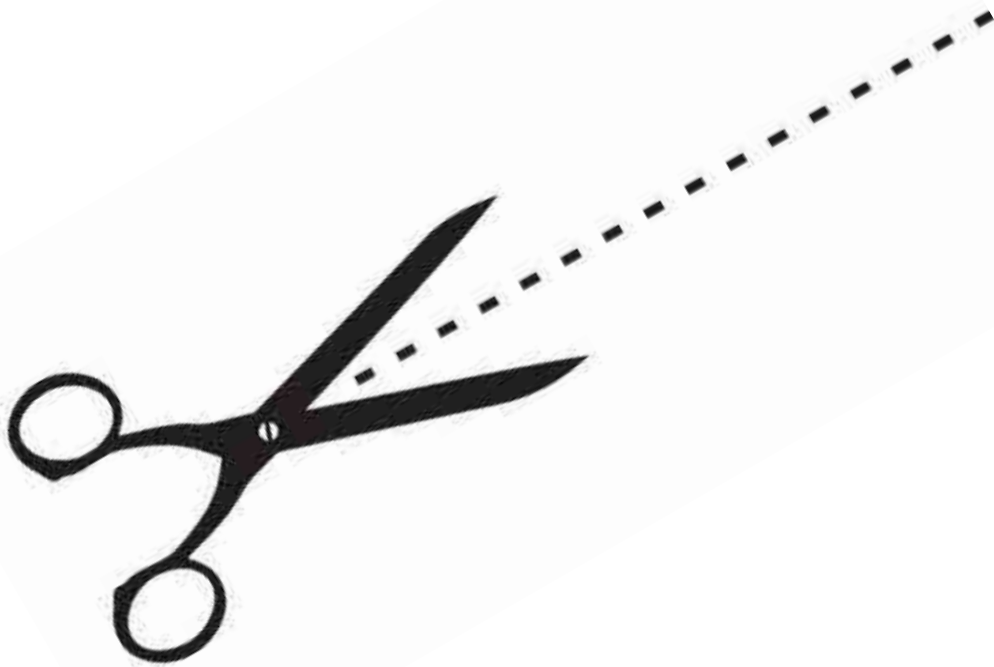


# PLANT ID CARDS

Here is your handy collection of the most commonly used raingarden plants in the Northwest Region.

Cut along dashed line and laminate for your own set of plant identification cards to take outside.





Carex Species  
**sedges**

Emergents



Juncus Species  
**rushes**

Emergents





Emergents

## Carex Species Sedges

**Description:** Sedges are grass-like, herbaceous plants with solid, triangular stems and fibrous roots or rhizomes. Most have grass-like leaf blades. Leaves are arranged in sets of three, and have parallel veins. Flowers are arranged in several, dense clusters, usually at the ends of long stems. Fruits are enclosed in a membranous sac.

**Habitat:** Over 100 different sedges grow in moist and dry areas of Western Washington. Many, such as *Carex obnupta* (slough sedge) and *Carex aquatilis* var. *dives* (Sitka sedge), grow in areas that are seasonally saturated or inundated. Others, such as *C. hendersonii* (Henderson sedge) or *C. pennsylvanica* (long-stoloned sedge), prefer moist to well-drained soil.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Sedges are easily propagated, provide excellent soil-binding and erosion resistance, are quite attractive, and need little care. Used for food by ducks and numerous other birds, and by deer, beavers, and small mammals.

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seed, by sowing in the fall, either on-site or in trays, and allowed to over-winter. Rhizome cuttings are effective, but should only be taken from appropriate salvage sites. Plants can be multiplied by division, though this should be used only with salvaged plants or plants already in



Emergents

## Juncus Species Rushes

**Description:** Rushes are grass-like herbaceous plants with cylindrical or flattened, solid stems. At their bases, leaves are tightly sheathed around the stem, and leaves are sometimes absent or little more than bladeless sheaths on green stems. Flowers are small, greenish-brown to purplish-brown, and borne in clusters near or at the ends of small flower stems.

**Habitat:** Generally found growing in clumps in wet soils or shallow, standing water. Rushes are widely-distributed, and there are more than 20 rush species in Western Washington.

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Rushes provide excellent soil-binding and erosion resistance, and are attractive additions to gardens. Although rushes are believed to have low value for wildlife, they provide cover for small mammals and marsh birds, who probably also eat the seed heads. There are numerous rushes native to Western Washington, and interested persons should consult other references. The most common species in our area is *Juncus effusus*, but it can be invasive and push out other native plants, especially in level wetland areas with uniform water depths. However, it can be a good choice for hilly wetland areas with both shallow and deep water, as these variations will prevent it from taking over.

