

PNW Native Plants for the Woodland Garden

Many people think of shade or woodland gardens when they think of growing native plants. In fact, many woodland plants do very well in garden settings, but careful selection and care is essential to making your woodland garden flourish.



Western mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*)

Tips

- ◆ Most woodland plants thrive on soil rich in organic matter, so add leaf mulch or composted wood chips to your woodland garden every year if possible. About two inches of mulch each year will help your garden thrive.
- ◆ Many of our woodland plants come from the foothills of the Cascade Mountains or Coast Range. Higher elevations often bring more rainfall, so your woodland garden may require more irrigation than other types of native plant gardens.
- ◆ Look for small trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants that thrive in the shade. Some native plants that actually prefer more sun may survive in the shade, but may not flower, or may grow too tall instead of maintaining a compact form.

- ◆ Some woodland flowers, trilliums for example, are still being dug from wild places and potted up for sale. Instead, look for plants that have been propagated in nurseries and be willing to pay the real cost of the growers' efforts in bringing these woodland beauties to a saleable size.
- ◆ Ferns and delicate fern-like plants look at home in a woodland garden. Since many woodland wildflowers bloom only briefly in the spring, ferns will add a year-long structure to the lower plant layer.

Here are some suggested plants:

Small Trees: Cascara (*Rhamnus purshiana*), vine maple (*Acer circinatum*)

Shrubs: Evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*), red huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*), Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*), Western mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*), Cascade Oregon grape (*Mahonia nervosa*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), and wavy-leaved silk-tassel (*Garrya elliptica*).

Groundcovers: Inside-out flower (*Vancouveria hexandra*), woods strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), Oregon wood-sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*).

Herbaceous plants: Small-flowered alumroot (*Heuchera micrantha*), Pacific bleeding heart (*Dicentra formosa*), fringecup (*Tellima grandiflora*), goat's beard (*Aruncus dioicus*), Western white trillium (*Trillium ovatum*), and stream violet (*Viola glabella*).

Ferns: Deer fern (*Blechnum spicant*) and sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*).