

Help Preserve Native Plants



Photo by Clay Antieau

Broad-leaved stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*)

Each of us can help preserve native plant species and habitat. You've already taken the first step by picking up and reading this brochure! Want to know more? Read on. Here are more suggestions on how to take action.

- ❁ Plant natives in your garden; ask your local nursery to stock them
- ❁ Become active in your local chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society
- ❁ Share information with friends and neighbors about how native plants contribute to the health and vitality of the northwest ecosystem and sustain the animals that live here
- ❁ Encourage others to "go native" in their home gardens
- ❁ Remind our elected officials that native plants play a key role in keeping Washington green
- ❁ Pull out a non-native invasive plant and plant a native in its place
- ❁ Volunteer to help pull out non-native plants in local parks – contact the city arborist to learn where you can help out

Why Use Native Plants?

Did you know that Washington State has over 2,300 native plant species? Here are some reasons why native plants are important and beneficial additions to your garden.

Native plants:

- ❁ are adapted to our climate of wet winters and dry summers
- ❁ require less water than non-natives once they are established
- ❁ resist native pests and diseases better than non-natives
- ❁ improve water quality by needing less fertilizer and no pesticides
- ❁ provide shelter, food and pollination opportunities for native wildlife
- ❁ save resources and encourage a sense of stewardship



Photo by Alan Yen

Western columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*)

Some Useful References

There are many resources to help you learn about and appreciate native plants — in your garden and in the wild.

Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast. Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon, Eds. Lone Pine Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 1994.

Flora of the Pacific Northwest : An Illustrated Manual. C. Leo Hitchcock and Arthur Cronquist. University of Washington Press (UW Press), Seattle. 1973.

Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest, 2nd Edition. Arthur R. Kruckeberg. UW Press, Seattle. 1996.

Landscaping for Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest. Russell Link. UW Press, Seattle. 1999.

Native Plants in the Coastal Garden, 2nd Edition. April Pettinger. Whitecap Books, Vancouver, BC. 2002.

Ethnobotany of Western Washington. Erna Gunther. UW Press, Seattle. Revised 1973.

Food Plants of Coastal First Peoples. Nancy J. Turner. UBC Press, Vancouver, BC. 1995.

Grow Your Own Native Landscape. Item MISC0273 WSU Cooperative Extension. Revised 1999. Order at 1-800-723-1763 or ><http://pubs.wsu.edu><

Propagation of Pacific Northwest Native Plants. Robin Rose, Caryn E.C. Chachulski and Diane L. Haase. Oregon State University Press. 1998.

Washington State Noxious Weed Board. >www.nwcb.wa.gov
Washington Natural Heritage Program. >www.dnr.wa.gov/nhp/index.html



Photo by Marcia Rivers Smith

Bunchberry (*Cornus unalaschensis*)

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NATIVE PLANTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON

The Natural Way to Grow



Photo by Ruth Munson

Red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)



Washington Native Plant Society



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Photo by Marcia Rivers Smith

Vanilla leaf (*Achlys triphylla*)

What are Native Plants?

Washington's native plants grew in this region before European-American settlers arrived. They have co-evolved with local insects, fungi and wildlife and are adapted to the local climate and soils.

Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), **Pacific bleeding heart** (*Dicentra formosa*) and **Red huckleberry** (*Vaccinium parvifolium*) are common native plants growing in western Washington.



Photo by Carol Beach

Nootka rose (*Rosa nutkana*)

What are Invasive Plants?

People have accidentally and intentionally introduced many non-native plants from other places. Some non-natives grow rapidly and crowd out native plants, eliminating wildlife habitat and food for native birds and mammals.

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), **Japanese knotweed** (*Polygonum cuspidatum*), **English ivy** (*Hedera helix*), and **Scot's broom** (*Cytisus scoparius*) are particularly invasive and damaging non-native plants. Once established, non-natives can be difficult to control or remove.

Landscaping with Native Plants

Gardening with native plants is rewarding and fun. Native plants have a subtle beauty that defines the Pacific Northwest. To design your native garden, begin by walking around your yard and evaluating the planting space. It is important to work with existing soil, water and light conditions. For example, moisture-loving shade plants will struggle in dry soil and constant sun. Here are some planting suggestions to help you get started.



Photo by Alan Yen

Vine maple (*Acer circinatum*)

Trees

Vine maple (*Acer circinatum*) and **Pacific dogwood** (*Cornus nuttallii*) are shade tolerant, flower early in spring and have good color in fall. **Mountain hemlock** (*Tsuga mertensiana*) and **Shore pine** (*Pinus contorta*) are sun-loving evergreens that are attractive additions to the home landscape. Shade-loving **Western redcedar** (*Thuja plicata*), **Western hemlock** (*Tsuga heterophylla*) and sun-loving **Douglas-fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) are large, stately evergreens that do well in greenbelts and spacious yards.



Photo by Marcia Rivers Smith

Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*)

Shrubs

Red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*), **Nootka rose** (*Rosa nutkana*), and **Mock-orange** (*Philadelphus lewisii*) have showy flowers and attract pollinators like hummingbirds, bees and butterflies. Medium-sized shrubs like sun-loving **Oregon boxwood** (*Paxistima myrsinites*) and shade-tolerant **Low Oregon grape** (*Mahonia nervosa*) are great evergreen additions to the garden. For striking visual interest and colorful fall fruit, include tall shrubs such as drought-tolerant **Hairy manzanita** (*Arctostaphylos columbiana*), shade-tolerant **Red elderberry** (*Sambucus racemosa*) and sun-loving **Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier alnifolia*).

Perennials & Ground Covers

Pacific bleeding heart (*Dicentra formosa*) is a beautiful spring plant with delicate pink flowers and lacy, blue-green leaves. **Sword fern** (*Polystichum munitum*) transplants well and its dark green leaves look great all year. Sun-loving **Coastal strawberry** (*Fragaria chiloensis*) is drought-tolerant, has shiny, evergreen leaves and white flowers in spring. **Inside-out flower** (*Vancouveria hexandra*) likes moist shade, spreads quickly and is covered with unusual diminutive white flowers in spring. Shade-loving **Vanilla leaf** (*Achlys triphylla*) will form a light-green carpet of delightfully-scented broad leaves with slender stalks of tiny flowers.

Finding Native Plants for Your Garden

Buy native plants at spring and fall plant sales held by several chapters of the Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS), County Conservation Districts, and other organizations. A list of local nurseries carrying a good collection of native plants and seeds is available on our WNPS web site.

Salvage plants from development sites. Remember that you must get permission from owners before removing plants. When digging plants it is important to take some of the native soil along with the plant's root system. Consider where the salvaged plant is going to be placed in your own yard. Similar light, soil and water conditions should apply. Other options include taking seeds and cuttings. Be sure collecting is done at the proper time. Some native plants transplant more easily than others. Learn more about identifying, using, propagating, and caring for native plants from references listed in this brochure.

PLEASE NOTE: The WNPS policy on collecting native plants from the wild discourages taking whole plants unless the site is about to be destroyed. It is preferred that plants be obtained through ethical seed collection and propagation methods. Rare plants should not be collected in any manner. The Washington Natural Heritage Program has more information on the rare plants of our state.

Caring for Native Plants in the Garden

Once planted, native plants will need water for the first two growing seasons. A bit of T.L.C. during a plant's infancy helps it develop a good root system, grow more vigorously and become more resistant to insect attacks. The addition of organic mulch helps the soil conserve moisture and keeps weeds to a minimum.



Photo by Alan Yen

Seep Monkey Flower