**Propagation:** Seeds are tiny, but germinate easily. Sow on soil surface, barely cover, and keep moist. Rhizome cuttings are effective. Division can be used to multiply salvaged plants or plants already in your yard.





*Sagittaria latifolia* var. *latifolia*

## broadleaf arrowhead

Emergents



*Scirpus acutus*

## hard-stemmed bulrush

Emergents





*Sagittaria latifolia var. latifolia*

## Broadleaf arrowhead

Emergents

**Description:** This native grows up to three feet above the water from tubers. Leaves are quite variable in shape, but are often arrowhead-shaped at maturity. Flowers consist of three white petals with a yellow center, and are in whorls of 2-8 (usually three) flowers on a separate flower stalk.

**Habitat:** Shorelines, in mud and to depths of one foot.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Its attractive leaves and flowers, non-aggressive growth (plants will remain in shallow areas), and usefulness to wildlife make this an excellent choice for shoreline areas and shallow water, especially where erosion might be a problem. Tubers are eaten by waterfowl and humans, and muskrats, beavers, and porcupines eat the entire plant. Numerous species of birds eat the seeds, and numerous insects and amphibians use the plant.

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seeds planted in mud, and tubers can be divided.



*Scirpus acutus*

## Hard-stemmed bulrush

Emergents

**Description:** This emergent perennial grows in a clump from rhizomes, and reaches a height of 4-8 feet. Stems are bright green, cylindrical, erect, often ½ inch wide at the base, with small, poorly-developed leaves clasped around the stem. Flowers appear near the tops of stems, and are contained in compact, grayish-brown spikelets clustered at the ends of short offshoots from the main stem.

**Habitat:** Periodically or permanently-flooded marshes, in water up to three feet deep. Full sun.

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Its value to wildlife and excellent soil-binding qualities make it an ideal plant for restoring marshes and the edges of streams, ponds, or lakes. Stems help reduce shoreline erosion from wave action. Plants destroy pathogenic bacteria in soil or water near the root zone. Muskrats eat the rhizomes and use the stems to build dens.

**Propagation:** Can be propagated from seed, from rhizome cuttings, by salvaging clumps, or by dividing salvaged plants or plants already established in your yard. Seed should be gathered in mid-summer (July) and scattered on-site immediately, or stored in damp sand at about 40° F and sown in pots in the fall or spring. If sown in containers, use a water-saturated mix of organic soil and sand, and plant out seedlings the following fall (seeds should germinate in about 3-4 weeks). Plants can be divided during winter and spring.





*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* ssp. *uva-ursi*

## kinnikinnick

Ferns, Ground covers, Herbaceous Perennials



*Asarum caudatum*

## wild-ginger

Ferns, Ground covers, Herbaceous Perennials





Ferns,  
Ground Covers,  
Herbaceous  
Perennials

### *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi ssp. uva-ursi*

## *Kinnikinnick*

**Description:** This trailing ground cover can grow to be 12 feet long, though it rarely gets more than eight inches above the ground. It can be identified by its small, evergreen leaves and thin, gray bark that flakes off to reveal smooth, red bark. Leaves are alternate, dark-green, oval, and about one inch long. Flowers are small (about ¼ inch across), drooping pinkish-white bells, and appear in few-flowered clusters at the ends of branches April to June. Fruits are small (¼ inch) bright-red berries that remain on the plant into the winter.

**Habitat:** Fairly common and widespread in Western Washington. In well-drained soils, especially sandy to rocky ones. Full sun to partial shade, though it grows and flowers best in full sun. Prefers low summer moisture.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** One of a handful of native ground covers that will grow in full sun and tolerate dry soils. Its wide-spreading rooting stems make it especially useful for stabilizing steep banks. Hosts butterfly caterpillars. Fruits are eaten by birds, small mammals, deer, elk, and bears.

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seeds or cuttings, though both methods are slow. Seed should be collected as soon as the fruit ripens, separated from the pulp, and planted. Seeds may take two years to germinate, and another 2-3 years to produce blooms. Cuttings of the current year's growth should be taken August to November. Each cutting should be about four inches long, and the lower leaves should be removed before planting in a container. Cuttings may take up to two years to grow enough roots to plant out. Plants already in your yard can be multiplied by layering.



Ferns,  
Ground Covers,  
Herbaceous  
Perennials

### *Asarum caudatum*

## *Wild-ginger*

**Description:** This low-growing evergreen perennial can be identified by its large (2-5 inches across), shiny, heart-shaped leaves, and the lemony-ginger smell of its leaves when bruised. Each leaf is attached to a hairy, 2-8 inch-tall stalk, and the stalks are in pairs from each of the rhizome's nodes. The solitary, reddish-brown flowers are rarely seen due to concealing leaves, and produce a fleshy capsule.

