

NATIVE PLANTS FOR WILDLIFE

**COMPILED FROM:
NATIVE WOODY PLANTS FOR WILDLIFE
PUGET SOUND AREA**

**BY
COLLEEN STINSON & GREG FISHER
USDA NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**



Native Plants For Wildlife

When choosing plants for wildlife, plant a diversity of sizes and types of plants to attract a wider diversity of wildlife species. Group plantings in clusters that have different layers including trees, shrubs and ground covers. Many wildlife species also use snags or dead trees, down wood or logs on the ground, or brush and rock piles for cover as well. If you can provide these features along with native plants, you will be able to attract even more species of wildlife.

The key words used in this guide are explained below:

Size. Plants are grouped in this guide by their maximum height.

Tall trees are greater than 60 feet at maturity.

Small trees and shrubs grow from 10 to 60 feet tall.

Small shrubs and ground cover are less than 10 feet tall when fully grown.

Moisture. Native woody plants require moisture in amounts that range from dry to wet, and many of them are adapted to a variety of moisture conditions. Supplemental watering of plants may be required during their establishment.

Dry (D): Plants prefer well-drained soils, and need less water when they are established: more drought-tolerant than plants in other moisture categories: will not thrive in poorly drained sites.

Moderate(M): Plants prefer medium-textured soils that store water, but aren't poorly drained.

Wet (W): Plants prefer wet soils and generally will not thrive in droughty sites.

Soil. Plants have unique preferences for soil texture, nutrients, pH, and water holding capability. There is a strong correlation between soil texture and available soil moisture.

Clay: Has the smallest particle sizes: wetter than other soil types because it stores more water and drains more slowly.

Silt: Soil particles are slightly larger than clay particles.

Sandy/gravelly: Coarse texture; doesn't store water well, droughty in dry summer months.

Loam: Mixture of sand, silt, and clay that provides optimal growing conditions for a wide variety of plants.

Sun. Plants needs for light also vary widely:

Full sun (FS): Little or no shade required.

Partial sun (PS): Diffuse sunlight or shade during part of the day.

Full shade (FSH): Little or no direct sunlight required.

Wildlife Uses. Dominant uses of specific plants by wildlife vary with the seasons. Plants provide **cover (C)**, **nest sites (N)**, and food animals eat: **seeds (S)**, **fruit (F)**, **browse (B)**, or **insects (I)**.

Tall Trees

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Pacific Madrone <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	D	FS	dry, coarse	90'
Wildlife Use: F: fruit and flowers eaten by hermit thrush, flicker, robin, grosbeak, waxwing, mourning dove and band-tailed pigeon.				
Oregon White Oak <i>Quercus garryana</i>	D-M	FS	well drained, gravely or sandy	75'
Wildlife Uses: S,C,I; acorns are important fall and winter food for western gray squirrel, and also are eaten by wood duck, towhee, downy woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon, grouse, quail, steller's jay, flicker, lark, and thrush; nuthatch eat insects; yellow bellied sapsucker eat insects and sap.				
Douglas Fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	D-M	FS	Prefers well-drained mineral soils	150'-200'
Wildlife uses: S,B,N,C,I; osprey and eagles use for nesting, perching; seeds eaten by mice, chipmunk, shrew, crossbill, finch, grosbeak, junco, pine siskin, sparrows, and winter wren; nuthatch and sapsucker eat insects, blue and spruce grouse eat leaves; mountain beaver, porcupine, deer, elk, bear, and rabbit eat bark, twigs, and foliage. Thermal cover for large mammals.				
Big Leaf Maple - <i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	D-M	FS	variety, rocky	100'
Wildlife uses: S,N,C,I; seeds eaten by squirrel, deer, finch, nuthatch, kinglet, pine siskin, quail, song sparrow, and grosbeak.				
Grand Fir <i>Abies grandis</i>	D-M	FS-PS	prefers deep, moist, alluvial soil	200'
Wildlife uses: S, N, C, I: grouse eat seeds in cones; source of insects for birds such as nuthatch and yellow-bellied sapsucker; sap for yellow-bellied sapsucker; porcupine eats the inner bark; thermal cover for large mammals.				
Shore Pine <i>Pinus contorta contorta</i>	D-W	FS	tolerates poor, sandy soils: peat	65'
Wildlife uses: S, C, I: 63 species of wildlife use this tree, including: grouse, chickadee, crossbill, grosbeak, band-tailed pigeon, squirrel, and chipmunk eat seeds; nuthatch eat insects; thermal and hiding cover for deer.				
Western Paperbirch <i>Betula papyrifera</i>	M-W	FS	variety; prefers loams	70'
Wildlife uses: S, B, I: seeds eaten by grosbeak, chickadee, junco, pine siskin, yellow-bellied sapsucker, downy woodpecker, grouse, beaver, rabbit, chipmunk, deer, and elk; ruby-crowned kinglet and yellow-bellied sapsucker eat insects; sapsucker eats sap; grouse eat catkins and buds.				
Red Alder <i>Alnus rubra</i>	D-W	FS	wide range	110'
Wildlife uses: S, B, N, I: seeds eaten by pine siskin and chickadee; deer and ruffed grouse browse leaves; beaver use branches for dams and lodges; common nest tree for great blue heron. Associated insects are eaten by ruby-crowned kinglet, bushtit, warbling vireo, and yellow warbler.				
Black Cottonwood <i>Populus balsamifera</i>	D-W,F	FS	variety, prefer loam	200'
Wildlife uses: B, N, C, I: cover and nesting for birds. Can harbor large insect populations that feed birds such as vireo and yellow-bellied sapsucker. Beaver and deer browse branches of seedlings.				

