

Create beautiful, easy-to-maintain naturescapes that attract birds and butterflies by



# Gardening with Native Plants



## *Inside...*

- Garden the natural way
- Prevent weeds from taking over
- Create habitat for wildlife
- Save water and money

*...and more!*



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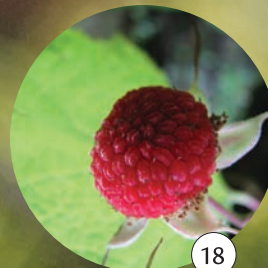
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## What is a Naturescape?

These days, we all want easy to maintain, drought-tolerant gardens that attract birds and butterflies. To achieve this, the best plant choices are native plants because they evolved to thrive in this region. Native plants are those species that were here before the European colonization of the Salish Sea bioregion. Rewarding and dynamic, **naturescapes are functional habitat gardens that reflect the diversity and beauty of this unique landscape.** This guide will help you improve your property: the best plant choices, garden design tips, commercial resources, free programs, and expert recommendations.

## Why are native plants great for your garden?

Did you know that southeastern Vancouver Island is one of Canada's top nature hot spots? That is because this beautiful place is home to the rare Garry Oak meadows and older Coastal Douglas-fir forests. However, over 97% of these habitats have been lost to urbanization and development. Introduced invasive plants are quickly transforming natural habitats for the worse, reducing biodiversity, overcrowding ecosystems, and putting wildlife at risk. Creating a naturescape (or a native plant habitat garden) on your property is part of the solution to habitat loss.

**The actions of individuals can make a big difference for wildlife across the region.**

A changing climate and booming population growth are forcing communities to rethink our prolific outdoor water use. Using native plants can also save you time and money as you will no longer need to worry about daily watering, expensive fertilizers, or toxic pesticides. Because native plants have evolved in this climate for generations, they support songbirds and attract a diversity of pollinators. Choosing the right plant for your garden conditions is important for success. Be sure to check the sun exposure and soil conditions that each plant requires. You can turn landscape issues into property features that enhance your property value!

## How to use this guide

**Numbers on photos refer to information in the Plant Table** (centrefold). The table identifies plant characteristics, uses, and suggested combinations. Bring this guide to your favorite nursery and show them which native species you want using their botanical name. Some nurseries can order in plants not typically stocked. Avoid ornamental varieties of native plants with similar names as they have sometimes been bred just for their flower size and some have even lost wildlife benefits!



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*June Plum (or Osoberry)*



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*Salal*



## Top Ten Naturescape Plants

Just getting started? HAT's Top Ten plant picks are beautiful, hardy, and readily available. Start small and install plants with plenty of mulch during the fall rains (Sept-Oct) to get a jump on next summer's dry season.



### Oceanspray

This beautiful shrub thrives in poor soils, drought, and salt spray. Plant it on a dry slope to help prevent erosion and attract seed eating birds. Lorquin's Admiral loves the creamy flower tufts that become orange-brown seed heads in winter, excellent food for birds.

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### Tall Oregon Grape

Blue edible berries, big yellow blooms, and shiny leaves in one drought tolerant perennial. Plant several behind low shrubs, around foundations, and in thickets. Spiny leaves, creeping rhizomes and upright habit creates a blooming evergreen hedge in full sun and well-drained or rocky soil.

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### Broad-leaved Stonecrop

A low groundcover for hot & sunny rock gardens, containers and garden borders. Edible, succulent leaves range from sage green to red. A hardy perennial, this plant's showy yellow flowers are a magnet for pollinators and hummingbirds.

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### Gummy Gooseberry

This spiny shrub replaces a thirsty cedar hedge for privacy and can be planted on top of raised areas. Excellent in dry sandy soils, fuchsia-like flowers are a favourite food and shelter for hummingbirds, and bloom as early as February. It has sticky ('gummy') leaves, and the sticky, hairy berries are birds' delight.

