

View this email in your browser



SIMPLE / SMART / SUSTAINABLE / STORIES

If your friend sent you this, you can [sign up for yourself here](#) to receive the Bluedot Living Brooklyn newsletter every other Sunday.



The shadow of the April 8 total solar eclipse passes over the United States. Video: NASA Earth Observatory

That eclipse was really something. I sat in a local park for a few minutes to take it in, and neighbors were kind enough to let me spy the phenomenon through their glasses. As neighbors chatted and swapped specs and the sky grew dusky, a general sense of camaraderie washed over us as the moon (mostly) blocked the sun for a few minutes. It felt like an appropriate event for Earth Month. (Don't toss those eclipse glasses! Peep this list of places that will send yours to other folks across the planet.)

I used to plant trees during Earth Month, but that was when I lived in suburbia. Here in the city, environmental actions might look a little different. Here are some readers's Earth Month goals:

- "Use my dog's doo-doo bags to pick up plastic trash on every walk." — *Finley*
- "Sign the petition for 1% for Parks and show up to the rallies, and make my voice heard in this arena—New Yorkers need our green spaces!" — *Elizabeth*
- "My earth month goal is to use cup swap programs more. The local coffee shop near me just started one and I am so excited to get started!" — *Chris*

For this edition, we have a roundup of our greenest news, big ideas, and some awesome personal actions to celebrate (and care for) our little blue dot.

— Michaela Keil, Editor, Bluedot Living Brooklyn

If a friend sent you this, you can [click here to sign up for the newsletter](#).

Brought to you by Eagle Urban Media

The Bluedot Brooklyn newsletter is edited by Michaela Keil. If you have any questions, suggestions, ideas, or want tell us what you're doing, email [bluedot@brooklyneagle.com](mailto:bluedot@brooklyneagle.com).

Quick Links

Skip scrolling! Here's what you'll find in today's Bluedot Brooklyn Newsletter:

- [Earth Month and Earth Day Actions](#)
- [Rolling Out the Green for Cleaner Energy](#)
- [Marketplace: Companies With Amazing Recycling Programs](#)
- [Dear Dot: Is Pollution the Reason for a Beautiful Sunset?](#)
- [Recipe: Fig and Lemon Verbena Pots de Crème](#)
- [Your April Greenmarket Guide](#)
- [Brooklyn Bird Watch: Brant Goose](#)

City Authorizes E-Cargo Bikes, Expanding Safety Rules for Streets

The NYC Department of Transportation authorized the use of e-cargo bikes on city streets and established key safety standards. Wednesday, March 27, DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez announced new rules designed to make deliveries safer and more sustainable by reducing the number of large delivery trucks on New York City streets. The rules reduce the e-cargo bike speed limit from the proposed 20 miles per hour to 15. They also establish "Commercial Bicycle Loading Only" zones, dedicated spaces at curbs to keep bikes out of pedestrian corridors during loading and unloading. E-cargo bikes must not be parked or left unattended on a sidewalk for any reason — even temporarily.

The finalized standards also increase low- or no-emission options for freight deliveries — including packages and groceries — by allowing the use of pedal-assist electric cargo bicycles that may be up to 48 inches wide and have up to four wheels. Note: E-bikes, including e-cargo bikes, are not the same as mopeds or e-scooters, which do not have working pedals.

Earth Month and Earth Day Actions

If you've ever needed a reason to do something good for the Earth, let Earth Month be your reason.

**Stop Food Waste:** To address food waste and storage, read "Room for Change: The Pantry." Learn more about food expiration dates (many are misleading) and use Bluedot's "Guide to Avoiding Food Waste" to keep perfectly good food from going into the trash.

**Get Your Thumbs Green:** Plant simple microgreens at home, try your hand at houseplants, or join a community garden and grow native plants.