**Habitat:** Common at low to middle elevations in moist, coniferous forests, in soils with a high organic content. Partial to full shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Its beautiful leaves and willingness to spread by extensive rhizomes makes it a popular choice for gardens.

**Propagation:** Easily grown from seed. Can also be grown from rhizome cuttings and by transplanting rooted sections.





*Athyrium filix-femina* var. *cyclosorum*

## lady fern

Ferns, Ground covers, Herbaceous Perennials



*Blechnum spicant*

## deer fern

Ferns, Ground covers, Herbaceous Perennials







Ferns,  
Ground Covers,  
Herbaceous  
Perennials

### *Athyrium filix-femina* var. *cyclosorum*

## *lady fern*

**Description:** This large (2-5 feet tall) fern has multiple fronds growing from a central clump. Fronds are deciduous, bright yellow-green, lance-shaped, tapered at both ends, and 2-3 times pinnate (though the smallest leaflets are just coarsely serrated).

**Habitat:** Wet meadows, forested wetlands, bogs, and nearly any damp area. In moist to wet, organic soils. Full sun to full shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** An excellent addition to wetland restoration projects due to its rapid growth and adaptability to a variety of environmental conditions. It can also be used as an ornamental plant in a wet site. Provides cover for wildlife.

**Propagation:** Easily salvaged during the dormant season (November to March), when the dead fronds can be used to locate individual plants. Once established in a favorable environment, it spreads readily from spores. Salvaged plants or plants



Ferns,  
Ground Covers,  
Herbaceous  
Perennials

### *Blechnum spicant*

## *deer fern*

**Description:** This 1-3 foot tall fern consists of sterile fronds encircling a central clump of fertile fronds. Both types of fronds have widely-spaced, oblong leaflets that become progressively smaller as one moves from the middle of the frond toward either end. The surrounding sterile fronds are evergreen and frequently lie on the ground, while the central fertile fronds are deciduous and erect, with much narrower and often rolled-up leaflets.

**Habitat:** In moist, coniferous forests. Full sun (in moister areas) to full shade; prefers shade, and takes dry shade well.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** An attractive addition to appropriate landscapes. In some areas, it is an important winter food for deer and elk.

**Propagation:** Can be salvaged.



*Dicentra formosa* ssp. *formosa*  
**Pacific bleeding-heart**

Ferns, Ground covers, Herbaceous Perennials



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*Polystichum munitum*  
**sword fern**

Ferns, Ground covers, Herbaceous Perennials







Ferns,  
Ground Covers,  
Herbaceous  
Perennials

*Dicentra formosa ssp. formosa*

## Pacific bleeding-heart

**Description:** This succulent, creeping perennial grows 6-20 inches tall, with deeply and much-divided (almost fern-like) leaves and drooping, heart-shaped flowers. Leaves arise from a slender, brittle rhizome on long stalks, and are numerous and smooth. The heart-shaped flowers have two deep, sac-like spurs, are pale to deep pink, about one inch long, and appear above the leaves in clusters of 5-15. Seeds are in pod-like capsules up to two inches long.

**Habitat:** A common low to mid-elevation plant in moist, rich soils, in partial to full shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Transplants and spreads easily, but is not aggressive. Hosts butterfly caterpillars, and flowers attract butterflies.

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seed or rhizome cuttings, and can be salvaged. Seed not planted in the fall may need three months cold stratification to break dormancy.



Ferns,  
Ground Covers,  
Herbaceous  
Perennials

*Polystichum munitum*

## Sword fern

**Description:** This evergreen fern is familiar to residents of Western Washington. Its dark-green fronds arch from a central clump, and are 2-5 feet long and lance-shaped, with simple, alternate, pointed, sharp-toothed leaflets. In spring, young fiddleheads sprout gracefully from the center of the plant and unroll to reveal new fronds. Roots form a dense, fibrous mass.

**Habitat:** Throughout lowland mixed conifer and deciduous forests; especially prevalent in moist areas and on steep slopes with loose soil. Full sun to full shade, though it prefers some shade. Plants can be remarkably drought-tolerant, even in full sun.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** A hardy plant suitable for nearly any upland site with shade or partial shade. It makes an attractive ornamental ground cover, and is good for restoration work due to its easy propagation and transplantation. Provides cover for ground-dwelling animals. Deer and elk browse on the leaves.

