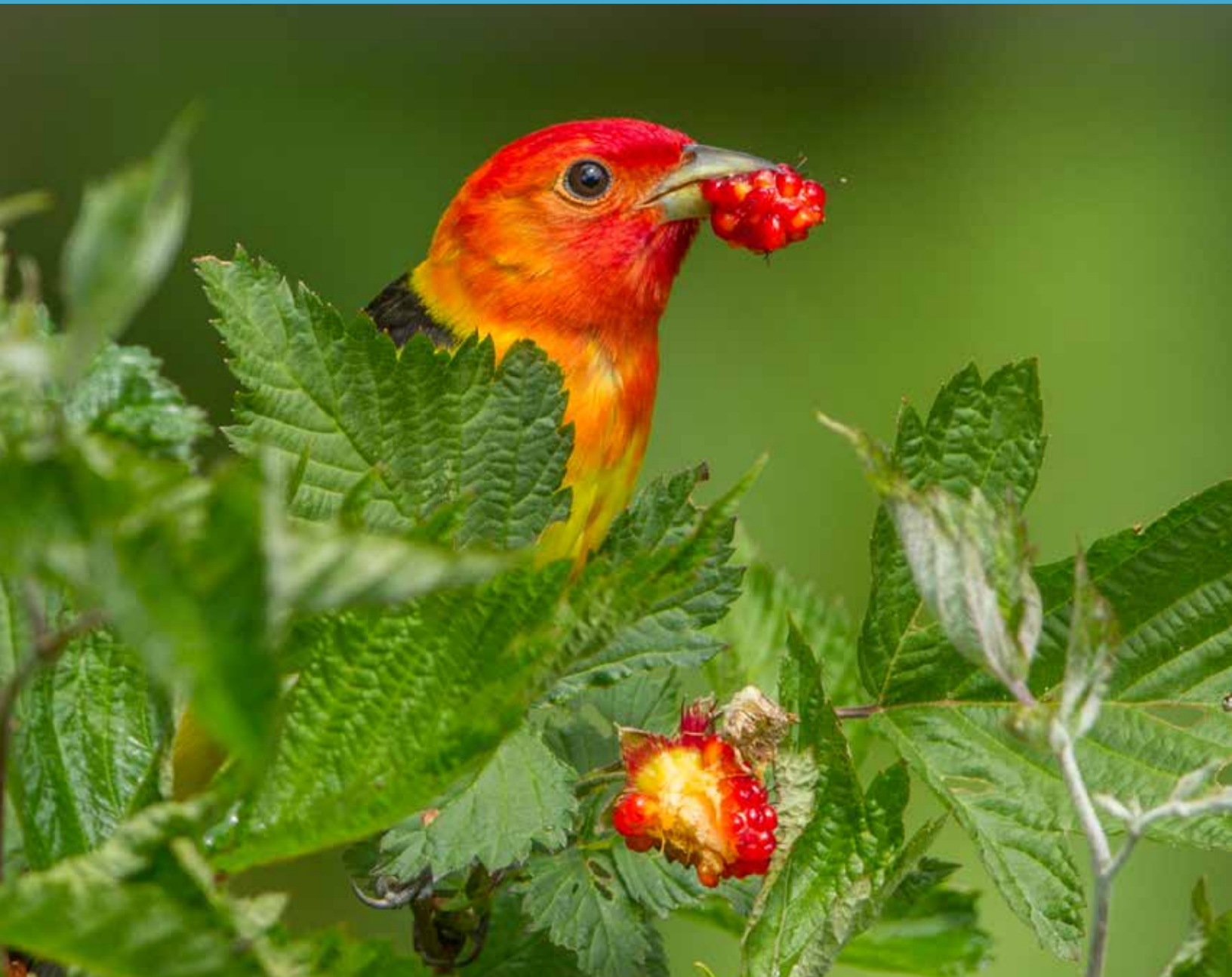


Gardening with Native Plants

in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley

Your guide to creating a backyard that supports nature



- Attract Birds, Butterflies & Bees
- Create Wildlife Habitat
- Choose Top Shrubs, Trees & Flowers
- Design a Thriving Native Garden



1



2



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4



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6



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Why Garden with Native Plants?