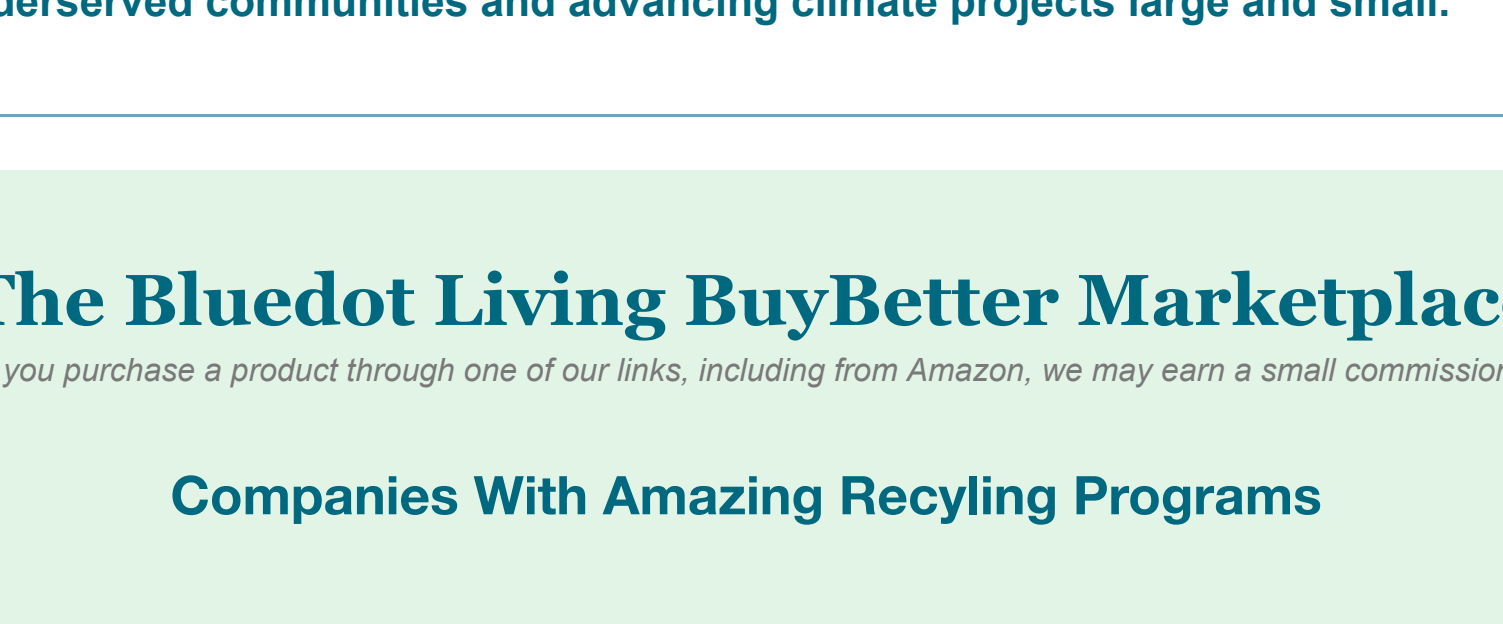
**Eat More Sustainably:** Consider beans, the climate-resilient food of the future, or take a look at how cutting meat and milk consumption could change the planet.

**Sustainable Spring Cleaning:** Need to do some tidying but don't want your old things to go to waste? Check out Bluedot's guide, "How To Get Rid of (Almost) Anything."

**Use Greener Transit:** NYC-area ferries got a green facelift and are now mostly zero emissions. (Take that, cars!) If water travel isn't for you, learn how to start cycling in the city with advice from the owners of Bushwick-based BikePlant.

**Reassess Your Investments:** The world's 60 biggest banks have invested more than \$5.5 trillion in fossil fuels since the Paris Climate Accord in 2016, according to Banking on Climate Chaos, an annual report published by the Rainforest Action Network and other civil society groups. Here's how to stop funding the climate crisis.

**Volunteer:** This Field Note from students in Hell's Kitchen outlines many ways to volunteer and participate in the care and preservation of NYC parks. Plus, Dear Dot has answered questions about who the heck takes care of our street trees. Here's a hint: It could be you!