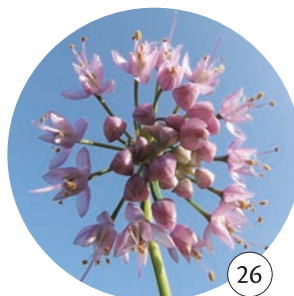
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### Sword Fern

Attractive copper-coloured fiddleheads in spring unfurl into tough, waist-high evergreen fronds. This hardy perennial complements finer foliage of groundcovers in partial sun to shade. Other native fern choices include shade-loving Lady Fern and Licorice Fern for rockeries.

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### Nodding Onion

A drift of this long-lasting lily lures pollinators and butterflies for months. Handles salt spray, wind, drought & poor, gravelly soils. Best for dry outcrops, exposed sandy meadows & rock gardens where it spreads nicely.

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### Red Flowering Currant

Hummingbirds feed from brilliant pink to red blooms in the spring, and other birds enjoy currants in the fall. A showy specimen plant or mixed in a hedgerow, this shrub is a gardener's favorite.

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### Woolly Sunflower

Bees and butterflies will party around showy drifts of intense yellow that last all summer. A self-sowing perennial with light green, velvety foliage enjoys dry shallow soils and looks great in banks, rockeries, and borders.

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### False Lily of the Valley

Low, shade-loving groundcover features small, white, perfumed flowers and creeping rhizomes. Berries turn red and gold in fall. Drifts of shiny spade-shaped leaves look great with woodland strawberry, ferns and bleeding heart. Grows under Cedar too.

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### Kinnikinnick

An early blooming, trailing evergreen groundcover with red berries in winter for birds. Best for pavement edges & dry, sunny slopes. Creeping branches cover walls and tolerate foot traffic. A butterfly nursery plant, this blooming beauty dresses up any site.