Tall Trees

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Western Hemlock <i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>	M-W	FS-FSH	prefers moist, acidic soil high organic content	200'
Wildlife uses: S, N, C, I: crossbill, siskin, junco, chickadee, flicker, grouse, and squirrel eat seeds. Porcupine and sometimes deer browse on branches and young seedlings. Dense stands provide thermal and hiding cover.				
Western Redcedar <i>Thuja plicata</i>	M-W	FS-FSH	loam	200'
Wildlife uses: S, B, N, C, I: deer and elk browse seedlings heavily. Seed is eaten by chipping sparrow, hermit thrush, pine siskin, yellow-rumped warbler, bluebird, flicker, nuthatch and tree swallow. Yellow-bellied sapsucker eats sap and insects; woodpeckers use for cavity nesting.				
Quaking Aspen <i>Populus tremuloides</i>	M-W	FS	sandy loams	90'
Wildlife uses: B, N, C, I: harbor large insect populations that feed warbling vireo and towhee. Branches and seedlings browsed by deer. Yellow-bellied sapsucker eats sap and insects.				
Sitka Spruce <i>Picea sitchensis</i>	M-W	F-FS-FSH	variety prefers moist, acidic soil high organic content	200'
Wildlife uses: S, B, N, C, I: twigs eaten by rabbit and grouse; small mammals, chickadee and crossbill eat seeds; porcupine eat inner bark				
Oregon Ash <i>Fraxinus latifolia</i>	W	FS-PS	prefers loams, rich in humus	80'
Wildlife uses: S, N, C, I: seeds eaten by quail, wood duck, finch, grosbeak, grouse, yellow-bellied sapsucker, bear, and deer.				
Pacific Silver Fir <i>Abies amabilis</i>	M-D	FS-FSH	deep, well drained	165'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Noble Fir <i>Abies procera</i>	M-D	FS		200'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Yellow Cedar <i>Chamaecyparis (Cupressus) nootkatensis</i>	W-M	FS-FSH	rocky	120'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Western White Pine <i>Pinus monticola</i>	D	FS	found in valleys/slopes	120'
Wildlife uses: Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Lodgepole Pine <i>Pinus contorta latifolia</i>	M-D	FS	recent volcanic deposit, burned areas	120'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Mountain Hemlock <i>Tsuga mertensiana</i>	W-M	FS-FSH	deep, organic	120'
Wildlife uses: song bird food				

