

simple pleasure

Backyard Bliss

I live in an enchanted neighborhood on the fringe of Arcadia in Phoenix, Arizona, where guinea hens, peacocks, roosters, hens, and baby chicks abound in the spring. On any given day there may be up to 24 little ones roaming my yard as if it's the vast countryside. A backyard fence of oleanders, which serves as a nesting ground for the hens to lay their eggs, becomes magical by night as pink and white blooms twinkle in the moonlight.

I have a small potted hibiscus on my front porch that hasn't bloomed since last year. The other day I caught a flash of orange as I was getting out of my car, and being in a hurry, almost dismissed it. Curiosity took over and I paused to investigate. What I saw took my breath away: the most vibrant tangerine petals housing a deep maroon center like a beating heart, outlined in carnation pink, crowned by a sunlit yellow stamen and fairy-dusted tips of red. Time stood still. In a single bloom I saw deeply into the universe and all was right with the world.

I didn't know it at the time, but the hibiscus blooms for only one day. What an exquisite reminder of life's impermanence and preciousness.

Take time to enjoy what really matters to you, spending time with the people you love and noticing the grace and wonder of what is right in front of you. You never know what you might find in your own backyard!

—Mary Bruce

Forget not that the earth delights in your bare feet and the winds want to play with your hair.

—Kahlil Gibran



living green

Greener's Cleaner!

ONE OF THE MOST TOXIC THINGS in your home might be lurking right under the sink...in the guise of a household cleaner. Besides contributing to indoor air pollution, conventional cleaning products can be a big chore for Mother Earth—petroleum-based ingredients rely on a nonrenewable resource and are not easily biodegradable; phosphates found in most detergents encourage growth of algae in our waterways; and chlorine bleach can be damaging to the ozone layer. Instead, opt for natural cleaning products with plant-based ingredients, such as these *Yoga+* favorites below:

- Manufactured in a grass-roofed eco plant, **Ecover** All Purpose Cleaner will leave your countertops and floors squeaky clean (and lemon-scented, too!). www.ecover.com
- **Biokleen** Citrus Laundry Liquid contains grapefruit seed and orange peel extracts, and comes in a concentrated formula, which means less packaging and less waste. www.biokleen-home.com
- Surprisingly affordable, **Sun & Earth** Ultra Dishwashing Liquid is tough on grease but easy on the environment. www.sunandearth.com
- **Mrs. Meyer's** Geranium Toilet Bowl Cleaner will leave your john sparkling with a sweet, chlorine-free scent. www.mrsmeyers.com
- And for that nasty drain buildup, pour some **Earth Friendly** Earth Enzymes down the sink. www.ecos.com

TIP: For minimal environmental impact, create your own cleaning products. Check out *The Naturally Clean Home* by Karyn Siegel-Maier for 100 easy herbal recipes. >>

—Natalya Podgorny