As our wild spaces decrease the importance of adding native plants to the urban landscape grows. Planting natives is the best place to start when the goal is restoring ecosystems, attracting wildlife, and supporting pollinators.

Northwest plants, animals, and insects have lived together for thousands of years, so it’s no surprise that our native critters prefer the familiar. Adding trees to support insects and caterpillars will bring birds. Using native perennials will bring butterflies. Almost all native plants have a role in supporting pollinators.

Many native plants will adapt to differing environments, but it is still important to put the right plant in the right place. Things to consider when choosing plants:

- **Sun/Shade requirements**
- **Size at maturity**
- **Purpose in the landscape**

**Benefits of Planting Natives**

- Attracting wildlife
- Ecological restoration
- Acclimatized plants
- Feeling more connected to nature
- Pest and disease resistance
- Reducing storm-water run-off

**Growing Native Plants**

Just like other nursery plants, NW natives need proper care. Here are a few tips for successfully establishing new plantings:

- Planting in autumn is ideal, but spring is good too. The closer you get to summer, the more water you will need to provide.

- Soil preparation is important. Break up existing soil in an area as wide as possible, but dig holes only as deep as the root ball. Planting depth should be flush with existing soil or slightly raised.

- Water new plantings thoroughly on planting day (even if it’s raining) and weekly during dry spells until plants are rooted into their new sites. We recommend a long....slow.....watering so roots are sure to get soaked.

- Apply 1-2” of mulch. This is the best way to amend heavy soil, keep moisture levels more even and protect against weeds.

- Remember that established plants need water in extreme conditions. They will appreciate a deep soaking during long, hot, dry spells.

Compiled by Stephanie Mack.

**References**


Bosky Dell Natives: [www.boskydellnatives.com](http://www.boskydellnatives.com)

Native Plant Society of Oregon: [www.npsoregon.org](http://www.npsoregon.org)

Portland Metro, Native Plants for Willamette Valley Yards
Evergreen Native Hedges

Ceanothus cuneatus – Buckbrush
8-10’, sun, heat, drought tolerant, Z6
Ceanothus thyrsiflorus – Blue Blossom
8-10’, sun, heat, drought tolerant, Z8
Mahonia aquifolium – Tall Oregon Grape
6-8’, sun or shade, Z5
Myrica californica – Pacific Wax Myrtle
10-12’, sun or shade, Z7
Vaccinium ovatum – Evergreen Huckleberry
4-6’, sun or shade, Z7

Natives for Wildlife

Any and All PNW Native Plants Support Wildlife!

Whether you’re adding a little or a lot, native plants will help our critters. Here are a few tips to get you started.

Birds

Birds need high landing places (trees) and cover of varying heights (shrubs, perennials and groundcovers) so they can make their way from the sky to the ground while feeling safe. They also need food and water.

Insects are an important food source. Provide host plants for insects and allow for holes in leaves – don’t use insecticides.

Insect Host Plants Include:

Abies grandis – Grand Fir
Acer macrophyllum – Bigleaf Maple
Calocedrus decurrens – Incense Cedar
Holodiscus discolor – Oceanspray
Pseudotsuga menziesii – Douglas Fir
Quercus garryana – Oregon White Oak

Fruit & Seed Plants:

Alnus rubra – Red Alder
Amelanchier alnifolia – Serviceberry
Fragaria – Wild Strawberry
Lonicera involucrata – Twinberry
Mahonia – Oregon Grape
Malus fusca – Western Crabapple
Prunus emarginata – Bitter Cherry
Sambucus racemosa – Red Elderberry
Vaccinium ovatum – Evergreen Huckleberry

These are by no means complete lists, but are a good place to start.

BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies need host plants for eggs and larva, along with nectar plants for adults.

Plants to provide both nectar and hosting habitat for butterflies:

Tree

Prunus emarginata – Bitter Cherry

Shrubs

Arctostaphylos uva ursi – Kinnikinnick
Ceanothus – Buckbrush, Blue Blossom
Sambucus – Elderberry
Spiraea – Western, Sub-alpine, Birchleaf
Vaccinium – Huckleberry

Perennials

Asclepias speciosa – Showy Milkweed
Fragaria chiloensis – Coast Strawberry
Mirulus – Monkeyflower
Viola glabella – Streambank Violet

To find more host and nectar plants go to boskydellnatives.com

Erosion Control

“Lace your soil with a supporting web of roots of varying depths” Lory Duralia

Arbutus menziesii – Madrone
Cornus sericea – Red Osier Dogwood
Fragaria – Strawberry
Gaultheria shallon – Salal
Holodiscus discolor – Oceanspray
Oemlaria cerasiformis – Indian Plum
Polystichum munitum – Sword Fern
Rubus parviflorus – Thimbleberry
Sambucus racemosa – Red Elderberry
Symphoricarpos alba – Snowberry
Thuja plicata – Western Red Cedar
Vancouveria hexandra – Inside-out Flower
Arctostaphylos uva ursi – Kinnikinnick
Asarum caudatum – Wild Ginger

Groundcovers

Fragaria chiloensis – Coast Strawberry
Linnaea borealis – Twinflower
Polypodium glycyrrhiza – Licorice Fern
Sedum oreganum – Oregon Stonecrop

Nectar Plants for Hummingbirds:

Amelanchier alnifolia – Serviceberry
Aquilegia formosa – Western Columbine
Asclepias speciosa – Showy Milkweed
Camassia – Camas
Iris douglasii, Iris tenax
Lupinus polyphyllus – Big-leaf Lupine
Mahonia – Oregon Grape
Mimulus cardinalis – Red Monkeyflower
Ribes sanguinium – Red Flowering Currant
Rubus spectabilis – Salmonberry
Sidalcea – Checkermallow
Symphoricarpos alba – Snowberry