

Selecting Native Plants for Home Landscapes in Central Oregon

Amy Jo Detweiler



Wood's rose

Photo: Amy Jo Detweiler



Oregon sunshine

Photo: Amy Jo Detweiler



Blue flax

Credit: Amy Jo Detweiler, © Oregon State University



Rocky Mountain maple

Photo: Amy Jo Detweiler

Growing native plants can be rewarding in many ways. They add beauty with colorful flowers, foliage, texture, and scents. If planted in a suitable habitat, native plants are well adapted to our soils and climate. This reduces the need for supplemental water (once established) and maintenance, and makes it easy to maintain plant health.

When grown in the right conditions, native plants typically experience less environmental, insect, and disease damage than nonnative plants. Native plants also create the best environments for local pollinators and wildlife. They tend to be minimally invasive when planted in the right environment.

The lists of trees, shrubs, grasses, and perennials in this publication focus on native plants that are readily available from local nurseries and adapt easily to an urban landscape environment (Figures 1 and 2). These are not complete lists of Central Oregon native plants.

When selecting native plants, choose plants whose natural habitat is similar to conditions in your landscape. For example, select plants native to riparian areas for a wet area of the landscape, or choose dryland plants for your rock garden. The information in the lists regarding preferred growing conditions and size refers to landscape conditions, not to plants growing in the wild.

Table 1. Native plants that are available from local nurseries and adapt easily to an urban landscape environment

These are not complete lists of Central Oregon native plants.

Common name	Botanical name	Preferred growing conditions	Mature height
Deciduous trees			
Alder, Mountain	<i>Alnus tenuifolia</i>	sun/moist	10 ft
Alder, White	<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>	sun to part shade/moist	50 - 60 ft
Aspen, Quaking	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	sun/ moist or dry	30 - 40 ft
Cherry, Bitter	<i>Prunus emarginata</i>	sun to part shade/ moist to dry	20 - 50 ft
Cottonwood, Black	<i>Populus trichocarpa</i>	sun/moist	100+ ft
Hawthorn, Black	<i>Crataegus douglasii</i>	sun/ moist	10 - 30 ft
Conifers			
Douglas-Fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	sun/moist	40 - 80 ft
Fir, Grand	<i>Abies grandis</i>	sun to part shade/ moist	100+ ft
Fir, Noble	<i>Abies procera</i>	sun to part shade/moist	50 - 100 ft
Fir, Pacific Silver	<i>Abies amabilis</i>	sun to shade/ moist	50 - 80 ft
Fir, Subalpine	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	sun/dry	30 - 50 ft
Hemlock, Mountain	<i>Tsuga mertensiana</i>	sun to part shade/ moist	30+ ft
Juniper, Western or Sierra	<i>Juniperus occidentalis</i>	sun/dry	15 - 30+ ft
Larch, Western	<i>Larix occidentalis</i>	sun/ moist to moderate	100+ ft
Pine, Lodgepole	<i>Pinus contorta latifolia, narrow upright form</i>	sun to part shade/dry	50 - 70 ft
Pine, Murrayana	<i>Pinus contorta murrayana, bonsai or sparse form</i>	sun/dry	40 - 60 ft
Pine, Ponderosa	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	sun/dry	50 - 60 ft
Spruce, Engelmann	<i>Picea engelmannii</i>	sun to part shade/moist	80 - 100 ft
Deciduous shrubs			