**Propagation:** Successfully grown from salvaged plants. Fronds can be sheared off about six inches from the base to facilitate digging and reduce water loss through the leaves. Small specimens can be dug up and transported with their soil. In order to move larger plants you may need to divide them or carefully shake the dirt off the roots; make sure the roots do not dry out by wrapping them in wet sawdust or leaves and then in plastic, and transplant as quickly as possible. Keep well-watered for the first year, if possible. Large clumps can be divided during the dormant season to multiply plants.



*Cornus sericea* ssp. *occidentalis*  
**red-osier dogwood**

Shrubs



*Corylus cornuta* var. *californica*  
**beaked hazelnut**

Shrubs







Shrub

## *Cornus sericea ssp. occidentalis* Red-osier dogwood

**Description:** This many-stemmed, deciduous shrub grows up to 15 feet tall. Leaves are opposite, 2-6 inches long, elliptical, pointed, with 5-7 distinct, curving veins that merge at the smooth or wavy leaf margin. In autumn, leaves turn a deep red before falling. Twigs and stems are often reddish or purple. Small, greenish-white flowers grow in dense, flat-topped clusters at the ends of branches, and produce bluish-white berries in the fall.

**Habitat:** In moist, well-drained soils, especially along stream banks and in swamps. Full sun to partial shade. Tolerates seasonal flooding.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Possesses excellent soil-binding qualities. Red stems make it attractive with or without foliage. Provides excellent wildlife cover, and is browsed by rabbits, deer, and elk. Hosts butterfly caterpillars. Buds and fruit provide food for numerous birds, small mammals, and black bear.

**Propagation:** Easiest to propagate from hardwood cuttings, including live stakes. Cuttings taken in the spring will also root readily and grow rapidly, but must be well-watered over the summer. Can also be grown from seed collected August to September. Plant the whole berries (you don't need to clean them) in flats, one-gallon pots, or garden beds (if the berries are dry, soak them for 24 hours before planting). Some of the seeds will germinate soon after sowing, and should be transplanted into gallon containers. The rest of the seeds will germinate the following spring. Transplant seedlings or rooted cuttings before roots grow too large. Can also be propagated by layering, but hardwood cuttings are generally preferred.



Shrub

## *Corylus cornuta var. californica* Beaked hazelnut

**Description:** This deciduous shrub grows up to 20 feet tall in dense, arching clumps, or occasionally as a small tree up to 30 feet tall. Leaves are alternate, oval, 2-4 inches long and 1½-3 inches wide, with toothed or serrated edges. Buds and new leaves are covered with fuzzy, white hairs. Catkins appear before the leaves in late winter or early spring, and are 2-3 inches long. Nuts are small (half-inch), round, in clusters of 2-4, and each nut is surrounded by modified leaves that extend beyond the nut to form a vase-like husk (hence the name "beaked"). In winter it can be identified by its distinctively zigzag branchlets, remaining catkins, and round, hairy, alternate buds.

**Habitat:** In moist (but well-drained) to dry sites. Intolerant of saturated soil. Full sun to full shade. Often found in the understory of coniferous forests, along streams, and on burned-over and logged-over lands.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Clumps form attractive fountains of vegetation. Provides excellent food and cover for wildlife. Nuts are eaten by birds, numerous small mammals, deer, and humans. Spreads to form clumps.

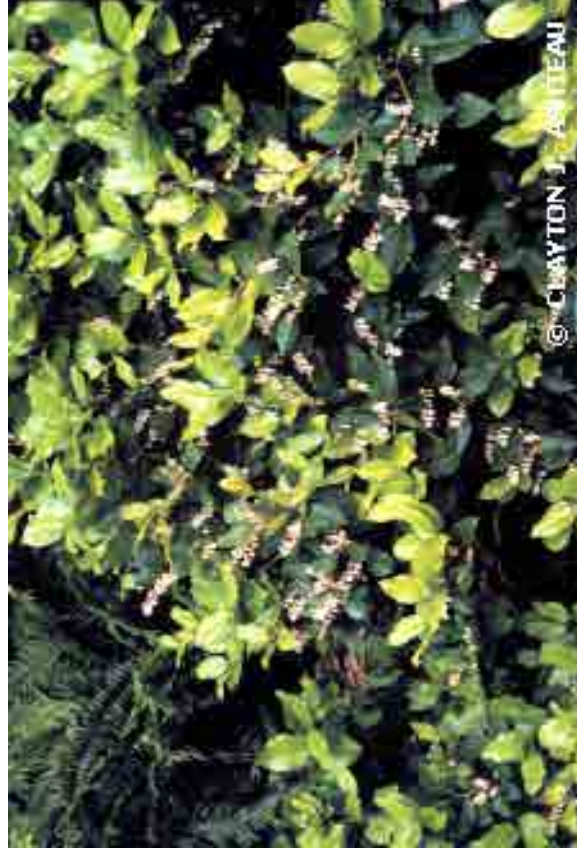
**Propagation:** Grows best from seed, though they can be difficult to find. Collect seed August through September once the nuts are nearly ripe, but before squirrels harvest the entire crop. Before sowing, allow the nuts to ripen and dry until the husk turns brown; husks can be left on or removed. Sow nuts in trays. Nuts not sown in the fall need two to three months cold stratification to break seed dormancy. Suckers can be transplanted, and plants under five feet tall can be salvaged. Plants in your yard can be layered to produce new offshoots.