By gardening with plants native to our region, you can have a garden that is not only beautiful and low-maintenance, but also provides habitat for local wildlife. Native plants can attract birds, bees, butterflies, and more. This guide will direct you in creating a gorgeous and thriving native plant garden. It provides steps to get started, native plant recommendations, design and maintenance tips, and ways to add beneficial natural features.

Attract local wildlife!

The area from Vancouver to Chilliwack is known as the Fraser Lowland. This region, influenced by the mighty Fraser River, was historically covered in forests, wetlands, estuaries, lakes, and streams. Because of this variety of habitats, it is a hotspot for biodiversity, with over 50 species at risk. However, these natural features are disappearing due to human-related threats such as development, water drainage and dyking, and invasive species.

Since much of this land is privately owned, landowners like you can make a real difference. By enhancing your property to include natural features, such as native plants, you are providing valuable places for wildlife to find food, water, and shelter.

Help our species at risk!

There are many species at risk that may live close to you or even in your backyard. At-risk species are those that are in danger of disappearing from BC and Canada. The **Northern Red-legged Frog** and **Western Toad** live in forests until they emerge early in the year to mate and lay eggs in nearby wetlands or ponds. The **Barn Owl** commonly builds nests in human-made structures and hunts at night in fields and meadows. The **Great Blue Heron** can be spotted hunting in ditches, shorelines and ponds, or tending to their nests in large, mature trees. Stinging nettle patches and bigleaf maple trees provide habitat for the **Oregon Forestsnail**.



Northern Red-legged Frog

Save time and money!

In addition to helping local wildlife and adding natural beauty, you will discover other benefits to planting native vegetation. Since they are adapted to the region, native plants:

- require little maintenance when planted in suitable spots
- can grow pesticide free
- contribute to reduced water use
- can reduce erosion along streambanks and wetlands



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The numbers on the photos refer to information in the Plant Table on pages 4-5.

Taking it Step by Step

Step 1 - Garden Design

Before creating wildlife habitat using native plants, get to know your property's features and set some gardening goals. Sketch out a garden map to visualize your ideas.

Questions to consider:

- **What is your property's unique conditions during the four seasons?** Consider sun exposure, shade, wind, water availability, soil types, and existing vegetation. Knowing these conditions for different parts of your property will help inform your design and allow you to pick the most suitable plants.
- **What are you looking to achieve?** Creating a backyard that supports nature can take many forms. Think about what nature means to you. Depending on where you live and the natural landscape, wildlife you can attract may include birds, bees, butterflies, frogs, and salamanders. Consider what you are striving for visually. Native plants come in a diversity of sizes, and colours for different seasons.

Nature Knows Best!

Natural inspiration is all around you. Visit nearby natural areas to experience the environment and see what grows well. Use a plant identification app to discover native plants that appeal to you. Ask your local nurseries which native plants they offer. Browse books and websites on gardening with native plants or contact a local stewardship group such as the Fraser Valley Conservancy.

Aim to create an ecosystem

Providing habitat rather than individual plantings is more beneficial for wildlife. Take an ecosystem approach when enhancing areas by choosing a selection of plants to create specific habitats.

Creating forested habitat

Envision a forest canopy with shade tolerant shrubs and plants growing on the forest floor below.

- **For a dry site** Douglas-fir and shore pine do well, along with oceanspray, salal, evergreen huckleberry, and Oregon-grape.
- **With average moisture** try Douglas-fir, western hemlock and western redcedar. Shrubs can include red-flowering currant, vine maple, common snowberry, Indian-plum, bitter cherry, salal, and Oregon-grape.
- **Wetter sites** are best for western redcedar, western hemlock, bigleaf maple, salmonberry, red elderberry, Pacific ninebark, and red-osier dogwood.

Providing shrubby habitat

A mix of shrubs of varying heights, with different flowering and fruiting times, can be important places for birds to find food and protection from predators.