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## Plant Table

|                         | Ref # | Common Name                | Botanical Name                    | Goes Well With (Ref #) | Max Height<br>100cm = 1m = 3.3 ft | Soil: Dry • Moist<br>• Well Drained | Light: Shade •<br>Partial Sun • Sun | Bloom Time |
|-------------------------|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| TREES                   | ①     | Garry Oak                  | <i>Quercus garryana</i>           | 2, 27, 32, 39          | 15 - 30m                          | D, M, WD                            | S, PS                               | May        |
|                         | ②     | Arbutus                    | <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>          | 1, 3, 29, 32           | 15 - 20m                          | D, WD                               | S                                   | Apr-May    |
|                         | ③     | Shore Pine                 | <i>Pinus contorta</i>             | 1, 2, 26, 29, 32       | 10 - 15m                          | D, WD                               | S                                   | n/a        |
|                         | ④     | Pacific Willow             | <i>Salix lucida</i>               | 15, 17, 20, 24         | 6 - 15m                           | M                                   | S                                   | Apr-May    |
|                         | ⑤     | Douglas Maple              | <i>Acer glabrum</i>               | 11, 16, 22, 38         | 1 - 7m                            | WD, M                               | Sh, S, PS                           | Apr        |
|                         | ⑥     | Cascara                    | <i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>          | 2, 11, 22, 23          | 8 - 10m                           | M                                   | PS                                  | May-Jun    |
|                         | ⑦     | Black Hawthorn             | <i>Crataegus douglasii</i>        | 13, 16, 23, 24         | 3 - 10m                           | M                                   | S, PS                               | May        |
| SHRUBS & FERNS          | ⑧     | Gummy Gooseberry           | <i>Ribes lobbii</i>               | 26, 28, 29, 33         | 1 - 10m                           | D, WD                               | S                                   | Feb-Mar    |
|                         | ⑨     | Pacific Crabapple          | <i>Malus fusca</i>                | 7, 20, 35, 39          | 5 - 7m                            | M                                   | S, PS                               | Jun        |
|                         | ⑩     | Saskatoon                  | <i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>      | 12, 14, 16, 29         | 1 - 5m                            | D, M                                | S, PS                               | Apr-May    |
|                         | ⑪     | June Plum (Osoberry)       | <i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>      | 17, 15, 20, 24         | 1.5 - 5m                          | D, M                                | Sh, PS                              | Mar        |
|                         | ⑫     | Red-flowering Currant      | <i>Ribes sanguineum</i>           | 10, 11, 16, 29         | 1 - 3m                            | D, M                                | S, PS                               | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ⑬     | Nootka Rose                | <i>Rosa nutkana</i>               | 7, 19, 20, 23          | 0.5 - 3m                          | M, WD                               | S, PS                               | May-Jul    |
|                         | ⑭     | Oceanspray                 | <i>Holodiscus discolor</i>        | 16, 19, 23, 34         | 1 - 4m                            | D, M                                | S, PS                               | Jul-Aug    |
|                         | ⑮     | Red Elderberry             | <i>Sambucus racemosa</i>          | 17, 18, 20, 24         | 2 - 4m                            | M                                   | PS                                  | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ⑯     | Mock Orange                | <i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>       | 11, 14, 22, 29         | 3m                                | D, WD                               | S, PS                               | May-Jun    |
|                         | ⑰     | Red-osier Dogwood          | <i>Cornus sericea</i>             | 13, 15, 19, 20         | 1 - 5m                            | D, M                                | Sh, S, PS                           | May-Jun    |
|                         | ⑱     | Thimbleberry               | <i>Rubus parviflorus</i>          | 11, 15, 20, 24         | 1.5 - 3m                          | M                                   | Sh, S, PS                           | Jun-Jul    |
|                         | ⑲     | Tall Oregon Grape          | <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>         | 12, 13, 23, 24         | 1 - 2m                            | D, M                                | S, PS                               | Apr-May    |
