

Native Plants for Wildlife and Pollinators in Western Washington Gardens and Yards

Species	Shade or sun	Drought tolerance	Growth habit
Trees			
Big-leaf maple <i>(Acer macrophyllum)</i>	Sun	Good	Large deciduous tree, single stemmed. Drops lots of leaves and seeds in fall. Will resprout from cut stumps.
Douglas fir <i>(Pseudotsuga menziesii)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Large evergreen tree, single stemmed. Single branches can be pruned if needed. Drops cones.
Hazelnut <i>(Corylus cornuta)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Good	Multi-stem tree up to 20 feet tall and just as wide. Drops lots of leaves and seeds in fall. Can spread aggressively. Resprouts vigorously following pruning.
Pacific crabapple <i>(Malus fusca)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Multi-stem tree up to 20 feet tall and just as wide. Accepts some pruning.
Red alder <i>(Alnus rubra)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Large deciduous tree, single stemmed. Drops leaves and seeds in fall. Branches tend to break off.
Western red cedar <i>(Thuja plicata)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Poor	Large evergreen tree, single or multi stemmed. Single branches can be pruned if needed.
Shrubs			
Baldhip rose <i>(Rosa gymnocarpa)</i>	Sun to shade	Good	Delicate and not too thorny as roses go. Multi-stemmed; spreads by runners. Pruning OK.
Black twinberry <i>(Lonicera involucrata)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Poor	Robust, multi-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall; spreads aggressively. Pruning OK but too much reduces abundance of flowers and berries.
Evergreen huckleberry <i>(Vaccinium ovatum)</i>	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Multi-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall. Does not spread too aggressively.

This list includes only species native to western Washington that are fairly easy to obtain and grow for the average gardener.

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Indian plum (<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Multi-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall. Does not spread too aggressively.
Mock orange (<i>Philadelphica lewisii</i>)	Sun	Moderate	Robust, multi-stemmed shrub. OK with some pruning but flowers best if given ample space.
Ninebark (<i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Poor	Robust, multi-stemmed shrub; can grow up to 20 feet tall. OK with some pruning but flowers best if given ample space.
Nootka rose (<i>Rosa nutkana</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Multi-stemmed; spreads by runners. Pruning OK; can spread aggressively.
Oceanspray (<i>Holidiscus discolor</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Good	Robust, multi-stemmed shrub; can grow up to 20 feet tall. OK with some pruning but flowers best if given ample space.
Red elderberry (<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Poor	Robust, multi-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall. OK with some pruning but flowers best if given ample space.
Red-flowering currant (<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>)	Sun	Good	Multi-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall. Does not like pruning, needs ample space.
Red-osier dogwood (<i>Cornus sericea</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Many-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall. Fast growing but tolerates pruning well. Can be rooted from cuttings.
Salal (<i>Gaultheria shalon</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Low-growing, multi-stemmed shrub. Grows to about knee height. Can spread quickly under the right conditions.
Salmonberry (<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Poor	Fast-growing, multi-stemmed shrub up to several feet tall. Can be quite aggressive in spreading. Tolerates pruning well.
Snowberry (<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>)	Sun	Good	Fast-growing, multi-stemmed shrub, grows to about breast height. Can be aggressive in spreading. Tolerates pruning well.

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Tall Oregon grape (<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>)	Sun	Good	Fast-growing, multi-stemmed shrub up to a few feet tall. Leaves are quite prickly.
Vine maple (<i>Acer circinatum</i>)	Part shade/Shade	Poor	Fast-growing, multi-stemmed shrub up to 15 feet tall. Can be pruned, grows back from cut stumps.
Ground Covers			
Big-leaf lupine (<i>Lupinus polyphyllus</i>)	Sun	Good	Summer bloomer. Flower stalks grow up to about knee height in summer.
Coastal strawberry (<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>)	Sun	Good	Spreading groundcover, summer bloomer. Edible berries are fairly small.
Creeping blackberry (<i>Rubus ursinus</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Fast-growing vine that spreads aggressively over the ground. Summer bloomer. Edible berries appear only on female plants.
Deer fern (<i>Blechnum spicant</i>)	Part shade/Shade	Poor	Small fern (up to 2 feet tall) with bright green fronds.
Douglas aster (<i>Symphyotrichum subspicatum</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Fall-blooming ground cover with stems up to a few feet tall.
Kinnikinnick (<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>)	Sun	Good	Low-growing, spreading groundcover.
Low Oregon grape (<i>Mahonia nervosa</i>)	Sun/Part shade	Moderate	Spreading groundcover up to a foot tall; prickly leaves.
Western Canada goldenrod (<i>Solidago lepida</i>)	Sun	Good	Multiple flower stalks in mid-summer, up to chest height.
Western sword fern (<i>Polystichum munitum</i>)	Part shade/Shade	Moderate	Large fern (three to four feet wide).

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A few suggested resources

Detailed native plant guides and info on plant sales (for the species listed previously and many other native plants):

<https://www.wnps.org/native-gardening> [Washington Native Plant Society]

<https://kingcd.org/publications/native-plants/> [King Conservation District]

<https://www.theplantsale.org/shop> [Snohomish Conservation District]

Pollinator plants:

<https://kingcd.org/programs/better-food/pollinator-resources/> [King Conservation District]

<https://xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/pollinator-plants-maritime-northwest-region> [Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation]

Backyard wildlife habitat:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/backyard#create-habitat> [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife]

<https://www.gardenforwildlife.org/s/> [National Wildlife Federation]

Don't own a garden or yard where you can plant native species? You can still help! Volunteer with a local group to restore native plants in local parks, where everyone can enjoy your good work. These organizations and many others have regular work parties and they'd love to hear from you! Check out their web pages.

Green Everett Partnership
Green Seattle Partnership

Adopt-A-Stream Foundation
Pilchuck Audubon

Snohomish County Healthy Forest Project
Your city or county parks department