*Gaultheria shallon*

**salal**

Shrubs



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*Holodiscus discolor*

**oceanspray**

Shrubs



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Shrub

## *Gaultheria shallon* salal

**Description:** This thicket-forming broadleaf evergreen usually grows 3-7 feet tall (though more compact in full sun or full shade), with branches that zigzag. Leaves are alternate, thick, leathery, glossy, broadly oval (2-4 inches long by 1-2 inches wide) and pointed, with fine teeth. Flowers are shaped like small (about ¼ inch) pinkish to white urns, and hang from stalks in loose clusters of 5-15. Berries are small (under ½ inch), dark-purple to black, oval, have minute hairs, and hang in clusters.

**Habitat:** One of the most common understory shrubs in our forests. Prefers dry places or raised areas within forested wetlands. Full sun to full shade, but does best with some shade, and requires some sunlight to produce much fruit.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Has good soil-binding qualities, delicious berries, and is tolerant of poor soils. Provides cover for birds and small mammals. Hosts butterfly caterpillars. Flowers attract butterflies. Fruits are eaten by birds, deer, bear, and humans. Plants are often slow to establish and begin spreading (often two to three years after transplanting).

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seed. Collect berries August through September, and separate seeds from the fruit (seeds are minuscule, so use pantyhose to strain the seeds out). Using flats or small pots filled with a mixture of sand, composted leaves, and loam, sow the seeds on the surface (a salt shaker can be used for sowing). Newly-germinated plants are tiny, and must be protected from late frosts, as well as from drying during warm spring weather.



Shrub

## *Holodiscus discolor* oceanspray

**Description:** This deciduous shrub usually has several, thin, main stems and grows up to 15 feet tall. Leaves are alternate, oval, ¾ - 2½ inches long, with shallow lobes or teeth. Flowers are profuse, white to cream, and form cascading clusters. Small, dry fruits form in drooping fruit clusters that persist into the winter. The presence of drooping fruit clusters and alternate buds are the best clues for winter identification.

**Habitat:** On well-drained to dry sites. Full sun to partial shade. Intolerant of saturated soils.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Does well on disturbed sites, has good soil-binding qualities, and is very attractive when blooming. Extremely drought-tolerant. Provides cover for small mammals and birds. Deer and elk browse branches. Nectar source for butterflies and numerous other insects. Birds eat seeds.

**Propagation:** Best grown from hardwood cuttings, salvaged plants, or seed. Collect seed September to November, and plant them in the fall in trays or garden beds. They should be sown thickly, as only small percentage of the seed typically germinates. However, because the seeds are so numerous, this is not a serious problem. Seeds not sown in the fall need 4½ months cold stratification to break dormancy.



*Physocarpus capitatus*  
**Pacific ninebark**

Shrubs



*Rhododendron macrophyllum*  
**Pacific rhododendron**

Shrubs







Shrub

### *Physocarpus capitatus*

## Pacific ninebark

**Description:** This multi-stemmed, deciduous shrub grows 6-13 feet tall, with thin, reddish-brown or yellowish-brown bark that flakes away in thin strips. Leaves are alternate, 1½ - 3½ inches long, and serrated, with 3-5 toothed lobes. Flowers are small, white, and are borne in dense, round pom-pom clusters about 1-3 inches in diameter. Fruits form inconspicuous, reddish clusters, each fruit being about ¼ inch in diameter.

**Habitat:** Moist to wet sites, in somewhat open areas (e.g., wooded edges bordering meadows and along water). More often in wetlands than in dry, brushy areas. Full sun to partial shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Has excellent soil-binding qualities, attractive leaves, and beautiful flowers. Provides cover, nesting sites, and food for birds and small mammals. Deer and elk browse on the twigs, foliage, and buds. Bears eat the berries.

