  
**ground cover** (n.) plants growing to protect from erosion and inhibit weeds

**to mow the lawn** (exp.) to cut an area of grassland

**onslaught** (n.) destructive attack  
**to ensure** (vb.) to make sure that  
**to struggle** (vb.) to make a great effort

**to get through** (phrasal vb.) to penetrate

**lawnmower** (n.) a machine that cuts the grass

**goat** (n.) an animal similar to a sheep that often lives in mountainous regions

**to poke through** (phrasal vb.) to penetrate and appear

**weedkiller** (n.) a product that kills weeds

**to do the trick** (exp.) to work, to be successful in doing sth.

**edible** (adj.) can be eaten

**to tick the box** (exp.) a positive thing sth. which contributes to the success

**bug** (n.) an insect

**veggie patch** (n.) an area where vegetables are grown

**raw** (adj.) not cooked

**outset** (n.) the beginning

**companion planting** (exp.) planting two types of plants together, which are mutually compatible, benefitting from each other's qualities

**tried-and-tested** (adj.) a method which has been proven to be effective

**to give off** (phrasal vb.) to emit

**to ward off** (phrasal vb.) to keep away or at a distance

To create a more economical use of water, buying a **rainwater butt** is a wise **investment** and one which can be connected to a watering system which will also save time. Making compost from green waste is another time and money **economy**. Compost can be made from leaves, grass cuttings, old newspapers and egg boxes, tea bags and vegetable peelings and even the contents of your Hoover bag!

**As the saying goes**, however, one man's weed is another man's flower, so being more **open-minded** over those **determined** weeds **poping up** in unwanted places, is a show of Nature's **strength** and therefore maybe to be more appreciated. For example, the Japanese love moss which is used for **landscaping** their gardens **whereas** in America, it is **wiped out** as an unwanted intruder.

Tune in next week for more stories on the environment, here on English Waves.

**to account for** (phrasal vb.) to make up, to represent

**hedge** (n.) bushes growing closely to form a boundary

**rainwater butt** (n.) large container for catching rainwater

**as the saying goes** (exp.) according to the proverb

**open-minded** (adj.) having a receptive attitude

**to pop up** (phrasal vb.) to appear

**landscaping** (n.) designing

**to wipe out** (phrasal vb.) to get rid of, to eradicate

**\*Tip!**

Tricky words to pronounce:

**knowledge, message, encourage** (the final syllable is pronounced "idge" like in the word "bridge")

**nature, horticultural, feature** (the "tur(e) is pronounced "tch" as in "Tchad) "pleasure" and "measure" rhyme, with a short "e" as in "plenty" or "met")

The following words have silent letters:

**(k)nowledge, veg(e)tables, gard(e)ners c(h)emicals, delib(e)rately, so(u)rce,**

In the word "**strength**" the "g" is pronounced like a "k" (strenkth)