- **For a dry site** try oceanspray, Nootka rose, Oregon-grape, mock-orange, thimbleberry, and Indian-plum.
- **With average moisture** pick vine maple, Oregon-grape, Sitka mountain-ash, mock-orange, common snowberry, thimbleberry, and Indian-plum.
- **Wetter sites** suit salmonberry, vine maple, red-osier dogwood, red elderberry, and Pacific ninebark.



Continue to Steps 2 and 3 on page 6



Plant Table

TREES

SHRUBS AND SMALL TREES

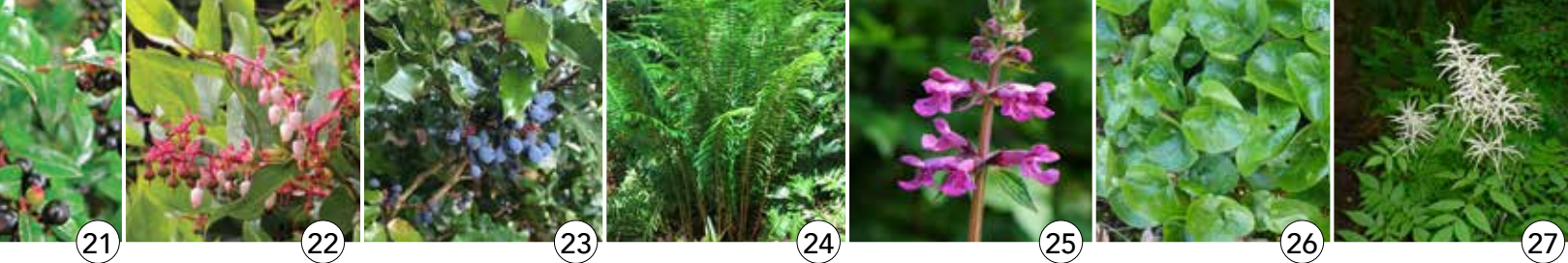
LOW PLANTS

Ref #	Common Name	Botanical Name	Max Height 100cm=1m=3.3ft	Soil: Dry • Moist • Wetter	Light: Sun • Partial Sun • Shade	Bloom Period
1	Western redcedar	<i>Thuja plicata</i>	to 60m	M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	n/a
2	Douglas-fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	to 70m	D, M	☀️	n/a
3	Western hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>	to 60m	M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	n/a
4	Bigleaf maple	<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	to 35m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Mar-Apr
5	Grand fir	<i>Abies grandis</i>	to 80m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	n/a
6	Shore pine	<i>Pinus contorta var. contorta</i>	to 15m	D, M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	n/a
7	Salmonberry	<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>	2 - 4m	M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Mar-May
8	Vine maple	<i>Acer circinatum</i>	3 - 7m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr
9	Bitter cherry	<i>Prunus emarginata</i>	2 - 15m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-May
10	Sitka mountain ash	<i>Sorbus sitchensis</i>	1 - 4m	M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Jun
11	Common snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	0.5 - 2m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Jun
12	Indian-plum	<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>	1.5 - 5m	D, M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Mar
13	Red-flowering currant	<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	1 - 3m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-Jun
14	Nootka rose	<i>Rosa nutkana</i>	0.5 - 3m	M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jul
15	Oceanspray	<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	1 - 4m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Jul-Aug
16	Red elderberry (coastal)	<i>Sambucus racemosa var. arborescens</i>	2 - 4m	M, W	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-Jun
17	Mock-orange	<i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>	3m	D, M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jun
18	Red-osier dogwood	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	1 - 5m	M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jun
19	Thimbleberry	<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	1.5 - 3m	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Jun-Jul
20	Pacific ninebark	<i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>	3 - 4m	M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Jun
21	Evergreen huckleberry	<i>Vaccinium ovatum</i>	1 - 2m	D, M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-May
22	Salal	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>	1 - 1.5m	D, M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Mar-Jul
23	Tall Oregon-grape	<i>Mahonia aquilifolium</i>	0.5 - 2.5m	D, M	☀️	Apr-May
24	Sword fern	<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	0.3 - 1.2m	D, M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	n/a
25	Cooley's hedge-nettle	<i>Stachys chamissonis var. cooleyae</i>	70-150cm	M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Jun-Aug
26	Wild ginger	<i>Asarum caudatum</i>	5 - 15cm	M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Mar-Jul
27	Goatsbeard	<i>Arunca dioicus var. acuminatus</i>	1-2m	M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jul
28	Douglas' aster	<i>Aster subspicatus</i>	20 - 80cm	M	☀️	Jul -Aug
29	Nodding onion	<i>Allium cernuum</i>	20 - 40cm	D	☀️	Jun-Aug
30	Deer fern	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	20 - 80cm	M, W	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	n/a
31	Coastal strawberry	<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	5 - 20cm	D, M	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-May
32	Kinnikinnick	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	5 - 20cm	D, M	☀️	Apr-Jun
33	Bunchberry	<i>Cornus canadensis</i>	5 - 25cm	M, W	☀️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jul
34	Broad-leaved stonecrop	<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>	15cm	D, M	☀️	Jun-Jul
35	Fringecup	<i>Tellima grandiflora</i>	40 - 80cm	M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-Jun
36	Red columbine	<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>	40 - 80cm	D, M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jun
37	False Solomon's-seal	<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>	30 - 100cm	M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-Jun
38	Pacific bleeding heart	<i>Dicentra formosa</i>	25 - 45cm	M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Feb-Jun
39	Wood sorrel	<i>Oxalis oregana</i>	5 - 20cm	D, M	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	May-Jul
40	False lily-of-the-valley	<i>Maianthemum dilatatum</i>	15 - 25cm	M, W	☁️ ☁️ ☁️	Apr-May