**Propagation:** Grows best from hardwood cuttings, is easy to propagate from cuttings at any time of the year, and can be live-staked. Can also be grown from seed (collect late August to September), but germination is spotty. Seed not sown in the fall may need 2-3 months cold stratification to break seed dormancy. Plants under six feet tall salvage well.



Shrub

### *Rhododendron macrophyllum*

## Pacific rhododendron

**Description:** This broadleaf evergreen shrub is the state flower of Washington. Usually 3 -15 feet tall, it tends to have a straggly form in shade and a more compact form in the open. Leaves are alternate, thick and leathery, 3-8 inches long, oblong, with smooth and often rolled-under edges, and range in color from gray green (in the sun) to dark green (in the shade). Flowers are pale pink to deep rose, broadly bell-shaped with five partially fused petals, ¾ - 1½ inches long, and appear May to July, often in dense clusters of 10-20 flowers.

**Habitat:** In coniferous or mixed forests. Prefers moist, well-drained, acid soils, though also found on excessively well-drained sites. Common on the Olympic and Kitsap peninsulas, Whidbey Island, and the western slopes of the Oregon Cascades at elevations of about 3,000-5,000 feet; less common in the San Juan Islands and in other areas around Puget Sound. Grows in sun or shade, though blooms are most profuse in partial shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Though often leggy in the shade, it can be pruned. Its beautiful floral display often rivals that of cultivated rhododendron hybrids. Due to toxins in the leaves and flowers, it has limited food value for animals, and is considered poisonous to sheep.

**Propagation:** Due to past over-collecting, plants or cuttings should not be collected from natural settings, unless it is a salvage site. Plants are available from some nurseries and it can be grown from seed, though it can take up to seven years for plants grown from seed to bloom.



*Acer circinatum*  
**vine maple**

Tree



*Alnus rubra*  
**red alder**

Tree







Tree

## *Acer circinatum* vine maple

**Description:** This deciduous native often grows to 25 feet tall, taking the form of an erect tree (often with multiple stems) or a tangle of branches creeping vine-like along the ground before turning upward. Branches are usually green or slightly reddish. Leaves are 2-4 inches in diameter, opposite, round in form with 5-9 (usually 7) shallow, fan-like and finely-toothed lobes, and palmate veins. In the fall, leaves turn gold or bright red before falling. Like other maples, it has "helicopter" seeds. However, its paired seeds are held wide apart, almost in a straight line, while those of most other maples form a "V". In winter, look for small (less than ¼ inch), opposite buds and a pair of terminal buds.

**Habitat:** Common understory plant in coniferous forests, and in clear-cut or burnt-over areas. Dry to moist sites. Full sun to full shade; prefers some shade, but becomes leggy in deep shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Has excellent soil-binding qualities, is shade-tolerant, and produces beautiful fall color. Provides valuable forage for deer and elk, and cover for deer, elk, birds, and small mammals. Flowers attract butterflies. Several species of birds and mammals eat the seeds.

**Propagation:** Best grown from salvaged plants or by layering. Two-leaf seedlings growing around trees in urban settings may be dug up and potted immediately. Water sparingly for the first summer after potting; after planting out the young seedlings, water only as necessary. Even mature specimens can be successfully salvaged given sufficient care. Layering can be used to multiply plants you already have. It can also be grown from seed, but they are difficult to germinate.



Tree

## *Alnus rubra* red alder

**Description:** This familiar tree has thin, smooth, gray bark, frequently with patches of white lichen, and grows 30-120 feet tall. Leaves are deciduous, alternate, 3-6 inches long, broad and elliptic, with pointed ends. Leaf surfaces are shiny green to yellow-green and smooth above; paler with hairs along the veins below. Leaf edges are wavy and slightly rolled-under, with coarse, blunt teeth. Male and female flowers are on the same tree and appear in catkins before the leaves. The small,

**Habitat:** Disturbed sites, landslides, stream banks, moist woods, wetlands, and floodplains. Grows in various types of disturbed soils. Tolerates drought, flooding, or brackish conditions. Full sun to partial shade. Often mixed with other trees, but can form pure stands in nutrient-poor soils or on logged-over or otherwise disturbed lands.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** This tree has been greatly under-valued in our region. Its quick growth and ability to fix nitrogen makes it particularly useful for stabilizing disturbed soils and revegetating nutrient-poor soils. Deer and elk browse the leaves, as do large numbers of invertebrates (which, in turn, feed many insect-eating bird species). Beaver use the branches. Larger trees provide habitat for numerous cavity-nesting birds and small mammals.