|                         | ⑳     | Pacific Ninebark           | <i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>      | 11, 15, 17, 18         | 3 - 4m                            | M                                   | Sh, S, PS                           | Jun        |
|                         | ㉑     | Evergreen Huckleberry      | <i>Vaccinium ovatum</i>           | 19, 23, 34, 39         | 1 - 2m                            | D, M                                | Sh, PS                              | Apr-May    |
|                         | ㉒     | Salal                      | <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>         | 19, 23, 38, 39         | 1 - 1.5m                          | D, M                                | Sh, S, PS                           | Mar-Jul    |
|                         | ㉓     | Sword Fern                 | <i>Polystichum munitum</i>        | 5, 24, 38, 39          | 0.3 - 1.2m                        | D, M                                | Sh, S, PS                           | n/a        |
|                         | ㉔     | Low Oregon Grape           | <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>            | 12, 36, 37, 40         | 40 - 80cm                         | D, M                                | Sh, PS                              | Apr        |
| GROUND COVERS & FLOWERS | ㉕     | Douglas Aster              | <i>Symphyotrichum subspicatum</i> | 12, 30, 31, 32         | 35 - 1.2m                         | D, M                                | S                                   | Jul -Aug   |
|                         | ㉖     | Nodding Onion              | <i>Allium cernuum</i>             | 27, 28, 29, 30         | 20 - 40cm                         | D                                   | S                                   | Jun-Aug    |
|                         | ㉗     | Great Camas & other lilies | <i>Camassia leichtlinii</i>       | 1, 2, 28, 30, 32       | 30 - 120cm                        | D, M                                | S, PS                               | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ㉘     | Coastal Strawberry         | <i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>        | 26, 29, 31, 32         | 5 - 20cm                          | D WD                                | S, PS                               | Apr-May    |
|                         | ㉙     | Kinnikinnick               | <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>    | 3, 26, 28, 33          | 5 - 15cm                          | D, WD                               | S, PS                               | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ㉚     | Pearly Everlasting         | <i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>     | 25, 27, 31, 32         | 30 - 60cm                         | D                                   | S PS                                | Jul-Sept   |
|                         | ㉛     | Yarrow                     | <i>Achillea millefolium</i>       | 26, 27, 31, 32         | 30 - 90cm                         | D                                   | S, PS                               | Jun-Sept   |
|                         | ㉜     | Woolly Sunflower           | <i>Eriophyllum lanatum</i>        | 3, 25, 27, 30          | 10 - 60cm                         | D, WD                               | S                                   | May-Jul    |
|                         | ㉝     | Broad-leaved Stonecrop     | <i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>       | 26, 28, 29, 30         | 15cm                              | D, WD                               | S                                   | Jun-Jul    |
|                         | ㉞     | Trumpet Honeysuckle        | <i>Lonicera ciliosa</i>           | 5, 6, 10, 16           | up to 10m                         | D, WD                               | S, PS                               | May-Jul    |
|                         | ㉟     | Fringecup                  | <i>Tellima grandiflora</i>        | 23, 21, 24, 37         | 40 - 80cm                         | M                                   | Sh, PS                              | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ㊱     | Red Columbine              | <i>Aquilegia formosa</i>          | 24, 35, 38, 40         | 40 - 80cm                         | WD                                  | Sh                                  | May-Jun    |
|                         | ㊲     | False Solomon's Seal       | <i>Smilacina racemosa</i>         | 23, 24, 39, 40         | 30 - 70cm                         | M                                   | Sh, PS                              | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ㊳     | Pacific Bleeding Heart     | <i>Dicentra formosa</i>           | 21, 24, 27, 39         | 25 - 45cm                         | M                                   | Sh, PS                              | Feb-Jul    |
|                         | ㊴     | Sea Blush                  | <i>Plectritis congesta</i>        | 25-27,30-33            | 5 - 20cm                          | D, M, WD                            | S, PS                               | Apr-Jun    |
|                         | ㊵     | False Lily of the Valley   | <i>Maianthemum dilatatum</i>      | 23, 35, 36, 39         | 15 - 25cm                         | M                                   | Sh, PS                              | Apr-May    |