🍷 Food source for wildlife in spring/summer

🍷 Food source for wildlife year-round

🦋 Attract butterflies



Characteristics	Comments
	BC's provincial tree! Important for wildlife, providing cover for many species, denning for small mammals, and nesting cavities for birds.
	Because of the seeds produced by the male cones, this tree is an important food source for several species of birds, including crossbills.
	A favourite nesting tree for many birds. Pine Siskins, crossbills and chickadees eat the seeds. Douglas Squirrels even eat the bark!
	Fabulous tree for wildlife! Provides food and shelter for many species of birds and small mammals. Fast growing.
	Provides cover and nesting sites for many animals. Birds and native squirrels eat the seeds.
	The nutritious, oily seeds are favoured by many bird species including grosbeaks and woodpeckers. Tolerant of nutrient-poor soils.
	A top pick for wildlife! An early food source for Rufous Hummingbirds and a berry feast for a myriad of bird and mammal species.
	Red flowers in spring that butterflies and bees love; birds eat the seeds. Gorgeous fall colour. Also try the similar Douglas maple.
	Provides food, shelter and nesting sites for a variety of wildlife. Host plant for larval stage of several butterfly species.
	White flower clusters that turn into showy red fruit - an important late season food source for birds and mammals.
	Attractive white berries add interest to the garden in winter. Grosbeaks, thrushes and bears love the berries.
	Very early flowering, with colourful mini plums in May. Important early flower source for native bees.
	A beautiful shrub! Hummingbirds rely on its early blooms. Songbirds and small mammals eat its berries. Foliage is eaten by butterfly larvae.
	Large, fragrant, pink flowers. Edible rose hips are reddish-orange and eaten by many mammals. Great cover and nesting habitat for birds.
	Big, showy flower clusters become puffball seed heads. Good cover for birds and amphibians.
	Fast growing with showy white flowers and red berry clusters. Provides nesting habitat, cover and food for a number of birds and small mammals.
	Early fragrant white flowers, attracting lots of pollinators to your garden. Seeds are eaten by squirrels.
	A top pick for wildlife! Fast-growing with white flowers, showy red twigs and gorgeous fall leaves. Foliage and berries used by birds and mammals.
	Large white flowers produce red berries that are relished by many bird and mammal species. Fabulous for filling in gaps in your garden!
	Sometimes called 'snowball bush' for its showy white flower clusters. Attracts native bees. Great cover for birds and small mammals.
	Great evergreen choice: thick, shiny leaves and pink flowers. The purple berries are a favourite of songbirds, mammals and people.
	Evergreen shrub grows well in shade. Berries eaten by many birds and native squirrels. Winter foliage browsed by Mountain Beavers.
	Evergreen with blue, edible berries that birds enjoy. Hummingbirds and pollinators love this plant with its bright yellow flowers.
	Evergreen fern that can be used to prevent slope erosion. Dead fronds create amphibian habitat. Preferred food of Mountain Beavers.
	The reddish purple, tubular flowers are visited by hummingbirds and other pollinators. This member of the mint family does not sting.