Solar panels. Photo by Pixabay via Pexels.

Rolling Out the Green for Cleaner Energy

Many climate-friendly projects, like solar panels and energy-efficient appliances, pay for themselves pretty quickly over time. Yet despite this good rate of return, getting financing for projects can be difficult, especially for small borrowers. This month, Vice President Kamala Harris and EPA Administrator Michael Regan announced funding to break down these barriers: \$20 billion in "Green Bank" awards that will go to promote energy efficiency and climate projects, many in disadvantaged communities.

The White House gave an example of the type of impact these funds can have, highlighting 78-year-old Mildred Carter of DeSoto, Georgia, who could not afford to replace her broken water heater. Rewiring America, a nonprofit that will receive "Green Bank" federal funding, replaced it for her, combining Georgia Power incentives with philanthropic support to install a brand-new heat pump water heater on Dec. 23, just in time for the holidays.

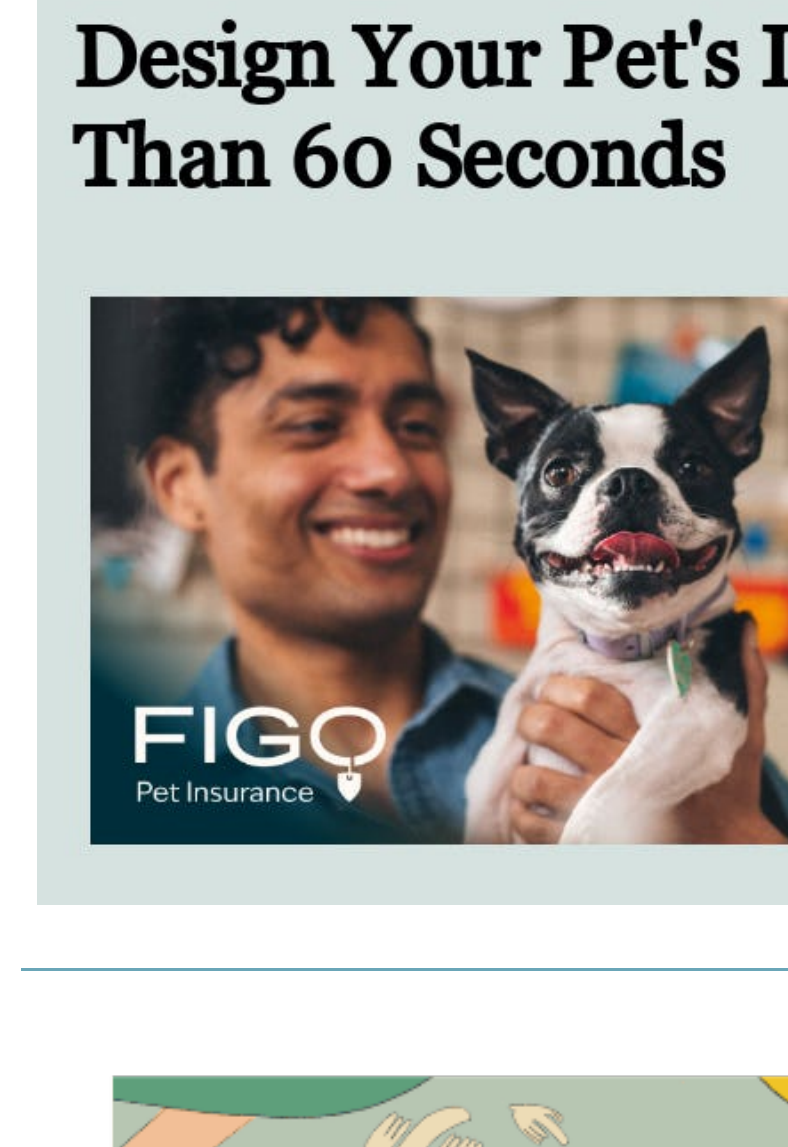
Read on to learn about the impacts these funds can have — benefiting underserved communities and advancing climate projects large and small.