attract butterflies



attract hummingbirds



shelter for wildlife



food for wildlife



food for people



fall colour

Bring this guide to your nursery and ask for native plants by species name to ensure proper plant selection



| Characteristics | Plant descriptions with suggested site conditions and additional species                                                                  |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                 | Slow-growing, can be a large tree or shrubby bush, leathery dark glossy leaves, acorns attract abundance of wildlife                      |
|                 | Fragrant showy white flower clusters, red berries, beautiful red peeling bark. Also try the shrub, Hairy Manzanita ( <i>A. hispida</i> )  |
|                 | A seaside favorite! Handles salt, wind & poor soil, grows straight in average soil, bonzai in poor, acidic soil                           |
|                 | Create thickets near water, shade out weeds, and grow from cuttings. Also try: <i>S. scouleriana</i> , <i>S. hookeriana</i>               |
|                 | Delicate, green flowers in spring, brilliant orange-red leaves in autumn, resprouts from roots. Beautiful ornamental                      |
|                 | Grows well on wet, disturbed sites. Tiny flowers produce blue-black berries. Yellow and red leaves in fall.                               |
|                 | Copious thorns resist beavers. White flowers, black berries, small tree or broad shrub likes organic soil. Scarlet in autumn              |
|                 | Great for poor, rocky or sandy soils, can be planted on top of berms. Fuchsia-like flowers are a favourite for hummingbirds.              |
|                 | Fragrant, white apple-blossom flower clusters, tart and delicious orange-pink edible fruit, yellow-orange leaves in fall, small tree      |
|                 | Showy white flowers, delicious fruit, spreading rhizomes. Drought, salt and clay tolerant. Deer browse leaves                             |
|                 | Hedge or borders, very early flowering, cucumber-tasting plums in May; use male & female plants to ensure fruiting                        |
|                 | Very showy with early blooms, no thorns, crinkly maple-like leaves on a compact shrub. Dark fruits eaten by birds                         |
|                 | Large, fragrant, lilac-pink flowers, large rose hips are reddish-orange, stabilizes stream banks                                          |
|                 | Big, showy flower clusters become puffball orange-brown seed heads. Grows taller in shade. Top ten pick!                                  |
|                 | Fast growing shrub, showy white flower clusters attract hummingbirds, shiny red berry clusters and big leaves                             |
|                 | Early fragrant white flowers, fast-growing, adaptable, broad upright shrub. Dense seasonal screening                                      |
|                 | Hardy, fast-growing, white flowers, showy red twigs, brilliant red fall leaves, fruit is white to bluish.                                 |
|                 | Large, fragrant pink flower produces sweet berries. Spreading streamside shrub forms thickets with snowberry                              |
|                 | Highly recommended! Tough holly-like leaves, yellow flower clusters, edible blue-black berries, dry slope stabilizer                      |
|                 | "Snowball bush" likes wet, open places like streams and lake shores, excellent for securing slopes. Attractive bark                       |
|                 | Bushy with leathery, shiny, leaves, pink, bell-shaped flowers, sweet, glossy edible purple-blue berries - harvest after frost             |
|                 | Excellent cover for shade and sandy soils, Berries make delicious jelly. Tough, shiny leaves can be pruned back.                          |
|                 | Grows fast, protects shady slopes. Dead fronds make amphibian habitat. Also try Deer Fern or in moist shade ( <i>B. spicant</i> )         |
|                 | Perennial creeping and low in full sun, erect and tall in semi-shade with larger leaves. Early flowers, tart berries                      |
|                 | Bumblebees love violet and yellow blooms, creeping rhizome fills perennial beds. Also try Canada Goldenrod ( <i>S. canadensis</i> )       |
|                 | Pollinators' delight! Bulbs multiply quickly in sandy soil & rockeries. Also try Hooker's Onion and Fool's Onion                          |
|                 | Edible bulbs multiply quickly, attractive seed heads in meadows, also Common Camas, Fawn, Chocolate, & Tiger Lilies                       |
|                 | Tasty groundcover with white flowers and sweet berries. Try <i>F. virginiana</i> or <i>F. vesca</i> for shade. Transplant runners         |
|                 | Salt and drought tolerant groundcover forms mats, takes trampling & poor soils.                                                           |
|                 | Crisp papery flowers, long bloomer provides late season interest. Also try the pink <i>Anaphalis rosea</i>                                |
|                 | Tough perennial, large, white, long lasting flower heads on feathery foliage. Root mat holds soil on slopes                               |
|                 | Long blooming rockery plant with silver-green leaves. Drought tolerant & self-sowing. Dead head for extended bloom                        |
|                 | Showy bright yellow flowers, succulent edible leaves, place in rock outcrops, on concrete. Salt tolerant                                  |
|                 | A vine with orange tubular flowers followed by red berries. Climbs posts & trees. Try pink honeysuckle ( <i>L. hirsuta</i> ) in dry zones |
|                 | Fragrant white flower spires rise from fuzzy, heart shaped leaves. spreading habit, resists slugs                                         |
|                 | Beautiful lantern flower, perennial adapts to gravel soils, can be used on steep banks, front of border plantings and streamsides         |
|                 | Showy white flowers and red berries, ornamental foliage, shade-tolerant, easy to transplant.                                              |
|                 | Rose pink flowers extend above mounds of grey-green lacy foliage that spreads well in shady moist soils                                   |
|                 | Deer resistant, dainty pink tufted spring flowers enjoyed by bumblebees in seasonally moist meadows or dry rocky sites                    |
|                 | Delicate white flowers followed by berries turning red in winter with glossy foliage spreads well in conifer mulch                        |

prevent erosion
 pollinators
 birds
 deer resistant
 hedge/privacy
 evergreen
 winter food

# How to Start Your Naturescape



**1. Observe for the first year. Yes, a whole year!** Whether you're screening scenes, holding slopes, or covering rocks, there is an ideal native plant for the job. However, in order to know which to choose, observation is key. Watch how water flows and how the sun moves across the sky for a full year before planting new areas. Sites with winter flooding are typical for backyards in our region. Sites with full sun, deep shade, poor drainage, or slopes have many options for suitable native plants, but take notes on the seasonal changes before planting.

