



# Conservation CONNECTION

WHIDBEY ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE

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## A sampling of our native plants . . .



### SITKA SPRUCE

Mature Height: 100'-150'  
Moisture: Wet to moist  
Exposure: Partial shade to full sun



### AMERICAN CRANBERRY

Mature Height: 10'-15'  
Moisture: Wet to moist  
Exposure: Partial shade to full sun



### GARRY OAK

Mature Height: 60'-80'  
Moisture: Moist to dry  
Exposure: Partial shade to full sun



### BUNCHBERRY

Height: 6 inches  
Width: spread indefinite  
Moisture: moist, loose soil  
Exposure: shade to semi-shade



*Peafruit Rose (Rosa pisocarpa), growing 3'-6' tall, thrives in riparian and other moist areas in partial shade.*

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Visit our website at  
[www.whidbeycd.org](http://www.whidbeycd.org)

## 2014 WICD Annual Native Bareroot Plant Pre-Sale Begins! More species than ever . . . and lower prices!

**Doug Fir, Deer Fern, Dogwood, oh my!** We have 15 species of shrubs, 6 species of deciduous trees, 7 conifers, 4 herbaceous perennials, and 6 potted groundcovers. It's time to go [shopping here!](#)

### Why does the District sell native plants?

WICD is committed to promoting resource conservation and wildlife habitat enhancement. Native plants improve local water quality, reduce soil and wind erosion, clean the air, reduce energy costs, help protect homes from wildfire, attract and support local wildlife, and beautify property.

In addition, plant sale revenues contribute to our programs – including free farm and forest planning and best practice assistance, engineering services, storm water management, cost share and tax incentive program guidance, and educational workshops on a variety of local resource conservation topics.

### Where do the plants come from?

Each summer, based on sales from previous years, we reserve our inventory from the Washington Association of Conservation District (WACD)

plant grower in Bow, WA which is owned by all 45 Conservation Districts in the state. The bareroot plants are harvested in mid winter (while dormant) and delivered to us the last week in February.

Prior to the delivery of our plants, from November through January, we accept plant sale pre-orders. As an order is purchased, it is reserved from our inventory. If we run out of a species, we try to increase our order accordingly, but often local growers have pre-sold all of their stock. This is why we encourage our customers to order early!

Ordering your plants and purchasing by credit card is easy at our website: [www.whidbeycd.org](http://www.whidbeycd.org).

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 the first weekend in March at two different locations:

- **Friday, February 28:** 1:00pm - 6:00pm at our WICD office, 1 NE 4th St., Coupeville
- **Saturday, March 1:** 9:30am - 1:30pm at the Island Co Fairgrounds, 819 Camano Ave., Langley.

## Upcoming Events - Please visit our website [Calendar page](#) for more details on these and other events.

- 10th Annual Focus on Farming Conference Thursday, November 21 - Comcast Arena, Everett
- Where Have All the Flowers Gone? Become a Master Beekeeper and help local honeybees survive! Monday evenings, Nov 18 thru Dec 16 - WSU Cougar Auditorium, Everett



*Intrepid visitors picking blueberries in the rain at Huntersmoon Farm during 2013 Farm Tour*

## Visitors Attend 2013 Whidbey Island Farm Tour from Far & Wide

During the 8th annual *Whidbey Island Farm Tour*, Whidbey farms were enjoyed by well over a thousand visitors from throughout Whidbey Island, Puget Sound, and from as far away as British Columbia, Texas, Georgia, and New York. An estimated forty five percent of visitors came from off-island and fifteen percent of all visitors reported staying in paid overnight accommodations. They found the event “informative,” “amazing,” and “wonderful!” Even the wind and rain did not keep visitors at bay on a blustery Sunday during which farmers reported a steady stream of visitors from beginning to end of the day.

This year’s fourteen farms showcased livestock and fiber animals, cheese-making, vegetables, berry crops, herbs, value-added products, and conservation practices. Operations included a vineyard and winery, a new distillery, and a full-service equestrian facility. As one visitor reported, “The farm owners were fabulous, providing information about their products and animals. I even learned how to care for some of the plants I have in my home garden.”

## Tips to Prepare Trees for Winter

Trees require care through winter to maintain their health.

Even though trees are now going into dormancy, they require care before and during the winter to stay healthy. Here are some tips:

- **Wrap the trunk.** Some recently planted, thin-barked trees like honeylocust, ash, maple, and linden are susceptible to bark-damaging sunscald and frost cracks when temperatures get very cold in winter. Wrap trunks of younger trees up to the first branches using commercial tree wrap to protect the bark. Remember to remove the wrap once weather warms in the spring.
- **Mulch.** Spread 2 to 4 inches of wood chips, bark or other organic mulch over the root system of the tree. It will help reduce soil evaporation, improve water absorption and insulate the soil and roots against temperature extremes. To reduce the possibility of rot, make sure that mulch does not rest against the trunk of the tree. Consider layering leaves around the base of each tree as natural mulch.
- **Prune,** but not too early or too late. Although trees can also be pruned in the summer during active growth, late winter is often a favorite time for pruning. Remove dead branches and improve form, but make sure to do it correctly. Always prune at the branch collar – the point where a branch joins a larger one – and don’t remove any branches without good reason.
- **Give them a drink.** If this winter brings long periods of dry weather (2-3 weeks without snow cover or rain), and the soil begins to dry out, provide trees with supplemental water. Trees need about 10 gallons of water per inch of tree diameter. Water trees throughout the dripline – the area from just outside the trunk to the outer edge of the longest branches. Long, slow watering gets moisture down into the root zone.

## Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Class

20 forest landowners from Island County, representing 15 ownerships covering 266 acres, are spending their Thursday evenings in October and November learning about all things related to forest management. A variety of natural resource professionals deliver talks on forest health, wildlife habitat, silviculture and reforestation, forest products, forest planning, tax incentive programs, and more. In a recent survey, a class participant said, “This has given us a whole new way of looking at our forest. We wish we had taken a class like this years ago.” The class is offered through a partnership between WSU Extension, WA Department of Natural Resources, Island County, and the Whidbey Island Conservation District.

## North Whidbey CSA Pilot Season a Success!

Thanks to a grant from Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC), the WICD coordinated the development of a multi-farm CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) to serve Oak Harbor and active-duty military families. The goal is to assist local farms in developing a cooperative marketing model for a multi-farm CSA to be run by the farmers after the initial trial seasons. Members, a quarter of which were military, enjoyed a lively variety of produce from five farms: Case,

Willowood, Rosehip, Prairie Bottom, and Kettle’s Edge. Thanks go to the five farms and all their hard-working staff; Coordinator Janiece Black, who packed and delivered the produce each week; and to the Oak Harbor Public Market, where the shares were delivered to the CSA members for the 10-week pilot season.

Results of the project show a stronger connection between the Oak Harbor community and local farms, a greater awareness of the benefits



*Janiece Black greets members at the Oak Harbor Public Market pick up.*

and availability of CSAs, an increase in the consumption of fresh produce by member families, and a strong interest in continuation of the CSA next year. To learn more about the North Whidbey CSA, visit the website at [www.northwhidbeycsa.com](http://www.northwhidbeycsa.com).