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Quoth the Raven

Another month, and a buggy one at that. Enough to try the patience of an organic gardener. Something is eating my beet tops, my dad's favorite spinach. But it doesn't eat much, so I wash the greens and cook them and forget about the ragged holes chewed in them. The culprit is small and yellow, spotted. I have forgotten its name.

For reasons I do not know, I have been remarkably free of slugs this year. (Knock on wood) We've been using a bait against them that seems benign in the rest of the environment, an iron phosphate that they go nuts for, but I am disturbed that the bait is 99% "inert ingredients," i.e., they don't tell you what it is. Slugs are usually legion here. I imagine they are lying in wait.

Environmental magazines keep piling up around me. Even in retirement I haven't time to read them all. "Blue Planet" is a quarterly put out by the Ocean Conservancy. Like so many of these mags, it has good articles and lots of information, much of it not happy. For example, Wakulla Springs, our once-beautiful neighbor in northern Florida, has been attacked by hydrilla, an invader from Africa brought in to adorn fish tanks. Escaped, it becomes a ferocious enemy of native aquatic plants. It smothers the water surface and shades out the bottom growers. It is another water hyacinth, perhaps. We're all familiar with the invaders introduced by our highway departments: Japanese honeysuckle, for one, and kudzu for another. Today the scotch thistle is pushing on our native yellow and purple thistles. And highway departments are bringing in crown vetch. I have not yet learned to fear the vetch, but some people do.

The Nature Conservancy puts out a good magazine. My copy is just in, but mislaid. A new to me "practical" journal called The Green Guide arrived here. Like many other sources it warns of carpet and plastic effluvia, pesticides on everything, estrogen mimics in our food, etc., etc. Environmental Defense has lots of usable advice, and so does the Union of Concerned Scientists.

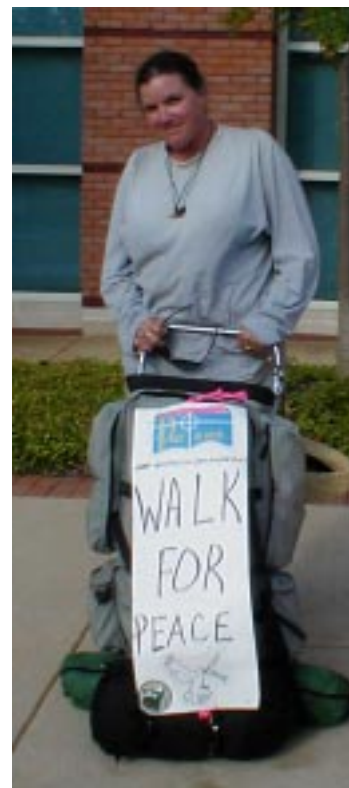
I was horrified to read in a recent American Scientist, I think it was, that the frogs of Yosemite have been decimated and crippled by what appears to be drift of pesticides from the farming areas of California. Multiple legs, heads, hopeless deformities.

May is the month of Rachel Carson's birthday. In 1961 she was already saying: "We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost's familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork...offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of our earth...A truly extraordinary variety of alternatives to the chemical control of insects is available..."

May we listen before it is utterly too late.

— Chip Busch

Kim Leverton walks for peace. Kim arrived in Auburn late Thursday. On Saturday she walked to Opelika for a total of 437.72 miles from her home. Then on Sunday she got a chance to hang out with the PLDC to fill up on drum energy and food. Late Sunday Kim boarded the bus to go tend to her mother's health, which has declined since Kim began her walk. Kim plans to continue her walk from Opelika to D.C. soon.



www.geocities.com/peacewalkerkim/