**2. Test your soil for standing water and drainage.** Dig some holes to determine your soil types: organic (acidic), sandy loam, clay, or mineral soil? Does water pool or drain away quickly? Light levels, acidity, and drainage can be improved, but it's best to choose plants that like existing conditions. Mounds, pits, pools, swales & terraces diversify your site's surface area and create microclimates.

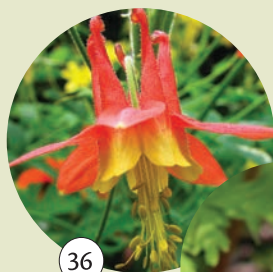
**3. Ask, Talk, Visit, Experiment!** Ask questions, talk to other gardeners, visit demonstration gardens, and do not be afraid to experiment! Try a few of your favourite native wildflowers by seed or starts in a pot or container first. For a layered look, place ground covers in the foreground, followed behind by taller wildflowers, ferns, then bushes and trees as a backdrop. Choose plants that will grow only to the height you require, and make sure there is room to grow on both sides.

**4. Maintain for best results.** Depending on your comfort with a wild-looking garden, basic maintenance and care is often needed to ensure your naturescape can thrive. The amount and duration of care – mostly watering and weed control – will depend on weather, site conditions, plant requirements, and what is coming under your neighbour's fence. If a suitable spot is chosen, native plants will initially require watering until they have become established at the site, usually within the first year and only supplemental water during the driest weeks of our drought summers.

## Shady Moist Site



If a space receives little or no direct sun, choose shade-loving moist forest plants. A shiny groundcover of False Lily of the Valley looks great under bold ferns (above). Columbine and Bleeding Heart add some color to cool greens like Miner's Lettuce. Choose dry-shade plants under dry roof lines, like Licorice Fern, Alumroot, or June Plum.



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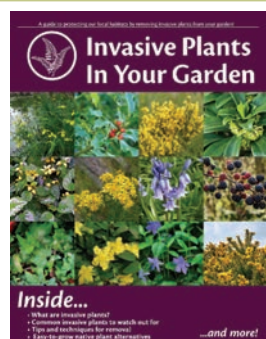


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## Sunny Dry Site



If a spot is hot and dry with full sun, choose drought-tolerant plants such as Roemer's Fescue, Tall Oregon-grape & Nodding Onion that form a ground cover beside Shore Pine. Coastal Strawberry (left) and Sea Blush thrive along with native grasses like California Brome, Junegrass, and Blue Wildrye without any irrigation. Add a clean water dish for birds and butterflies, and replenish regularly.



## Are You Harbouring Aliens?

Some introduced plants escape from ornamental gardens, grow (or get dumped) into natural areas and overwhelm native ecosystems. Even some "Native Canadian Wildflower" seed mixes contain invasive weedy species. Steer clear of known invaders (below) and replace with similar native alternatives.

For some invasive species, repeated hand removal or cutting are the most effective methods. For others, smothering with cardboard & weed-free mulch is best. For information about invasive plant removal, visit CRD Invasives at [crd.bc.ca/invasives](http://crd.bc.ca/invasives) or get a copy of HAT's companion guide *Invasive Plants in Your Garden*.

LAMIAM

BUTTERFLY BUSH

DAPHNE

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

ENGLISH IVY

PERIWINKLE

ENGLISH HOLLY



# Your Naturescape Checklist:

## Wildlife Stewardship

**The three essentials: food, shelter and water.** Seed and berry producing shrubs feed and shelter birds. **Keep dead tree trunks or stumps to invite woodpeckers.** Provide a variety of food sources through the seasons by leaving seed heads and pruning just before buds break. Leave sticks and branches in a brush pile for shelter. Leaves left on the ground become mulch that attracts many birds like Spotted Towhees, holds moisture for roots, and builds soil. A water feature will attract pollinators like bumblebees and hummingbirds.

