

Gardeners vs. the Apocalypse: 10 Ways Your Garden Can Fend Off the End of the World

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1. Use Less Fossil Fuels

Replace fossil fuel powered equipment

Decrease deliveries of materials, upcycle materials (concrete, bricks, wood, compostables, etc.) on-site

[National Emissions from Lawn and Garden Equipment](#)

[Gas Powered Garden Equipment and the Environment](#)

[Lawn Care Is Going Electric](#)

[Your Yard Is a Stealthy Fossil Fuel Guzzler](#)

[Noisy Polluting Leaf Blowers Are Finally Going Electric](#)

[Lawn Maintenance and Climate Change](#)

[Sustainable Gardening with Urbanite](#)

[The Merits of Using Salvaged and Upcycled Materials in Your Landscape Projects](#)

2. Use Less Fertilizer

Manufacture of synthetic fertilizer is very energy intensive

Nitrous oxide is the most potent greenhouse gas

Nitrogen and phosphorus runoff pollutes waterways

With healthy soil, most plants don't need fertilizer

Save your ORGANIC fertilizer for your pots and vegetable garden

If you must fertilize your lawn, apply at ½ recommended rate

[The World's Forgotten Greenhouse Gas](#)

[Fertilizer Cause More Than 2% of Global Emissions](#)

[Sowing the Seeds for Healthy Waterways](#)

[Fertilize Less: Many Plants Can Do Without](#)

[Garden Fertilizer Basics](#)

3. Build Healthy Soil

Healthy soils store an enormous amount of carbon

Development destroys soil

Compost restores soil biota, improves aeration, water holding capacity, drainage

Forking is less destructive than tilling or digging

Mulching is a low impact way to improve soil

Free mulch from Chip Drop

Peat alternatives; compost, Coco Coir, Peatmoss, potting mix recipes

[Gardening, Healthy Soil, and Carbon Sequestration](#)

[Improve Soil Health for a Climate-Resilient Garden](#)

[Prevent Soil Damage During Construction Projects](#)

[Assessing and Addressing Soil Compaction in Your Yard](#)

[Let It Rot: The Gardener's Guide to Composting](#)

[Worms Eat My Garbage](#)

[Transitioning to a No-till Garden](#)

[Chip Drop](#)

[Serious About Climate Change? Get Serious About Peat](#)

[Harvesting Peat Contributes to Climate Change](#)

[Coconut Coir vs. Peat Moss](#)

[Pittmoss](#)

[Make Your Own Peat Free Potting Soil](#)

[No-Peat Potting Soil Options](#)

4. Use Water Wisely

Climate forecasts predict wetter winters, drier summers, smaller snowpacks

Water use nearly doubles in summer due to landscape and garden use

Salmon are a keystone of the Pacific NW food chain, and they need cool, clean water

Chimichanga gardening; dividing your garden into hydration zones

Use drought tolerant natives, plants from other Mediterranean climates, plant in fall

Stormwater management begins at home

Rain Garden Handbook, 12,000 Rain Gardens

[EPA Water-Sense Website](#)

[Climate Change Could Make WA Stream Too Hot for Fish](#)

[Help Save Salmon from the Dangers of Stormwater](#)

[Save Water With Hydrozone Gardening](#)

[Drought Tolerant Landscaping for Washington State](#)

[Incorporating Pacific NW Native Plants Into Your Drought Tolerate Landscapes](#)

[Great Plant Picks Drought Tolerant Plants](#)

[Xera Plants](#)

<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/SPU/EnvironmentConservation/Landscaping/SmartWatering.pdf>Smart Watering Guide

[A Gardener' Guide to Protecting Water Quality](#)

[Stormwater Runoff Pollution and How to Reduce It](#)

[Puget Sound Starts Here](#)

[Rain Garden Handbook](#)

[12,000 Rain Gardens](#)

5. Have Less Lawn

Lawns consume a lot of resources

We put lawns in some pretty crazy places

The "perfect lawn" is a futile, endless, uphill battle

[Lawn Maintenance and Climate Change](#)

[Leaf Blowers, Lawn Mowers, and Fertilizers; How Lawns Contribute to Climate Change](#)

[Your Perfect Lawn is Bad for the Environment; Here's What to Do Instead](#)
[They Fought the Lawn and the Lawn's Done](#)

6. Plant More Plants

Trees are perfect carbon storage machines; reduce heat island effect; help manage stormwater

Health benefits of trees

Trees for Neighborhoods

Tree protection; summer watering, stop topping, be careful with string trimmers and mowers; tree rings

Hire only ISA certified arborists, Seattle's new tree regulations, Plant Amnesty

"Contractor's Blight", protecting trees during construction, trenchless tunneling

Trees create habitat for humans and wildlife

[Is Planting Trees the Best Solution for Climate Change?](#)

[Pining for Forest: The Health and Climate Benefits of Trees](#)

