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AT HOME ON EARTH

MARTHA'S VINEYARD



Every other week, Bluedot Living Martha's Vineyard will share stories about local changemakers, Islanders' sustainable homes and yards, planet-healthy recipes and tips, along with advice from Dear Dot. Did your friend send you this? [Sign up for yourself here](#). Not interested? No problem — [click here](#) to be removed from Bluedot Living emails.

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SIMPLE / SMART / SUSTAINABLE / STORIES



“Often, the very plants you may need have a way of showing up around you,” Rebecca Gilbert of Native Earth Teaching Farm, writes in her new book, *Weedy Wisdom for the Curious Forager: Common Plants to Nourish Your Body + Soul*. “Turn to your elders, the weeds, when you need help and healing.” See the [rest of Catherine Walthers’ story \(plus recipes!\) here](#).

DISCOVER

The.Hub.

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and good news from all over.

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Sign up today and we'll donate 50 cents to the Great Pond Foundation and enter your name to win a \$200 Atria dinner.

Quick Links

Skip scrolling! Here's what you'll find in this edition of the Bluedot Newsletter:

- [Save our shorebirds: Mass Audubon’s Coastal Waterbird Program tells us how](#)
- [Farewell flip-flop season: Find sustainable sneakers and more in the Bluedot Marketplace](#)
- [From the Bluedot Hub: Do trees really fight pollution? Dot digs in.](#)
- [Forager Rebecca Gilbert shares her recipe for Mediterranean Stuffed Grape Leaves](#)

This issue of the Bluedot newsletter is sponsored by [Island Grown Initiative](#).



Don't wait for the IRA, take advantage of energy incentives now

We celebrated the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) for its aim to cut climate pollution by 40

percent, mostly by pushing industry and consumers toward clean energy. The lion's share of the \$370 billion will go toward rebates and incentives but also includes conservation initiatives, coastal restoration, cleanup, and *loads* more.

But now that the initial thrill is wearing off, we're all standing around amidst the confetti and flat champagne thinking, 'okay, this is all great and everything but what, exactly, does it mean for me right now?'

And the answer is: we're still waiting to see. Or, as Briana Kane, residential

program manager for Cape Light Compact puts it, “when the benefits are going to become available is unclear.”

But, Kane is quick to say, **that doesn't mean that we should just wait.** Kane is nothing if not a persuasive salesperson and she is selling the heck out of the **Cape Light Compact programs already in place** — “very robust energy efficiency programs with really generous incentives for customers to pursue home energy assessments as well as HVAC equipment,” she says. The time is now, she insists, to swap out your propane, oil, or electric baseboard systems for heat pumps. (And just to clarify, heat pumps also cool. It's a mystery why it's taking us so long to widely adopt this climate-friendly technology.)

The Commonwealth as a whole, says Kane, has been at the head of the pack in terms of incentivizing energy efficiency and climate measures. So yay for the IRA but let's get this clean energy revolution started!

–Leslie Garrett and Jamie Kageleiry

CLIMATE QUICK TIP

Want a greener lawn? Consider taking your mower, blowers, and other yard equipment electric. Electric equipment cuts down on noise and pollution. Mollie Doyle explains how in **Room for Change: The Lawn.**



The Nest Best Thing: Protecting Nesting Shorebirds

An entire summer's worth of hard work can be destroyed in a matter of seconds. "Next time you walk out onto a beach, if you are mindful of who you're sharing it with, you can be the difference in an international conservation effort!" Mass Audubon's Madalyn Taylor writes in a field note from our sandy shores. "Please respect habitat that has been fenced, give shorebirds plenty of room to avoid flushing parents off of incubated nests, and if you are accompanied by a furry friend, keep them on a leash and walk down by the water's edge."

[READ MORE HERE.](#)

BUY LESS/BUY BETTER



Step into sustainable sneaker season

Farewell flip-flops, it's sustainable sneaker season. We love [these eco kicks from Cariuma](#). From the cork insoles to organic and recycled materials to the two trees planted for each purchase, this Brazilian company walks its talk (see what we did there?). They're on Bluedot's [Buy Better marketplace](#), where we showcase items that meet our threshold for ethical, sustainable, and awesome!

LEARN MORE



Dear Dot: Do Trees Reduce Pollution?

Dear Dot,
The other day we were talking about how much oxygen a tree can produce

from CO2 and we got to wondering — do trees remove particulate matter from the air too?

–Will, Seattle

Dear Will,

Trees sprout, they tower, they sway, they fall. They are “carbon sinks” and they are “the lungs of the planet.” They are, in short (and in tall, ha!), remarkable. The **Arbor Day Foundation** reports that, in one year, a mature tree will absorb more than 48 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and release oxygen in exchange. But trees don’t just stop at giving us oxygen!

Read the rest of Dot’s response.

Got a question for Dot? Ask her at deardot@bluedotliving.com.

RIGHT AT HOME



TECH

Cruising Climate Week

“Kristi Strahler said that the **Climate Week convoy** had two mandates: draw attention to the fossil-fuel climate crisis and underscore electric cars as a solution. The other reason was to have fun.” Bluedot’s Cruising columnist Geoff Currier shares the EV tech from MV Climate Week.

FOOD

Stuffed Grape Leaves

Rice, chopped herbs, and your choice of additions like onion, ground lamb, or venison make up these **classic Mediterranean appetizers**. The grape leaves can likely be sourced from your own backyard. Use the stems as “handles” to blanch them and top with Mermaid Farm yogurt sauce.





Quiz: How Many Heat Pumps?

A goal of The Vineyard Way Climate Action Plan is to reduce the Island's fossil fuel use from the 2018 baseline 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2040. One path toward this goal is to ensure what percentage of Island homes will have air source heat pumps by 2023?

50%

55%

75%



[Read more about The Vineyard Way Climate Action Plan here.](#)

HANDBOOK

Leftover food from a summer of entertaining? Food waste is a big problem. IGI tells us that, each year, more than 6,500 pounds of food waste is shipped off-Island as garbage. Wasteful and *expensive*! Find out where to take non-perishables and help

feed your neighbors by consulting our [Ultimate Simple, Smart, Sustainable Handbook to Martha's Vineyard](#).



As summer fades, we want to thank our summer intern Cleo Carney (don't worry, you'll be seeing more of her on our new Hub site in Cleo's Clean Cooking videos, and she remains a student advisor for our Bluedot Institute). Her parting gift to us is [this short video with filmmaker Ollie Becker](#) on one of the Island's Great Ponds. Enjoy — and subscribe to our YouTube channel while you're there.

The Nature Conservancy

TOGETHER WE'RE TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Over the past 35 years, The Nature Conservancy has helped protect more than 1,500 acres on Martha's Vineyard. We're restoring unique habitats like rare sandplain grasslands for the survival of animals and plants.

[NATURE.ORG/MARTHASVINEYARD](https://www.nature.org/marthasvineyard)

How energy efficient is your home?

FIND OUT >>

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