**Leave the leaves and eliminate pesticides to encourage pollinators.** Although more familiar in their adult form, caterpillars need food too (host plants), and poisoning their food with pesticides will reduce your butterfly numbers. Plant willows and stinging nettle as egg-laying habitat and celebrate your chewed leaves. **Swallowtail caterpillars** (left) love Spring Gold and sister plants. Some butterflies even lay eggs or overwinter in leaf mulch so leave your leaves!

**Avoid using rodenticide.** Although this is a quick and convenient way to remove undesirable rodents from your home, the poison will make its way into the food chain. **Rodenticide is a killer of neighbourhood owls and other birds** that unknowingly consume poisoned rats. To deter rodents, try reducing the amount of food available outdoors (birdseed), and reduce rat friendly habitat on your property by staying away from thick invasive ground cover plants like St. John's Wort and English Ivy (which can also be used to climb buildings and create nests by rats).

**Let your garden get a little messy.** **Allow logs to rot in place and hold summer moisture for salamanders,** and build a brush pile for birds. Rock piles, patches of long grass, and leaf mulch piles create diversity. Snags or wildlife trees (dead and dying standing trees) are extremely valuable for salamanders and birds but are usually missing from urban areas.

**Remove pet waste and prevent fertilizer runoff from entering waterways;** the fish and turtles will thank you. Use trees to shade ponds to keep water cool & oxygen rich. Shrubs can create a buffer alongside streams, filtering toxins and providing habitat for insects that in turn feed our fish, birds, and turtles.

**Attract native birds by building the right kinds of shelter.** Native birds are a wonderful addition to any yard. European Starlings and European Sparrows, however, are unwanted exotic species of birds that are aggressive and compete with native birds. To avoid them, try reducing the entrance hole size of bird boxes or installing nesting ledges and chickadee, swallow, and bluebird boxes instead. **To keep your new bird friends safe from your feline family member, try a bright and colourful "cat bib" -- which birds can see but rodents (like rats) cannot.**

## Nurturing Nature

**Protect soil by mulching with leaves and use as fertilizer for native plants.** Make a large wire leaf bin in the fall and then spread composted leaves around plants in the fall & spring. Keep the pile moist and sprinkle with lime to speed composting. **Pine cone mulch** discourages digging cats, **wood chips** protect soil from compaction, and **conifer needles** make excellent pathway mulch. Fallen leaves and twigs are what fungi convert to soil; let nutrients return to the plants. **Avoid using peat moss** in your gardening and switch for something more sustainable like coconut coir (husk).

**When planting shrubs, make the hole larger than the root ball** but keep the same depth as in the pot. To promote healthy growth, cut any roots that wrap around the root ball, and do not add soil amendments. Firm up the soil around roots and mulch heavily, avoiding plant stems.

**Reduce lawn to just what you need** since lawns consume the most effort, chemicals, and water of any landscape treatment. Reduce lawn area in shade, corners, and slopes. Instead of using fertilizer **top dress turf with sifted compost or meal in February to promote healthy, drought tolerant soil.** Avoid driving vehicles on wet soil as compacted soil favours weeds and prevents water recharge. Never dump lawn clippings or garden waste in parks.

**Easily convert to gardens by covering grass with 3 layers of cardboard** under 10 cm (4 in) of mulch (leaf mold, wood chip, bark bits, etc.). Raid the cardboard bin of a local appliance/bicycle retailer and cover up your weed patches too (remove the tape first). Plant through cardboard (bottom left) for hardy new plants and fewer weeds. Never use non-biodegradable black plastic cloth as a weed barrier under mulch.