Small Trees and Shrubs

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Red Huckleberry <i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i>	M	PS-FSH	acidic, loamy soils or rotting wood	10'
Wildlife uses: F, B, C: important winter browse for rabbit, moose, deer and elk; fruits eaten by black bear, quail, ruffed grouse, woodpecker, warbler, thrush, kingbird, robin, sapsucker, band-tailed pigeon, bluebird, flicker, flycatcher and wood duck. Provides cover.				
Evergreen Huckleberry <i>Vaccinium ovatum</i>	D	FS-FSH	acidic, rocky, gravelly	15'
Wildlife uses: F, C: berries favored by grouse, chipmunk, quail, towhee, and black bear; thickets provide cover				
Red Osier Dogwood <i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	M-W	FS-PS	variety	20'
Wildlife uses: F, B, C: important winter browse for rabbit, moose, deer and elk; fruits eaten by black bear, quail, ruffed grouse, woodpecker, warbler, thrush, kingbird, robin, sapsucker, band-tailed pigeon, bluebird, flicker, flycatcher, and wood duck. Provides cover.				
Cascara <i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>	M-W	FS-FSH	fertile, loamy	30'
Wildlife uses: F, C, I: fruits and insects found on plant eaten by bushtit, evening grosbeak, band-tailed pigeon, robin, thrush, ruby-crowned kinglet, chickadee, flycatcher and nuthatch. Deer browse on leaves and twigs; thickets provide cover.				
Red Elderberry <i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	M-W	FS-PS	variety	12'
Wildlife uses: F, B: deer browse twigs and foliage; fruits eaten by small mammals, bushtit, white crowned sparrow, hermit thrush, towhee, yellow warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, bluebird, flicker, nuthatch, song sparrow, and evening grosbeak.				
Salmonberry <i>Rubus spectabilis</i>	M-W	FS-PS	variety; prefers fertile areas rich in humus	12'
Wildlife uses: flowers attract bees and hummingbirds; berries are eaten by steller's jay, finch, wren and quail; thickets provide cover.				
Scouler Willow <i>Salix scouleriana</i>	M-W	FS	variety	30'
Sitka Willow <i>Salix sitchensis</i>	"	"	"	30'
Pacific Willow <i>Salix lucida lasiandra</i>	"	"	"	40'
Hooker's Willow <i>Salix hookeriana</i>	"	"	"	25'
Wildlife uses: S, B, C, I: provides cover and insects for wildlife; seed eaten by bushtit, ruby-crowned kinglet, yellow warbler, yellow-bellied sapsucker, grouse, and grosbeak; rabbit, deer, elk and beaver eat twigs and leaves.				
Western Crabapple <i>Malus fusca</i>	M-W	FS-PS	variety	35'
Wildlife uses: F, B, N, C; fruit is choice food for most fruit or seed-eating wildlife species including deer and elk. Foliage and twigs are choice browse for elk, deer, rabbit and mice; thickets provide nesting and hiding cover.				
Bitter Cherry <i>Prunus emarginata</i>	D-W	FS-FSH	loam, sand or gravel	45-60'
Wildlife uses: S, B: seeds eaten by squirrel, deer, finch, nuthatch, kinglet, pine siskin, quail, song sparrow and grosbeak. Young shoots or sprouts browsed by deer and elk. Butterflies, butterfly larvae, hummingbirds also.				

Small Trees and Shrubs

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Oceanspray <i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	D	FS-PS	variety, including rocky	10-15'
Wildlife uses: S, C: habitat for small mammals; browse for deer and elk; seeds eaten by white-crowned sparrow and chickadee.				
Hazelnut <i>Corylus cornuta</i>	D-M	FS-FSH	variety, including rocky	15-20'
Wildlife uses: S, C, I; nuts are a favorite of squirrels, nuts are also eaten by grouse, woodpecker, steller's jay, chipmunk, rabbit, raccoon, fox, deer, beaver, and people: yellow warbler forages for insects.				
Indian Plum <i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>	D-M	FS-PS	variety	15-20'
Wildlife Uses: F; berries eaten by many mammals and birds, including cedar waxwing.				
Serviceberry <i>Amelanchier ainifolia</i>	D-M	FS-PS	prefers loamy, well-drained fertile soils but has wide tolerance	15-20'
Wildlife uses: F, B; twigs are browse for deer, moose, and elk; berries eaten by evening grosbeak, junco, hermit thrush, spotted towhee, yellow-bellied sapsucker, bluebird, chickadee, flicker, song sparrow, downy woodpecker, waxwing, grouse, bear, deer and elk.				
Blue Elderberry <i>Sambucus cerulea</i>	D-M	FS-PS	variety	15-20'
Wildlife uses' F, C, I: fruits are eaten by many species of wildlife including bushtit, white-crowned sparrow, hermit thrush, towhee, yellow warbler, yellow-bellied sapsucker, yellow-rumped warbler, bluebird, flicker, nuthatch, song sparrow, and evening grosbeak; thickets provide cover.				
Pacific Yew <i>Taxus brevifolia</i>	D-M	PS-FSH	loam	10-45'
Wildlife uses: F: birds eat berries and disperse seeds (poisonous to humans)				
Black Hawthorn <i>Crataegus douglasii</i>	D-M	FS-PS	loam, moderately deep to deep, well-drained, porous	25'
Wildlife uses: F, N, C: dense foliage used by nesting songbirds; fruits eaten by band-tailed pigeon, evening grosbeak, hermit thrush, flicker, robin, wood duck, grouse, cedar waxwing, Lewis' woodpecker and black bear. Thickets provide cover.				
Vine Maple <i>Acer circinatum</i>	D-W	FS-PS	sandy loam	30-40'
Wildlife uses: S, B: seeds eaten by squirrel, deer, finch, nuthatch, kinglet, pine siskin, quail, song sparrow and grosbeak. Young shoots or sprouts browsed by deer and elk.				
Douglas Maple <i>Acer glabrum</i>	M-D	FS-FSH	well drained, rocky	30'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Twinberry <i>Lonicera involucrata</i>	M-W	FS-PS	prefers loam	15'
Wildlife uses: F; fruits are eaten by evening grosbeak, junco, hermit thrush, bluebird, chickadee, flicker, finch, quail and deer.				