	In shade, this groundcover spreads well by underground rhizomes. It has attractive leaves with exotic flowers underneath.
	A multitude of insects pollinate this flower. Leave the flower heads to overwinter for birds to eat the seeds.
	Bees love the masses of violet blooms with yellow centres. Spreads easily. Great for late summer colour in the garden.
	Pollinators' delight! Bulbs multiply quickly in sandy soil. Great in rockeries. Also try Hooker's onion and fool's onion.
	Valuable food for deer, hence the name! An attractive evergreen fern that provides year-round cover for small mammals, insects and some birds.
	Attractive groundcover with white flowers and sweet berries, eaten by birds and small mammals. Try woodland strawberry (<i>F. vesca</i>) in shadier spots.
	Prolific evergreen groundcover in well-drained soils that can prevent erosion. Birds eat the bright red berries. Leaves turn wine-colour in the fall.
	Lovely leaves, showy white flowers, and attractive red berries! Many birds eat the fruit; an important food source during fall migration.
	Showy, bright yellow flowers attract many pollinators including bees and butterflies. Great in rock gardens.
	Fragrant white flower spires are beneficial to many insects and can attract butterflies. Lovely in a shade garden.
	A favourite of hummingbirds! Seeds are eaten by juncos, sparrows and finches. The architecture of the red flowers is something to behold.
	Showy white flowers and red berries enjoyed by birds. Ornamental foliage, shade-tolerant, and easy to transplant.
	Rose pink flowers provide nectar for hummingbirds. Butterfly larvae browse on the lacy foliage. Perfect for a shade/partial shade area of the garden.
	The native shamrock! Its clover-like leaves form a carpet in the shade, and its white to pink flowers attract butterflies and native bees.
	Glossy leaves and delicate white flower spires, followed by red berries in the fall. Spreads nicely in shady areas. Attracts pollinators.





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Step 2 - Ready to Plant

Once you have a plan in place, follow these steps to establish your native plant garden.

- 🍷 **Sourcing native plants.** Seek out nurseries that sell locally grown native plants or seed. Never take plants from the wild as they often do not survive transplantation and their removal can negatively affect the ecosystem they came from.
- 🍷 **Best time to plant.** The rainy seasons, fall or early spring, are the ideal times to plant. Water helps with root development. Extra watering will be needed during the summer months and any dry spells during the first year or two.
- 🍷 **Go slowly and try not to overplant.** Consider adding only a few plants as a test to see how they do. Remember to leave shrubs and trees room to grow, as you can choose to fill in gaps later.
- 🍷 **Protect the young plants.** If deer or beaver live in your area, fence off newly planted areas or encircle the base of planted trees or shrubs with wire mesh. Plastic guards around the stems will prevent damage from other rodents.



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Step 3 – Maintenance

It can take two to five years for your garden to mature. Follow these steps to keep your garden thriving.

