



**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.