Small Trees and Shrubs

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Pacific Ninebark <i>Physocarpus capitatus</i> Wildlife uses: F; bears eat the berries; the foliage provides forage for deer and cover for small mammals and birds.	M-W	FS-PS	variety	15'
Pacific Dogwood <i>Cornus nuttallii</i> Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae, song bird food	M	FS-FSH		55'
California Wax-Myrtle <i>Myrica californica</i> Wildlife uses: song bird food	W-D	FS-FSH		6-18'
Chokecherry <i>Prunus virginiana</i> Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae, song bird food, hummingbirds	M-D	FS		6-45'
Western Mountain Ash <i>Sorbus scopulina</i> Wildlife uses: song bird food	W-D	FS		3-12'

Small Shrubs and Ground Cover

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Buckbrush/Snowbrush <i>Ceanothus velutinus</i> Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae	D	FS	often in burned areas	9'
Red-Stem Ceanothus <i>Ceanothus sanguineus</i> Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae	D	FS	rocky	3-9'
Sweet Gale <i>Myrica gale</i>	W	FS	nitrogen fixer	5'
Oregon boxwood <i>Pachistima myrsinites</i> Wildlife uses: song bird food	M-D	FS-FSH		
Blackcap Raspberry <i>Rubus leucodermis</i> Wildlife uses: song bird food, hummingbirds	M-D	FS-FSH	disturbed sites	6'
Trailing Blackberry <i>Rubus ursinus</i> Wildlife uses: song bird food, hummingbirds	M-D	FS-FSH	disturbed sites	1.5'

Small Shrubs and Ground Cover

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Thimbleberry <i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	M-W	FS-PS	loam	6'
Wildlife uses: F; fruit eaten by birds and mammals including jay, wren, hummingbird, grouse, finch and quail.				
Sitka Mountain Ash <i>Sorbus sitchensis</i>	W-D	FS-FSH		3-12'
Wildlife uses: song bird food				
Alaska Blueberry <i>Vaccinium alaskaense</i>	W-D	FS-FSH	soils w/ decaying wood	6'
Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae, song bird food, hummingbirds				
Oval-leaved Blueberry <i>Vaccinium ovalifolium</i>	D-M	PS-FSH	acidic, loamy	6'
Wildlife uses: F, N: berries favored by black bear, grouse, chipmunk, quail and towhee; deer browse.				
High-bush Cranberry <i>Viburnum edule</i>	M-D	FS-FSH	rocky	2-10'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food				
Oval-Leaved Viburnum <i>Viburnum ellipticum</i>	M-D	FS-FSH		2-10'
Wildlife uses: butterfly larvae, song bird food.				
Snowberry <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	D	FS-PS	prefers deep loams, mod. well to well-drained	6'
Wildlife Uses: F, B, C: waxy, persistent fruits eaten by pheasant, evening grosbeak, quail, robin, thrush and towhee; deer and elk browse.				
Cascade Oregon Grape <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>	D	FS-PS	variety	2'
Tall Oregon Grape <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	"	"	"	5'
Wildlife uses: F; fruit is eaten by many birds and mammals, including junco, chipping sparrow, towhee, cedar waxwing, finch, grouse, elk and deer.				
Kinnikinnick <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	D	FS	sandy, rocky, well-drained	2'
Wildlife uses: F, B; deer and elk browse foliage lightly; berries eaten by deer, elk, bear, band-tailed pigeon, evening grosbeak and grouse.				
Hairy manzanita <i>Arctostaphylos columbiana</i>	D	FS	rocky, slightly acidic	9'
Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae, hummingbirds, song bird food.				
Mock Orange <i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>	D-M	FS-PS	loamy to rocky	5'-9'