The Bluedot Living BuyBetter Marketplace

If you purchase a product through one of our links, including from Amazon, we may earn a small commission.

Companies With Amazing Recycling Programs

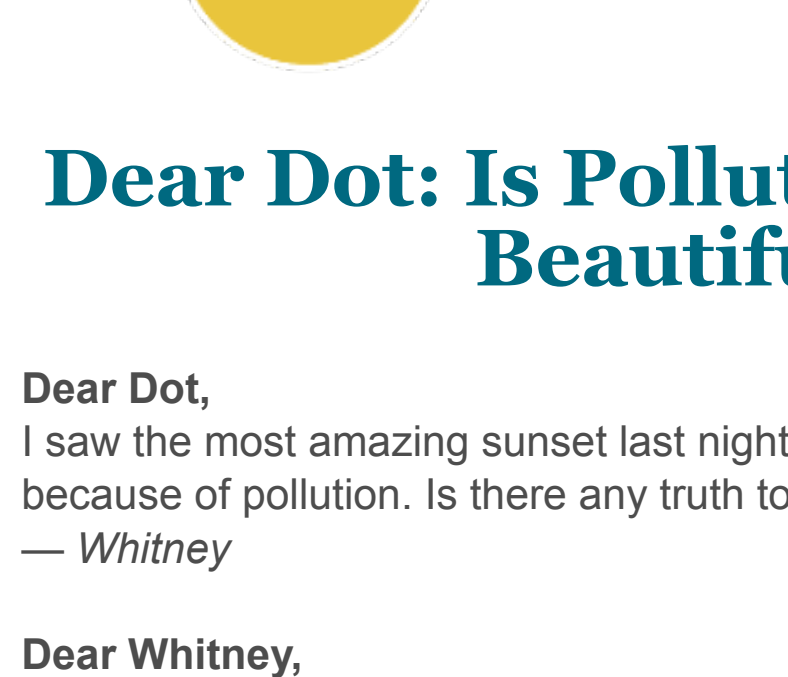
Subset Innerwear



Almost all of us don underwear daily, and while some of us delight in scoring vintage blazers and jeans, used underwear has never been had much market value. Until recently. Now, there's a better way. Subset and SuperCircle have created a pioneering intimates recycling program that will basically pay you to send in your old underpants. Put at least five items (laundered, please) in your own bag or box, and Subset will send you a free shipping label. Once they receive the package, they'll turn your old undies into furniture stuffing, insulation, and more. They'll also send you a \$25 credit to spend on their great, size-inclusive, organic cotton underthings.

[BUY NOW.](#)

Thousand Fell Sneakers



Our Boston editor actually turned us on these NYC-designed, Brazilian-made vegan sneakers from Thousand Fell. Their list of materials reads almost like a recipe, and includes corn, sugar cane, aloe, castor bean oil, and coconut husks. Upcycled yoga mats make ingeniously soft and comfy insoles, while a quartz coating extends the sneakers' lifespan by preventing scuffing and repelling water. When your shoes have served you fully, you can send them back to Thousand Fell for recycling and \$20 off your next pair.

[BUY NOW.](#)

