



**Planning Your Perfect Native Plant Landscape: Part 3**

With a new year comes change and I'm sure you, like me, are experiencing a host of emotions that go along with the changing of 2017 to 2018. Whether it's led by concern or excitement, it's hard not to take part in the collective shift in consciousness that happens when the clock strikes 12 the first of January each year. For me, the start to a new year is a great opportunity to express gratitude. Gratitude – for our loved ones near and far, for our communities, for the opportunity to get up each day, for a smile, for each breath. Among the responsibilities and commitments we've made that make our days full and abundant, I try to cultivate a moment of gratitude each day. Having grown up on Whidbey Island, I often find my mind turning to the place in which I live as something to be grateful for. Do you feel as I do, that we are lucky to live here? Not only are we host to some of the most biodiverse native plant communities in the world here, we also have a wealth of local and regional knowledge, resources, and expertise to help guide us on conservation journeys. Today, we'll wrap up part three in our three-part series learning how native plants can help us achieve a wide variety of conservation goals.

For those following this "Crafting Your Perfect Native Plant Landscape" series, you'll recall that in parts one and two – featured on page 8 of the *Whidbey Weekly's* November 9-15, 2017 issue and page 8 of the December 7-13, 2017 issue ([www.whidbeyweekly.com/digital-issues](http://www.whidbeyweekly.com/digital-issues)) – we began to explore how native plants can benefit us in landscape conservation through the introduction of native plants, what existing landscape characteristics we should learn more about on our properties, and specific elements of landscape design we might consider using to plan and prioritize native plant species selection.

In part one, we defined native plants as those which are indigenous, or from, an area – having established communities with little to no human aid over long periods of time – and which thrive in balance with other plant species. Native plants are those which have adapted naturally to living here and are neither exotic (i.e. an ornamental plant not derived from this area) nor noxious (i.e. a plant not from here but that has become invasive). Planting native species contributes to overall ecosystem resiliency, while simultaneously helping us meet our property goals. Are you using native plants as a lower maintenance alternative in landscaping, or do you wish to achieve a specific conservation goal, like soil stabilization or water quality improvement, or enhancing local pollinator and wildlife habitat? We learned first and foremost, an understanding of your landscape – its soil types, topography, slope and aspect, climate, water availability, and inventory of existing native plants – is a critical first step in crafting your perfect native plant landscape.

In part two, we explored together how Whidbey Island's ecosystems are sources of inspiration in the design of your property's planting plan. With its countless shorelines, bluffs, wetlands, marshes, prairies, and forests, all these and more have native plants from which you can choose to bring to your neck o' the woods. Landscape design techniques were discussed, like that of microsites within your larger plan – i.e. zone(s) on your property that possess unique conditions or characteristics you'd like to plant to. We also learned about the landscape design elements of unity, line, form, texture, color, scale, balance, simplicity and variety, emphasis, and sequence as useful tools to strengthen your overall native planting plan, helping you to configure your species selections in such a way to unite your conservation and aesthetic goals.

Whidbey Island Conservation District staff is regularly asked by landowners about what types of native species they should use. In an effort to assist you, the reader, we've collated some of the "top conservation goals" we at the District address with landowners and list below them a handful of native species suited for most Whidbey Island properties. Additionally, the plants

As part three in this three-part "Crafting Your Perfect Native Plant Landscape" series, we hope the following select lists of native plant species for these common conservation goals (in graphs at right) will serve as useful starting points for you and help empower you to locate additional resources for assistance.

Of the four top conservation goals listed above, we encourage you to look at these only as guides. These lists are a selection based on the expertise of our staff and do not represent a complete comprehensive list for that particular goal. Through careful study of your landscape and referencing of additional material, such as those found on our recommended books and links list at <http://bit.ly/2B2A9hx>, we know consulting multiple resources and expertise is key to long-term success of your perfect native plant landscape. Lastly, also just as important is to know whether a permit may be necessary to start your planting project, so contact your local County planning and public works staff to learn more.