**Propagation:** Seeds germinate easily. Collect seeds September to October. Seed not planted in the fall must be cold-stratified for 30 days to break seed dormancy. Seedlings under four feet tall can be salvaged: when digging them, notice the nitrogen-fixing bacteria nodules on the roots! Layering may also work.



*Amelanchier alnifolia*  
**western serviceberry**

Tree



*Cornus nuttallii*  
**Pacific dogwood**

Tree







Tree

## *Amelanchier alnifolia* western serviceberry

**Description:** This multi-stemmed, deciduous native usually grows 10-12 feet tall, and has smooth, dark gray to reddish bark. Leaves are alternate, thin, oval, 1-2 inches long, and mostly smooth-edged on the lower half of the leaf, becoming regularly toothed on the outer half, with veins running out to the teeth. Flowers are white with five long, thin petals, and form showy, erect or droopy clusters. Fruits are small ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter) and initially dull-red, becoming dark purple when ripe, and look somewhat like small blueberries. Difficult to identify in winter, but look for slender, curved, alternate buds and a larger terminal bud. Two of the varieties found in Western Washington are var. *humtulpensis* and var. *semiintegrifolia*.

**Habitat:** In moist to dry areas, on well-drained soils; often in open conifer forests. Full sun to partial shade. Common throughout the Northwest, frequently in thickets. Very drought-tolerant.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Though largely unnoticed except when in bloom, its showy flowers and delicious fruit make it a good ornamental plant for open, wooded sites, or woodland edges. Can form soil- holding thickets via rooting branch tips. Provides good wildlife cover.

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seed or salvaged seedlings. Collect fruit when ripe (in late summer) and separate seeds from pulp. Seed not sown in the fall should not be allowed to dry out, and needs to be cold-stratified for 3-6 months to break seed dormancy. Seedlings under three feet tall can be salvaged. Plants in your yard can be layered to produce new plants.



Tree

## *Cornus nuttallii* Pacific dogwood

**Description:** This deciduous tree usually grows 20-30 feet tall with an irregularly shaped trunk and smooth, dark bark that develops rectangular scales with age. Twig ends curve upward, and branchings are often in whorls of four, making branch tips look somewhat like candelabras. Leaves are opposite, 3-5 inches long, generally oval with a sharp tip, and deep to bright green above, paler below. Leaf veins are in opposite pairs that parallel the curves of the leaf, and leaf edges are smooth or wavy. In autumn, leaves turn dull- to pinkish-red before falling. Trees flower April to June, and some individuals flower a second time in August or September.

**Habitat:** Moist, well-drained soils. Partial to full shade. A common understory tree in open to fairly dense, mixed forests, though it may not produce fruit in heavy shade. Found throughout most of our region.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Its attractive branching pattern, flowers, fruits, and fall foliage make this a beautiful tree in all seasons. Once established, it can do without summer watering, and is long-lived (to 150 years). Very shade tolerant. Plants host butterfly caterpillars. Birds, especially band-tailed pigeons, eat fruit clusters. Deer browse on twigs and foliage.

**Propagation:** Seed is the best method. Collect fruit as soon as ripe (September to October), before the birds get them. One source says they can be sown as is, while another recommends removing the pulp. Plants under three feet high can be salvaged. Plants in your yard can probably be multiplied by layering small branches.



*Crataegus suksdorfii*  
**black hawthorn**

Tree



*Fraxinus latifolia*  
**Oregon ash**

Tree







Tree

*Crataegus suksdorfii*

black hawthorn

**Description:** This deciduous native grows as a small tree (20-30 feet tall), or smaller thicket-forming shrub (10 feet tall), with sharp, single spines up to one inch long. Leaves are alternate, 1½ - 4 inches long, generally oval, and serrated on the outer half of the leaf. Small white flowers (about ½ inch in diameter) appear in spring in clusters, and produce black berries by August. New twigs often turn reddish in early summer. A related species, *C. douglasii* (formerly called *C. douglasii* var. *douglasii*) is also native to Western Washington.

**Habitat:** Dry to moist areas, especially on the edges of pastures along streams. In well-drained, sandy or gravelly soils. Full sun to partial shade. Forms dense thickets.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Stabilizes soil and is well-adapted to disturbed sites. Can be used to create a thorny barrier. The thickets provide excellent nesting sites for birds, and as cover for birds and small mammals. Flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Fruits are a food source for birds and small mammals. Deer usually shun the foliage. Produces a fair amount of small, leafy debris in the fall.

**Propagation:** Grow from seed or salvage. Seed should be collected as soon as it ripens (late July through August), because it is harvested quickly by birds. Separate seeds from pulp and sow seeds immediately in trays containing ordinary soil. Sow very thickly, because some seeds may not germinate until the second spring, and place the trays in an unheated area. Seed not planted in the fall needs to be cold-stratified for 2½ months to break seed dormancy.



