



Nature Speaks: The Lusty Month of May

Article and photo by Jennifer Rotermund

***"It's May, it's May, the lusty month of May!" -
Guinevere, from "Camelot"***

This month begins with the swift passing of Beltane, the Gaelic celebration of May Day, on the first of the month, thrusting us toward the ever-approaching climax of the Summer Solstice in June. Like an orchestral movement building to a crescendo, the fullness of May is upon us. Increasing soil fertility, warmer weather, and the occasional lingering rain shower collide in harmonious perfection to match blossom with pollinator in the dance of life.

In the northwest, thanks in part to the Seattle Tilth (www.seattletilth.org), May is "official" start of the food-growing season for the bulk of the population who choose to partake in this divine ritual. After all, what's more hedonistic than having fresh food waiting for you to harvest it just steps from your front or back door? My partner and I recently had friends over to dine with us, and after they arrived, we invited them to join us in harvesting the dinner salad together from the front yard. We then enjoyed a fresh mix of four different leaf lettuces, kale, spinach, chard, arugula, parsley, mint, lemon balm and kale flowers, picked only moments before with loving gratitude to Mother Earth for the incredible miracle of being able to grow such ample nourishment for us. Mixed with a little olive oil, a splash of lemon juice, a sprinkle of coarse sea salt, and enjoyed with great company, what more is there to want out of life?

And, we Shoreliners have it so good here. Not only is the Seattle Tilth available, at our finger tips, but we have our very own Diggin' Shoreline (www.digginshoreline.org) as a beautiful resource for food-growing inspiration. Then, if that wasn't enough already, it gets even better. Unsure of what to grow in your gorgeous soil? Our locally produced, Maritime Northwest Garden Guide (<http://seattletilth.org/get-involved/gardenstore>) has vegetable, herb and flower plant lists, organized like a month-by-month calendar, informing you of the best time to start each plant to insure success.

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