



Conservation CONNECTION

WHIDBEY ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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Septic Drainfield Package



Native Plant Packages!

The WICD Annual Native Plant Sale continues taking orders through January 31, 2016. Our plant packages for specific site requirements or goals continue to be very popular, and we've just added a new **Septic Drainfield Package** that's also great for any well-draining site with moist to dry soil. In response to the interest in a versatile wet-site species, through January 16 we're offering **Twinberry** at \$10 for a bundle of 5 plants! (reg. \$11.25) View the complete **storefront**, and pre-order/purchase plants online! Phone orders can be taken by calling 360-678-4708 or by walk-in at our office, 1 NE 4th St., Coupeville. Order now for pick up Saturday, February 27, 9am-1:30pm at Camp Casey, Coupeville.



WICD Outreach & Education Specialist Sarah Cassatt leads an informative workshop about using native plants.

WORKSHOP: Using Native Plants in Your Landscape - A North & South location on 2 dates

In association with our [Annual Native Plant Sale](#), we are offering two workshops in January. Learn how to match native species to your site characteristics, and become familiar with native groundcovers, shrubs, and trees that are well-adapted to our variety of local conditions. We will discuss several plant packages we have put together for particular sites, such as sunny, well-drained slopes or shady areas, or for specific purposes, such as for pollinators or other types of wildlife habitat.

New this year, we've teamed up with local Native Plant Stewards, Barb Kolar and Mark Fessler, who are preparing collections of native prairie plants that will be available through our Plant Sale.

They will join us for the workshops to talk about these iconic plants.

We will also discuss how to care for new plants, from taking care of them until you can plant them, to installing them, through caring for them the first few years until they become established.

Join us at either location:

Saturday, January 9, 2016, 10am – 12pm

Hummingbird Farm Nursery & Gardens
2319 Zylstra Rd, Oak Harbor

Saturday, January 16, 2016, 10am – 12pm

Bayview Farm & Garden
2780 Marshview Ave, Langley

Click for more [info](#) or to [RSVP](#).



WICD Forestry Program WSU Extension Forestry and the Washington Department of Natural Resources recently brought their Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Short Course to Whidbey Island. WICD, Island County, and Puget Sound Energy were co-sponsors of the course. Landowners met at the Deer Lagoon Grange Hall near Langley to learn about their forests and how to manage them to meet the owners' objectives.

A survey after the course revealed that 100% of the 43 class participants were glad that they took the class, and would recommend it to other forest landowners. Class participants owned parcels ranging from

2 acres to 40 acres, and represented a wide range of goals including ecosystem health, promoting wildlife, and an interest in the County's Current Use Taxation program for Designated Forests, which provides tax incentives for timber-producing lands. Learn more about this program [here](#).

The WSU Extension Forestry program now offers many courses on-line. This is a great opportunity for landowners to become better informed about responsible management of their forest resources. See their complete list of offerings [here](#).

Livestock Forage Disaster Program

Producers who are raising livestock for commercial use and have non-irrigated acres (owned or leased) that were grazed by eligible livestock in 2015 may be eligible for disaster assistance due to the drought conditions in 2015.

Find more details [here](#), or contact Tammy, Dorothy, or Sue as soon as possible at the Farm Service Agency office in Mt. Vernon at 360-428-7758.

Waldorf Mapping Project



WICD recently worked with the 4th grade class at the Whidbey Island Waldorf School on the lesson in local geography. Students learned to locate their homes and their school on a map of Whidbey Island. They then drew their own maps, starting with their homes and their school, expanding to all of Whidbey and Camano Islands. They labeled the bodies of water that surround Whidbey, such as Saratoga Passage, Admiralty Inlet, and Useless Bay. The kids also included natural features such as forests, farms, and wildlife. WICD was glad to help in this effort by providing printed maps and aerial photos.

Stormwater and Drainage on Whidbey Island



Our recent weather patterns have brought ample rainfall to Whidbey Island. From October 30th through December 21st, the Langley weather station recorded 11.93 inches of rainfall, and the Coupeville weather station recorded 10.45 inches. That's well over half of the annual average for Coupeville, and more than double the amount recorded for that time period in 2014.* Most of us don't need those numbers to tell us that it's been wetter than usual, and lots of our low-lying areas have been inundated with stormwater runoff.

So it's a good time to think about how best to manage the stormwater flows that come from our rooftops, driveways, and other impervious surfaces. These impervious surfaces prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground. During heavy rains, stormwater can pick up debris,

chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, wetland, or Puget Sound.

At WICD, we encourage people to consider these potential impacts and how you might get more of your stormwater runoff to stay on your property by soaking it into your soil. Can you divert stormwater away from ditches and roads, and instead route it into a rain garden? Rain gardens are simply planted basins where rainwater can be collected and stored, to give it more time to soak into the surrounding soil. Rain from rooftop areas or paved areas can be diverted into these areas rather than into storm drains or ditches. Not every property has a suitable area for a rain garden, depending on the soils, slopes, proximity to buildings, and other considerations. You can learn more about how to design and build a rain garden by downloading a copy of the [Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington](#).

*Access WSU Extension weather stations [here](#).



Attention Whidbey Farmers: Join other local farmers for the second in a series of evening potlucks and discussions to develop an outreach model for building community support for local farms. Contact Sarah or Karen for details at 888-678-4922, or email wicd@whidbeycd.org

Upcoming Events - Please visit the WICD website [Calendar page](#) for a complete listing.
USING NATIVE PLANTS in your landscape

Sat, Jan 9,; 10am - 12pm Hummingbird Farm Nursery & Gardens, 2319 Zylstra Rd, Oak Harbor

Sat, Jan 16,; 10am - 12pm, Bayview Farm & Garden, 2780 Marshview Rd., Langley

4th Cascadia Grains Conference: Saturday, Jan 9, '16, South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia

USDA Value Added Producer Grant Boot Camp: Tuesday, Jan 26, 8:45am - 4pm, Fairgrounds, Mount Vernon

Sound Waters: Saturday, Feb 6, 8am to 4:15pm, South Whidbey High School, Langley

Business Of Making Cider: Monday, Feb 8, 8am - 5pm, WSU Research & Extension Center, Mount Vernon

Mud Management Workshops: How to Create a Mud-Free Farm

Thirty livestock owners attended our series of workshops held on north, central, and south Whidbey in November and December. Participants learned about a variety of practices that they can apply to their sites to prevent and address mud issues. Primary practices include designing and creating sacrifice areas, installing geotextile fabric or other soil protection materials to prevent

desired footing from mixing with mud, and managing stormwater runoff and manure to keep from creating more mud in the future. If you would like assistance with this issue for your farm, [contact us](#) or visit our [website](#) to learn more or to find

out when the next workshop will be held (planned for early spring).