- 🍷 **Watering and weeding.** Once established, the plants will require less maintenance. However, for the first year or so, until the plants have filled in, ensure the weeds are removed, and the plants are watered during the dry summer months. If you add fertilizer, ensure it is organic.
- 🍷 **Remove the alien invaders.** Invasive plants can quickly overrun a native plant garden and undo your efforts. Identify them and keep them out. Some of the most common troublemakers are listed below.
- 🍷 **Be patient.** Achieving your goals, including attracting wildlife, may take time. As your plants mature, learn from what succeeds and what fails to thrive. Adjust along the way and seek additional advice.
- 🍷 **Spread the word.** The more native gardens there are in your community, the greater the benefit for nature.



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Watch out for aliens!

Some introduced plants escape from gardens or their seeds are transported by birds, mammals and people. They can become established in natural areas where they may overwhelm the native vegetation. Steer clear of known invaders and use similar, yet non-invasive, alternatives instead. See the 'Grow Me Instead' program at www.bcinvvasives.ca for more ideas. Beware of store bought 'wildflower mixes' as they can contain invasive weeds. Contact the Fraser Valley Conservancy to purchase local native seed mixes.

LAMIUM



KNOTWEED



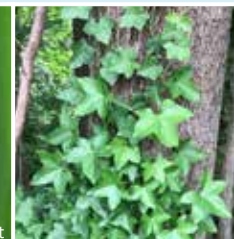
HIMALAYAN BLACKBERRY



YELLOW FLAG IRIS



ENGLISH IVY



PERIWINKLE



GIANT HOGWEED

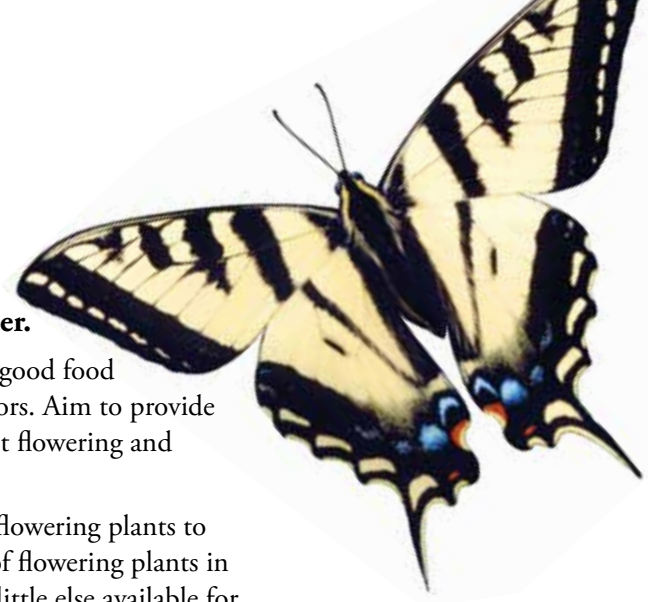


L Scott

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B Brown

Garden Tips for the Nature Lover



Remember these three essential needs for wildlife: food, shelter, and water.

- ✦ **Incorporate food-producing shrubs.** Berry and fruit-producing shrubs are a good food source for birds in particular. Shrubs also provide excellent shelter from predators. Aim to provide a variety of food sources through the seasons by including species with different flowering and fruiting times, and leaving seed heads on plants.
- ✦ **Flowers for bees and other pollinators.** Pollinators are vital in helping most flowering plants to reproduce and are crucial for much of our food production. Choose a variety of flowering plants in shape, size and colour. Pick some with early spring bloom times when there is little else available for emerging insects. Create flowering patches of at least one square metre and consider adding insect nest sites, such as bee condos.
- ✦ **Dead trees can be full of life.** Leave dead and dying tree trunks to attract woodpeckers feeding on insects. Cavities provide both homes and shelter for many bird species. If safety is a concern, cut the tree down to a safe height.
- ✦ **Leave logs to rot in place.** Logs can provide shelter for different types of critters, such as salamanders and small mammals. Insects in rotting logs provide food for many species.
- ✦ **Pile it up.** Create brush piles that give shelter to birds and small mammals. Rock piles can provide habitat for snakes (none are poisonous here) and other reptiles.
- ✦ **Just add water.** Put in a water bath (keeping cats away from it) or a small pond feature to provide a water source for birds, mammals, salamanders and frogs.