Tree

*Fraxinus latifolia*

Oregon ash

**Description:** This deciduous tree grows 40-80 feet tall with opposite branches and leaves. Bark is dark-gray or brown, with thick, furrowed and forking, scaly ridges. Leaves are pinnately-compound, up to one foot long, with five, seven, or nine bright-green, broadly-tapered leaflets that turn yellow in the fall. Flowers are greenish and in dense clusters which, on female trees, bear winged fruits 1-2 inches long. In winter, the opposite twigs are distinctive.

**Habitat:** Low-lying areas, on moist, saturated, or ponded soils. Full sun to partial shade. May form pure stands, or mixed stands with black cottonwood and red alder. Tolerates standing water early in the growing season.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** This is the only true ash native to the Northwest. Its flood tolerance makes it a good choice for wet sites and riparian areas. Provides nesting sites for birds; and cover for birds, deer, and fish. Plants are an important food source for deer, elk, beavers, small mammals, and birds. Leaves are susceptible to a disfiguring, but not serious, fungal blight late in the growing season.

**Propagation:** Best grown from seeds or salvaged seedlings. Collect seed August to October, and sow as soon as possible in trays or garden beds. Mulch in the fall, and carefully rake off mulch in the spring. Plant out seedlings in 1-2 years. If seeds must be stored, air-dry them thoroughly. Seed not sown in the fall require three months cold stratification to break seed dormancy. Seedlings under four feet tall can be salvaged.



*Malus fusca*

## Pacific crabapple

Tree



*Prunus emarginata* var. *mollis*

## bitter cherry

Tree







Tree

## *Malus fusca* Pacific crabapple

**Description:** This deciduous native grows as a tree up to 40 feet tall, or as a large shrub growing in dense thickets, sometimes with sharp thorns on limbs and young trunks. Leaves are alternate, 1- 4 inches long, ovate, oval, or elliptical in shape, with serrated or lobed margins, dark-green to yellow-green on the upper surface and paler below. Flowers are small ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch), white, borne in clusters in the spring, and develop into small crabapples that vary in size and color. Can be identified in winter by its sprawling branches, peeling bark, and alternate buds that (on older branches) appear on spur shoots.

**Habitat:** Swamps, marshes, and other moist sites near streams. Full sun to partial shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** Has attractive flowers and fruits, and is an excellent plant for creating thickets. Does well near salt water, sloughs, and estuaries, and is tolerant of prolonged soil saturation. Provides nesting sites for birds, and shelter for birds and other wildlife. Fruits are eaten by birds, squirrels, elk, and deer. Foliage and twigs are browsed by deer and elk. Beavers use the whole plant. Somewhat untidy, as it sheds twigs, bark, leaves, and flowers, but this is more than offset by its value to wildlife.

**Propagation:** Can be grown from seed. Separate seeds from pulp, and plant immediately in flats or directly in the ground. Seed not planted in the fall needs to be cold-stratified for three months to break seed dormancy. Seedlings are small and start slowly. Plants in your yard can be layered to produce new offshoots, but it may take two years for sufficient roots to develop.



Tree

## *Prunus emarginata* var. *mollis* Bitter cherry

**Description:** This deciduous native grows as a large shrub or small tree, to heights of 20-50 feet tall, and has shiny, reddish-brown bark with thin, horizontal stripes. Leaves are alternate, 2-4 inches long, oval to oblong, with rounded tips and fine teeth on the margins; and bright to dark-green in color, turning bright-yellow in the autumn before they fall. Flowers are small, white to pinkish, and form loose, flat-topped clusters of 5-10 flowers.

**Habitat:** Both species occur on dry to moist sites, in full sun to partial shade, though *P. virginiana* prefers settings that are slightly more open. Both are intolerant of full shade.

**Advantages/ Disadvantages:** *P. emarginata* makes a stately ornamental tree in open, conifer forests. The fruits of both species are an important food source for birds and small mammals (especially in early winter), and deer and elk feed on the leaves and twigs. Provides nesting sites for cavity-nesting birds, mammals, and sometimes bees. Plants are short-lived (40- 60 years).

**Propagation:** Both species grow best from seed. Collect fruit when fully mature (July to September for *P. emarginata*; late August to September for *P. virginiana*). Remove pulp, keep soaking time to a minimum to avoid damage to seeds. Sow liberally in the fall. Seed not sown in the fall must be cold-stratified for 3-4 months to break seed dormancy. Seedlings under six feet tall can be salvaged.