Small Shrubs and Ground Cover

Name	Water	Sun	Soil	Height
Nootka Rose <i>Rosa nutka</i>	D-M	FS-PS	loam	8'
Baldhip Rose <i>Rosa gymnocarpa</i>	"	"	rocky	8'
Swamp Rose <i>Rosa pisocarpa</i>	M-W	"	loam	8'
Wildlife uses: F; rosehips are eaten in fall and winter by bluebird, junco, grosbeak, quail, grouse, thrush and deer.				
Black Gooseberry <i>Ribes lacustre</i>	M-W	FS	variety; prefers loam	6'
Wildlife uses: F; many species of wildlife eat the berries, including towhee, waxwing, woodpecker, coyote, fox, mountain beaver, raccoon, skunk, tree squirrel, ground squirrel, deer and elk.				
Bunchberry <i>Cornus canadensis</i>	M-W	PS-FSH	loam; often grows on tree trunks and rotting logs	1'
Wildlife uses: F, B; berries eaten by sparrow, thrush, vireo and grouse; grouse also eat the buds.				
Hardhack <i>Spiraea douglasii</i>	W-M	FS-FSH	swamps, fens	6'
Wildlife uses: butterflies, butterfly larvae				
Salal <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>	D-M	FS-PS prefer FS	variety	8'
Wildlife uses; F, N; berries favored by black bear, grouse, chipmunk, quail and towhee; deer browse.				
Red Flowering Currant <i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	D-M	FS-PS	loam	6'
Wildlife Uses: F; Berries eaten by many wildlife species including chickadee, grouse, jay, waxwing, towhee, woodpecker, coyote, fox, mountain beaver, raccoon, squirrel, deer, elk, and chipmunk; hummingbirds attracted to red flowers.				

Water: D – dry; M – moderate; W – wet; F – flood tolerant

Sun: FS – full sun; PS – partial sun; FSH – full shade

Uses: S – seeds; F – fruit; B – browse; N – nesting; C – cover; I – insects

References

- City of Bellevue, Parks and Recreation Department, Butterfly Garden, undated
- Cowlitz County Conservation District, Streamside Planting Guide for Western Washington, January 1993
- Fisher, G., USDS/NRCS Area Forester. Pers. com. 1995.
- Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey and J.W. Thompson, Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969.
- King County Surface Water Management, Northwest Native Plants: Identification and Propagation, undated.
- Kruckeberg, Arthur R., Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest: An Illustrated Guide. Seattle, London: University of Washington Press, 1982.
- Lines, Ivan L., "Woody plants and their value as food for wildlife," USDA Soil Conservation Service, Biological Technical Note3. January 1976.
- Martin, A. C., H. S. Zim and A. L. Nelson, American Wildlife and Plants: A Guide to Wildlife Food Habits. New York: Dover Press, 1951. *
- Pojar, J., and A. MacKinnon (editors), Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast. Redmond, Washington: Lone Pine Publishing, 1994.
- Reed, Jr., Porter B., "National list of plant species that occur in wetlands, 1988 National Summary," US Fish and Wildlife Service, Biological Report 88(24), 1988.
- Robbins, C. S., B. Brunn and H. S. Zim, Birds of North America. New York: Golden Press, 1983.
- Stam, J., "Native season food plants used by insectivorous native birds and other wildlife: South Vancouver Island, Western Washington and Western Oregon," (list). Olympia, Washington, February 14, 1991.
- Voss, C. A., A Guide to Stream Corridor Revegetation in Western Washington. Olympia, Washington: Thurston Conservation District.
- Washington Department of Wildlife, Plants for Wildlife in Western Washington, undated.