Bonus tips for butterflies.

In addition to the flowers listed in the plant table, you can further your efforts to attract butterflies by including plants needed during the caterpillar (larval) life stage. Creating a mud puddle in the spring and summer months may also attract adult butterflies to perform the interesting behaviour of ‘puddling’, where a number will gather for water and important minerals found in the earth. The minerals can enhance the males’ colouring, making them more attractive to females!



Leave the leaves.

Leaf litter (dead or fallen leaves) protects the soil from erosion, maintains moisture, and provides nutrients to the soil as it decomposes. Leaf litter also attracts ground-feeding birds hunting for insects, and some overwintering butterflies. If you do need to rake some leaves, place them around the plants, instead of removing them as green waste. This can also deter weeds.

Let go of the lawn.

Of all your landscape options, lawns consume the most effort, chemicals, and water while providing the least benefit to wildlife. Reduce your time and resources spent in pursuit of the perfect lawn and consider:

- ✦ **Lawn conversion.** Transform a lawn to garden space by covering it with three layers of cardboard under 10 cm (4 in) of mulch (leaf litter, wood chips, etc.). Plant through holes in the the cardboard. Never use non-biodegradable plastic cloth as a barrier under mulch. This method works for weed patches too!
- ✦ **Other options for open areas.** Let the grass grow and become fallow to produce a meadow environment. Owls and raptors can hunt in the meadow for rodents. Adding native wildflower seeds can add beauty and food for bees.



Gardening with Native Plants



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Looking for more support? Join the *Nature Stewards Program!*

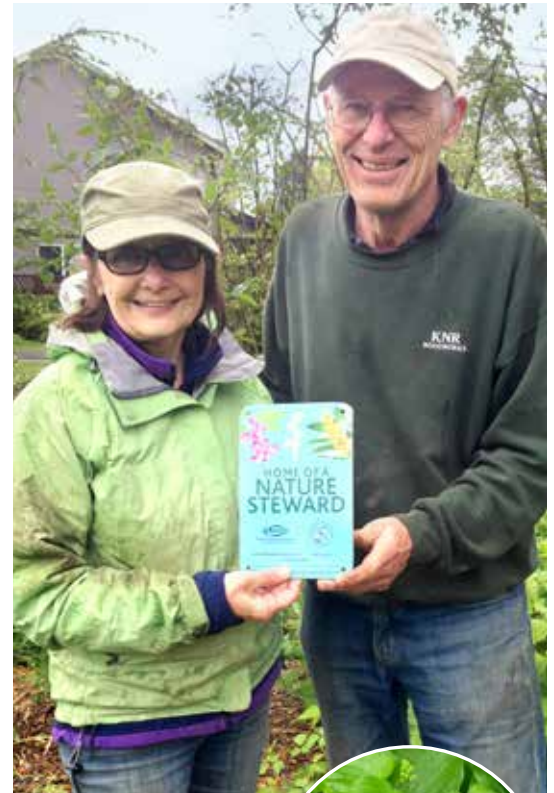
The Nature Stewards Program supports landowners who want to actively play a role in the stewardship and improvement of wildlife habitat on their land. Landowners receive advice and resources to help them learn more about local wildlife and species at risk, habitat enhancement, and land protection.

Who can get involved?

The Nature Stewards Program is open to those who own private land that has natural areas such as creeks, streams, wetlands, ponds, forests, or meadows. There is no minimum size.

The Fraser Valley Conservancy, in partnership with the South Coast Conservation Program, manage the Nature Stewards Program. For more info, contact: 604.625.0066 or outreach@fraservalleyconservancy.ca

For more info and resources about species at risk on BC's South Coast visit: www.sccp.ca



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Create a Conservation Legacy!

This guide was created by the Fraser Valley Conservancy. The FVC, established in 1998, is a charitable land trust that works to promote the conservation and acquisition of areas with ecological and historic value in the Fraser Valley.



Fraser Valley Conservancy
Placing lands in trust for our future

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www.hat.bc.ca