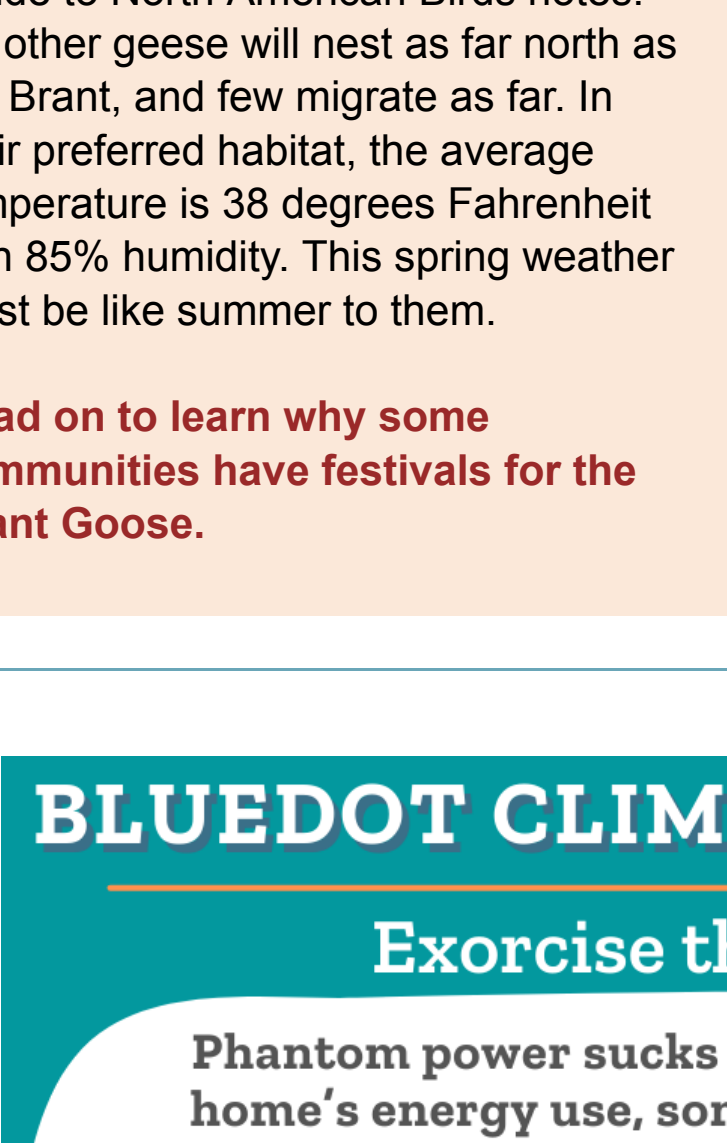
Nimble Tech Accessories



Nimble makes great tech accessories, like portable chargers, cords, cases, and more, out of a minimum of 72% recycled materials. The Certified B Corp and Climate Neutral Certified company not only offsets all its carbon, but also includes a mailer with every order that you can fill with old, unwanted tech products that the company will responsibly recycle. All items come with a two-year warranty, save the (limited) lifetime warranty on the recycled glass screen protectors.

[BUY NOW.](#)

Design Your Pet's Insurance Plan In Less Than 60 Seconds



Figo makes keeping your pet happy and healthy easier than ever, because they deserve the best.  
[Get Started Today](#)

SPONSORED



Dear Dot: Is Pollution the Reason for a Beautiful Sunset?

Dear Dot,  
I saw the most amazing sunset last night. Someone told me the beautiful red color is because of pollution. Is there any truth to that?  
— Whitney

Dear Whitney,  
Those vibrant colors we see at sunrise and, even more vividly, at sunset, are the result of a phenomenon called Rayleigh scattering. During sunrise and sunset, light must travel through more atmospheric particles to reach us and most of the shorter blue and green wavelengths — they scatter more easily! — have a harder time making it through. However, the longer wavelengths, which produce orange and red colors, do make it through, giving us those rich vibrant colors. When there are wildfires? Wildfire smoke puts more particles in the air, which allows red hues to dominate. Consequently ... your spectacular sunset.