Starting from the familiarity of our "backyards," we each have the opportunity to exercise our artistic and scientific muscles – thinking both like

a conservationist and landscape designer – to truly make a difference in conservation through thoughtful, carefully crafted native landscapes. From ground covers to shrubs, conifers to deciduous trees, the Pacific Northwest's ecosystems give us a lot to choose from. Often available at local plant nurseries and, additionally, through the Whidbey Island Conservation District's annual Native Bare Root Plant Sale November 1– January 31 of each year (visit [www.whidbeycd.org/native-plant-sale.html](http://www.whidbeycd.org/native-plant-sale.html)), native plants are a gateway to natural resource conservation on our properties. We thank you for taking the time to learn with us in this three-part series and look forward to inspiring more voluntary conservation through future issues of the *Make a Difference* column.

For additional resources, expertise, and support pertaining to native plants and other natural resource conservation topics, including farm and forest planning, alternative stormwater management, and more, contact the Whidbey Island Conservation District for free, voluntary conservation planning assistance from our staff at (888) 678-4922 or by visiting [www.whidbeycd.org](http://www.whidbeycd.org).

listed are organized by several characteristics, including but not limited to plant landscape type (i.e. ground cover, shrub, and tree) includes the environment the plant is best suited for (i.e. wet, moist, dry) and specific light needs (i.e. full sun, part shade, full shade).

**Native Plant Goal: Pond Edge & Wetland Edge Planting • For: Full Sun to Part Shade Landscapes**

| Common Name        | Latin Name                     | Light            | Soil      | Hgt.      | Type        |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Yellow Pond Lily   | Nuphar luteum Ssp. polysepalum | Sun/Part Shade   | Aquatic   | 24 in.    | Aquatic     |
| Wapato             | Sagittaria latifolia           | Sun              | Aquatic   | 3 ft.     | Aquatic     |
| Marsh Marigold     | Caltha biflora                 | Sun/Part Shade   | Wet/Moist | 16 in.    | Groundcover |
| Dwarf Dogwood      | Cornus unalaskchensis          | Part Shade/Shade | Wet/Moist | 10 in.    | Groundcover |
| Douglas Aster      | Aster subspicatus              | Sun/Shade        | Moist/Wet | 32 in.    | Groundcover |
| Deer Fern          | Blechnum spicant               | Part Shade/Shade | Moist     | 40 in.    | Fern        |
| Lady Fern          | Athyrium filix-femina          | Part Shade/Shade | Moist/Wet | 3-6 ft.   | Fern        |
| Sweet Gale         | Myrica Gale                    | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist/Wet | 3-6 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Labrador Tea       | Ledum groenlandicum            | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist/Wet | 5 ft.     | Shrub       |
| Swamp Rose         | Rosa pisocarpa                 | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist     | 6-8 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Douglas' Spirea    | Spiraea douglasii              | Sun              | Moist/Wet | 6-8 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Highbush Cranberry | Virburnum edule                | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist     | 3-9 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Salmonberry        | Rubus spectabilis              | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist/Wet | 13 ft.    | Shrub       |
| Red-Osier Dogwood  | Cornus stolonifera             | Sun              | Moist/Wet | 20 ft.    | Tree        |
| Pacific Crabapple  | Malus fusca                    | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist/Wet | 16-40 ft. | Tree        |
| Bitter Cherry      | Prunus emarginata              | Sun              | Moist     | 50 ft.    | Tree        |

**Conservation Goal: Forest Edge Enhancement Planting • For: Full Sun to Part Shade Landscapes**

| Common Name           | Latin Name             | Light            | Soil      | Hgt.    | Type        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| Bleeding Heart        | Dicentra formosa       | Shade            | Moist     | 1.5 ft. | Groundcover |
| Deer Fern             | Blechnum spicant       | Part Shade/Shade | Moist     | 40 in.  | Fern        |
| Low Oregon Grape      | Mahonia nervosa        | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 2 ft.   | Groundcover |
| Meadow Barley         | Hordeum brachyantherum | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist     | 3 ft.   | Grass       |
| Lady Fern             | Athyrium filix-femina  | Part Shade/Shade | Moist/Wet | 3-6 ft. | Fern        |
| Sword Fern            | Polystichum munitum    | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 3 ft.   | Fern        |
| Goat's Beard          | Aruncus dioicus        | Part Shade       | Moist     | 6 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Salal                 | Gaultheria shallon     | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 6 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Evergreen Huckleberry | Vaccinium ovatum       | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 10 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Vine Maple            | Acer circinatum        | Part Shade/Shade | Moist/Wet | 13 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Serviceberry          | Amelanchier alnifolia  | Sun/Part Shade   | Moist/Wet | 15 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Indian Plum           | Oemleria cerasiformis  | Part Shade       | Moist/Dry | 16 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Oceanspray            | Holodiscus discolor    | Part Shade/Sun   | Moist/Dry | 20 ft.  | Shrub/Tree  |
| Flowering Dogwood     | Cornus nuttallii       | Part Shade       | Moist/Dry | 20 ft.  | Shrub/Tree  |
| Cascara               | Rhamnus purshiana      | Part Shade       | Moist     | 20 ft.  | Shrub/Tree  |
| Western Yew           | Taxus brevifolia       | Part Shade/Shade | Moist     | 40 ft.  | Tree        |