**Wildflower meadows should only be mowed after seed has set (usually late August), leaving at least a quarter of the area uncut to create wildlife refuge.** Raking up some dead grass in early fall can help wildflowers thrive. Leave it in piles so the overwintering butterfly cocoons can survive to next spring. Light mulching in late winter can help lily species thrive among thick grasses, but mulch smothers annuals like Sea Blush. Control weeds during the summer drought; avoid weeding or mowing from February in Camas meadows.



All of the native lilies are beautiful additions to any deer-fenced garden (Above left to right: Tiger, Fawn, and Chocolate Lily)



# Gardening with Native Plants

## What are Oak and Prairie Landscapes?

A landscape of many names, these unique natural features are also referred to as KŁO,ELENEŁ by SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples, Garry oak ecosystems, prairie-oak meadows, coastal oaks, oak-savannahs, and many more. As a resident in this beautiful region, we respectfully acknowledge the immense significance of these habitats as cultural landscapes to all of the Indigenous communities in the region. These are not just meadows, but a Cultural Keystone Place: they “express a long and intimate relationship between Peoples and their natural environments, reflecting specific techniques of sustainable land use, the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation with nature” since time immemorial (Cuerrier et al, 2015). We recognize and greatly appreciate the ongoing efforts by Indigenous communities to reclaim and restore these ecosystems from colonial and ecological destruction.

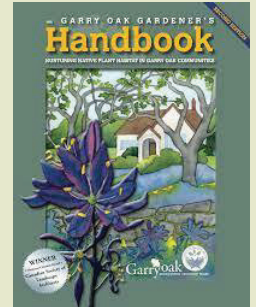
As a proud member of the Songhees Nation and lək̓ʷəŋən (Lekwungen) People, Cheryl Bryce shares with us that “diverse ecosystems, such as the Garry Oak Ecosystem (GOE), which is known for the kwetlal (camas, a starchy bulb that has been a staple food and trade item for Indigenous Peoples in the region for generations), have thrived on Lekwungen territories for centuries. GOEs remain vital to the kwetlal food and trade system, and Lekwungen communities were known worldwide as the place to trade for kwetlal.”

Only about 3% of oak areas are left undeveloped, so they are an **endangered ecosystem in Canada**, and because of their destruction, over 100 species of birds, pollinators, mammals, plants, and human culture that depend on oak areas are officially listed as “at risk” of extinction - disappearing forever.

That is why it is important now more than ever, to learn about these unique ecosystems, and to protect and restore every inch we have left. There are an incredibly biodiverse suite of seven different oak-associated ecosystems to discover. These landscapes are characterized by openness, and the presence of oak and/or prairie plants, and are only found in the Pacific Northwest. **Their ability to thrive in drought-stricken summers and wet winters make them a great choice for any gardener wishing to save water and are a powerful option in a naturescapers effort to increase our regional climate resilience.**

Read the full article at [hat.bc.ca/oaks](http://hat.bc.ca/oaks) on Cultural Keystone Places: Conservation and Restoration in Cultural Landscapes by Alain Cuerrier, Nancy Turner, Thiago Gomes, Ann Garibaldi & Ashleigh Downing. (2015) from the Journal of Ethnobiology.

visit  
[hat.bc.ca/oaks](http://hat.bc.ca/oaks)  
for resources, project  
ideas, and more!



The Garry Oak  
Gardener's Handbook is a  
great place to learn more!  
Available free online or  
by donation at the HAT  
office.

For more in-depth  
information visit the  
Garry Oak Ecosystem  
Recovery Team  
(GOERT) website  
[goert.ca](http://goert.ca)



The difference between a restored meadow space (left) and a mowed turf lawn (right) is night and day for wildlife. One side is home to dozens of species which act as food and shelter for animals, while the other contains that same biodiversity as that of a shag carpet.



### Habitat Acquisition Trust

HAT is a non-profit regional land trust established in 1996 to conserve natural habitats through stewardship, land protection, and community education.

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