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**THE VIEW FROM LAKE PLEASANT**


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# A Long-Awaited Rebirth

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My hummingbird has returned. As I was sitting on the back porch the other day, I saw it hovering near where its feeder hung last summer. For a few glorious moments, it perched in the lilac bush not five feet away from me before flitting off, making a quick detour around the regular bird feeder to make sure I knew what it was asking for.

At long last, spring is here! So far it's a pretty nice one, and we certainly deserve it after what we've been through.

Spring is springing, birds are singing, and suddenly it's very obvious how much yard work I didn't get to before the first snow fell last fall. Dead leaves and broken branches vie with daffodils and hyacinths for my attention. But of course the bamboo is happily shooting skyward! Also known as "the Scourge of Lake Pleasant," the bamboo plants are extremely prolific, sending runners under the earth to make new plants at a rate of speed faster than my car will go. And nothing seems to kill them. Last year when I searched the Internet — which is usually pretty helpful — for suggestions on getting rid of bamboo, I found a few messages extolling its "lucky qualities," and even more messages asking folks who have bamboo to send some, just for fun. Yikes, I thought. It's amazing how people can have totally opposite viewpoints about the same thing: I'm thinking, "How can I get rid of it?" Other people are thinking, "How can I get some?" I even thought about starting a small



**The scourge of Lake Pleasant**

bamboo-selling business on the Web, but I wouldn't want folks coming after me in three or four years when they discover that what I sold them has multiplied exponentially, taken over most of their garden space, and that they can't get rid of it.

But my Net search did turn up some interesting information: bamboo is actually good for something. Apparently it's even better than trees are at making oxygen out of carbon dioxide. Hmm. At least I'm breathing clean air, graciously provided by "the Scourge of Lake Pleasant."

The other scourge of spring, the wasp, has also been busy at my house. In fact, I've already had one in my house. I opened both the front and back doors, and politely invited the wasp to fly right out. I made waving motions with my arms; then turned on the fan to try and blow it out; then went to the door and called, "Wasp! Wasp! This way!" then pleaded, "Please leave — you'll really

like it better outside!" Nothing worked. Until I made a fabulous discovery (this is The Lake Pleasant Homeowner's Tip of the Week): I went outside and picked a daffodil, attached it to the end of a broomstick with a rubber band, and slowly moved it up close to the wasp. (Note: using a broomstick hopefully makes it look like any misfortune is the broomstick's fault, not the human's.) Bless its heart, the wasp climbed right onto the daffodil, and I carried it safely outside before running back in to close the doors. I don't know why I picked a daffodil,

except that the wasp wouldn't get on the broomstick with nothing on it, and honey didn't work either. I mused briefly on how many things I would have tried before giving up if the daffodil hadn't worked, but then I really don't like wasps. I suppose I would have given up eventually and simply sprayed it, but I don't like those sprays almost as much as I don't like wasps. I thanked the daffodil profusely, placed it in a vase, and paid homage to it once a day until it passed away.

I'm glad that spring is finally here. I'm even feeling a little rejuvenated myself. Maybe it's because I can now go outside without a parka and hood and gloves and boots and Kleenex and a snow shovel. It's nice to join in the process of spring's rebirth. Enjoy this glorious season of renewal, and make sure you have some daffodils handy as an important part of your Natural Wasp Elimination Program.