**Conservation Goal(s): Promotion of Pollinators & Privacy Hedge • For: Full Sun to Part Shade Landscapes**

| Common Name           | Latin Name              | Light            | Soil      | Hgt.    | Type        |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| Coastal Strawberry    | Fragaria chiloensis     | Full Sun         | Moist/Dry | 4 in.   | Groundcover |
| Kinnikinnick          | Arctostaphylos uva-ursi | Full Sun         | Dry       | 8 in.   | Groundcover |
| Sea Thrift            | Armeria maritima        | Full Sun         | Moist/Dry | 18 in.  | Groundcover |
| Bleeding Heart        | Dicentra formosa        | Shade            | Moist     | 1.5 ft. | Groundcover |
| Low Oregon Grape      | Mahonia nervosa         | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 2 ft.   | Groundcover |
| Roemer's Fescue       | Festuca roemerii        | Full Sun         | Moist/Dry | 3 ft.   | Groundcover |
| Salal                 | Gaultheria shallon      | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 6 ft.   | Shrub       |
| Evergreen Huckleberry | Vaccinium ovatum        | Shade/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 10 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Snowbrush             | Ceanothus velutinus     | Full Sun         | Moist/Dry | 10 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Pacific Wax Myrtle    | Myrica californica      | Sun/Part Shade   | Dry/Moist | 15 ft.  | Shrub       |
| Oceanspray            | Holodiscus discolor     | Part Shade/Sun   | Moist/Dry | 20 ft.  | Shrub/Tree  |
| Flowering Dogwood     | Cornus nuttallii        | Part Shade       | Moist/Dry | 20 ft.  | Shrub/Tree  |
| Cascara               | Rhamnus purshiana       | Part Shade       | Moist     | 20 ft.  | Shrub/Tree  |
| Western Yew           | Taxus brevifolia        | Part Shade/Shade | Moist     | 40 ft.  | Tree        |

**Conservation Goal(s): Soil Stabilization • For: Full Sun to Part Shade Landscapes**

| Common Name        | Latin Name              | Light               | Soil      | Hgt.        | Type        |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Coastal Strawberry | Fragaria chiloensis     | Full Sun            | Moist/Dry | 4 in.       | Groundcover |
| Kinnikinnick       | Arctostaphylos uva-ursi | Full Sun/Part Shade | Dry       | 8 in.       | Groundcover |
| Snowberry          | Symphoricarpos albus    | Full Sun/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 3-5 ft.     | Shrub       |
| Salal              | Gaultheria shallon      | Shade/Part Shade    | Moist/Dry | 6 ft.       | Shrub       |
| Nootka Rose        | Rosa nutkana            | Full Sun/Part Shade | Moist/Dry | 6 ft.       | Shrub       |
| Tall Oregon Grape  | Mahonia aquifolium      | Full Sun            | Moist/Dry | 2.5-6.5 ft. | Shrub       |
| Pacific Ninebark   | Physocarpus capitatus   | Full Sun/Part Shade | Moist     | 15 ft.      | Shrub       |
| Pacific Wax Myrtle | Myrica californica      | Sun/Part Shade      | Dry/Moist | 15 ft.      | Shrub       |
| Oceanspray         | Holodiscus discolor     | Part Shade/Sun      | Moist/Dry | 20 ft.      | Shrub/Tree  |



Thank you for reading! Please recycle the Whidbey Weekly when you are finished with it.