[6 Ways Trees Benefit All of Us](#)

[Forest Bathing: A Retreat to Nature Can Boost Immunity and Mood](#)

[Trees for Neighborhoods](#)

[Seattle's Canopy Cover](#)

[International Society of Arborists](#)

[Plant Amnesty](#)

[Tree Protection on Construction and Development Sites](#)

[Protecting Trees During Construction](#)

[Understanding Seattle Tree Codes Webinar](#)

7. Build Habitat

Insect populations are collapsing; The Windshield Phenomenon

Insects perform many functions essential for life

Just say no to insecticides; Plants are *supposed* to be eaten

Switch to insect-friendly security lighting

Lights out during migration

Lawns are wildlife deserts

No Mow May

Making your garden wildlife friendly: planting in layers, native plants support native wildlife

Remove bioinvasive exotic ornamentals, Noxious Weed Control Board

Wildlife Needs Wild Spaces; leave the leaves, leave plants standing in winter, chop and drop, brush piles, snags

Just add water; ponds, bird baths, pollinator puddles

Keep kitty inside, Catios

[The Collapse of Insects](#)

[Partners for Pollinators Living Landscape Series](#) (scroll down for recorded seminars and links)

[The Most Fascinating Birds will Be the First to Go Extinct](#)

[Five Ways to Increase Nesting Habitat for Bees](#)

[No Mow May](#)

[Falling a Little Bit in Love with the Dark](#)
[Landscaping for Wildlife in Layers](#)
[Why Native Plants Matter](#)
[For Wildlife and Humans, Native Plants are a Key to Climate Resistance](#)
[Pre-Settlement Forests Around Puget Sound; Eyewitness Evidence](#)
[Invasive Plants are Still Being Sold](#)
[Noxious Weed Board](#)
[Gardenwise](#)
[Leave the Leaves](#)
[Seasonal Tip: Leave Plants Standing](#)
[How to Chop and Drop More Effectively](#)
[Keeping Dead Wood and Creating Habitat Piles](#)
[How to Provide Water for Wildlife](#)
[The Impact of Free-Ranging Domestic Cats on Wildlife in the United States](#)
[The Killer at Home; House Cats Have More Impact on local Wildlife Than Wild Predators](#)
[Seattle Catio Tour](#)
[Russell Link, Landscaping for Wildlife](#)
[Doug Tallamy Hub](#)

8. Grow Food

Climate Victory Gardens
Homegrown food needs no shipping or refrigeration
Winter is for vegetables!
Purple sprouting broccoli
Self-sown food: Kale, arugula, mustard, parsley, etc.
No-till fruit and veggies: Asparagus, berries, rhubarb, etc.
Edible hedges: Evergreen huckleberry, blueberries, espaliers
[Growing Vegetables West of the Cascades](#)
[Territorial Seed Company](#)
[Maritime NW Garden Guide](#)
[Binda Colebrook, Winter Gardening in the Maritime NW](#)
[William Head, Gardening Under Cover](#)
[20 Perennial Vegetables to Plant Once for Years of Food](#)
[Robert Kourik, Designing and Maintaining Your Edible Landscape](#)
[How to Garden Through Climate Change](#) (excellent interview about growing food in a changing climate)

9. Use Less Plastic

Microplastic and Nanoplastic
Welcome to the “Green Industry”
Recycling nursery pots; Some nurseries take them, as do some big box stores; accepted curbside in some localities

Plastic pots alternatives

Plastic tag alternatives

Bioplastic weed barriers

[Impact of Microplastics and Nanoplastics on Human Health](#)

[Why Horticulture Has a Plastics Conundrum](#)

[How Plastics Contribute to Climate Change](#)

[Alternatives to Petroleum Based Containers for the Nursery Industry](#)

[Tierra Garden Bamboo Pots](#)

[Coir Pots](#)

[Cow Pots](#)

[POSIpots](#)

10. Changing Our Attitudes

Changing attitudes burns more calories than shoveling

Almost all of these ideas involve *less* effort rather than more

Getting beyond pretty

You don't have to sacrifice beauty to have a more climate friendly garden

More info and webinars on Climate Change and Gardening

[Adapting Your Garden for Climate Change, Wes Miller, OSU](#)

[Climate Reality Project](#)

[How to Reduce your Carbon Footprint in the Garden](#)

[Gardening for Climate Change](#)

[Arbor Day Climate Change Site](#)

[Cornell's Climate Change Demonstration Garden](#)

[Cornell's Gardening in a Warming World](#) (Check out the Course Book, lots of links in resource chapter!)

[SPU's Sustainable Landscaping Seminars](#)

[The Climate Friendly Gardener](#), Union of Concerned Scientists (lots of good resources in "Endnotes")

[MOBOT's Sustainable Gardening site](#)

[Climate Friendly Gardening Tip Sheet from WSU](#)

[You Can Help the Planet. Start in Your Own Backyard](#)