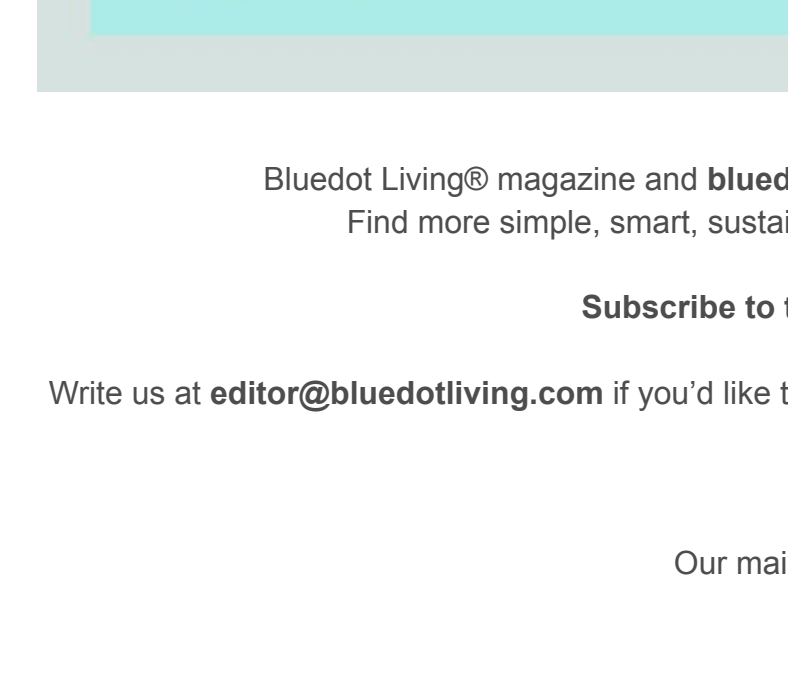
So there you have it. Your beautiful sunset, the one that made you stop, and gasp, and reach for a way to preserve that moment, was a product of both light and of darkness. Appreciate that beauty, Whitney, no matter what created it.

For a more in-depth breakdown of the sunset's beautiful hues, read on.

See more Dot here.  
Got a question for her? Write her at [deardot@bluedotliving.com](mailto:deardot@bluedotliving.com)

BLUEDOT KITCHEN

Fig and Lemon Verbena Pots de Crème



If your Earth Month and springtime shopping inspired you to buy a lemon verbena plant, use the leaves to make Fig and Lemon Verbena Pots de Crème. These little pots are so simple and quick to make. Unlike many custardy desserts, they require no eggs and no baking. Perfumed with lemon verbena and filled with fresh figs, Fig and Lemon Verbena Pots de Crème are a perfect springtime treat.

[Get the recipe here.](#)

[Get Your April Greenmarket Guide here.](#)

BROOKLYN BIRD WATCH

Brant Goose

These birds are tough. As the Audubon Guide to North American Birds notes: No other geese will nest as far north as the Brant, and few migrate as far. In their preferred habitat, the average temperature is 38 degrees Fahrenheit with 85% humidity. This spring weather must be like summer to them.

Read on to learn why some communities have festivals for the Brant Goose.



BLUEDOT CLIMATE QUICK TIPS

Exorcise the Phantom

Phantom power sucks roughly ten percent of a home's energy use, sometimes even when your devices aren't charging or aren't even turned on.



1. Unplug items when not in use, such as countertop appliances or chargers for electronics.
2. Purchase power strips with timers so that items are turned off automatically.
3. Group items that are typically used together and plug them into a single power bar.
4. Purchase a Smart Plug

#BluedotClimateQuickTips



Love local and promote urban sustainability. Send this newsletter to a friend. Click here to discover more about our other local newsletters.



Find more simple, smart, sustainable stories at [bluedotliving.com](http://bluedotliving.com) or our Marthas Vineyard location, [marthasvineyard.bluedotliving.com](http://marthasvineyard.bluedotliving.com).  
[Subscribe to other Bluedot newsletters here.](#)



Design Your Pet's Insurance Plan In Less Than 60 Seconds



Figo makes keeping your pet happy and healthy easier than ever, because they deserve the best.  
[Get Started Today](#)

SPONSORED

Bluedot Living® magazine and [bluedotliving.com](http://bluedotliving.com) are published by Bluedot, Inc.

Find more simple, smart, sustainable stories visit [bluedotliving.com](http://bluedotliving.com).

Subscribe to this newsletter here.

Write us at [editor@bluedotliving.com](mailto:editor@bluedotliving.com) if you'd like to see a Bluedot newsletter or magazine in your community.

Our mailing address is:

Copyright © 2022 Bluedot Living Brooklyn. All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from all Brooklyn Eagle newsletters.  
If you fully unsubscribe, your subscription to other Brooklyn Eagle newsletters may be impacted.