Common name	Botanical name	Preferred growing conditions	Mature height
Ash, Sitka Mountain	<i>Sorbus sitchensis</i>	sun to light shade/moist to dry	10 - 20 ft
Birch, Water	<i>Betula occidentalis</i>	sun/moist to dry	15 - 30 ft
Bitterbrush	<i>Purshia tridentata</i>	sun/dry	3 - 4 ft
Chokecherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	sun to part shade/moist to dry	15 - 30 ft
Currant, Golden	<i>Ribes aureum</i>	sun to shade/dry	6 - 8 ft
Currant, Wax	<i>Ribes cereum</i>	sun/dry	4 - 6 ft
Desert Sweet	<i>Chamaebatiaria millefolium</i>	sun/dry	3 - 6 ft
Dogwood, Redoiser	<i>Cornus sericea ssp. occidentalis</i>	sun to part shade/ moist	7 - 9 ft
Elderberry, Blue	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	sun/moist	15 - 30 ft
Elderberry, Red	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	sun to part shade/moist	6 - 20 ft
Maple, Rocky Mountain	<i>Acer glabrum</i>	sun to part shade/ moist or dry	10 - 20 ft
Maple, Vine	<i>Acer circinatum</i>	shade to part sun/moist	10 - 20 ft
Mockorange	<i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>	sun to part shade/ moist to dry	5 - 10 ft
Oceanspray	<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	part shade/ moderate	10 - 15 ft
Rabbitbrush, Gray	<i>Ericameria nauseosus</i>	sun/dry	2 - 6 ft
Rabbitbrush, Low Green	<i>Ericameria viscidiflorus lanceolatus</i>	sun/dry	1 - 4 ft
Rose, Wood's	<i>Rosa woodsii</i>	part shade to sun/moderate	3 - 6 ft
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	sun to part shade/moderate	8 - 12 ft
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	sun to part shade/ moderate	4 - 6 ft
Spirea, Douglas	<i>Spiraea douglasii</i>	sun/ moist	3 - 7 ft
Willow species	<i>Salix spp.</i>	sun/moist	varied
Evergreen shrubs - Groundcovers (1-12") denoted by (G)			
Buckbrush	<i>Ceanothus velutinus</i>	part shade to sun/ dry	2 - 10 ft
Boxwood, Oregon	<i>Paxistima myrsinites</i>	sun to part shade/moist	1 - 3 ft

Common name	Botanical name	Preferred growing conditions	Mature height
Kinnickinnick (G)	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	sun/dry	4 - 8 in
Mahonia Creeping	<i>Mahonia (Berberis) repens</i>	part shade to sun/moderate	12 - 18 in
Manzanita, Greenleaf	<i>Arctostaphylos patula</i>	sun to part shade/dry	4 - 6 ft
Manzanita, Pinemat	<i>Arctostaphylos nevadensis</i>	sun to part shade/dry	12 - 20 in
Mountain Mahogany, Curl-Leaf	<i>Cercocarpus ledifolium</i>	sun/dry	10 - 15 ft
Oregon Grape	<i>Mahonia (Berberis) aquifolium</i>	part shade to sun/moderate	3 - 10 ft
Purple Sage	<i>Salvia dorrii</i>	sun/dry	16 - 18 in
Sagebrush, Big	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>	sun/dry	3 - 6 ft
Grasses			
Bluebunch Wheatgrass	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i>	sun/dry	2 - 3 ft
Great Basin Wild Rye	<i>Leymus cinereus</i>	sun/moist to moderate	3 - 4 ft
Idaho Fescue	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	sun/dry	12 in
Indian Rice Grass	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	sun/dry	2 - 3 ft
Prairie Junegrass	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	sun to part shade/dry	1 - 2 ft
Sandberg's Bluegrass	<i>Poa sandbergii</i>	sun/dry	4 - 12 in
Tufted Hair Grass	<i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i>	sun/moist	1 - 3 ft
Perennials			
Alumroot	<i>Heuchera cylindrica</i>	sun to part shade/moderate	12 - 18 in
Arrowleaf Balsamroot	<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	sun/dry	8 - 30 in
Aster, Long-leaved	<i>Aster chilensis</i>	sun/ dry to moderate	1 - 2 ft
Bleeding Heart	<i>Dicentra formosa</i>	shade/ moist	1 - 1.5 ft
Blue-eyed Grass	<i>Sisyrinchium idahoense</i>	shade to part sun/moist	20 - 24 in
Buckwheat, Creamy	<i>Eriogonum heracleoides</i>	sun/dry	6 - 14 in
Buckwheat Sulphur	<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	sun to light shade/dry	6 - 12 in
Columbine, Western	<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>	part shade to sun/moist	2 ft
Flax, Blue	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	sun/dry to moderate	2 ft

Common name	Botanical name	Preferred growing conditions	Mature height
Fleabane, Showy	<i>Erigeron speciosus</i>	sun to shade/dry	10 - 12 in
Geranium, Sticky	<i>Geranium viscosissimum</i>	sun/dry	10 - 24 in
Gilia, Scarlet	<i>Ipomopsis aggregata</i>	sun/dry	24 - 30 in
Globemallow, Scarlet	<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>	sun/dry	6 - 12 in
Hollyhock, Mountain	<i>Iliamna rivularis</i>	sun/dry or moist	2 - 3 ft
Indian Blanket Flower	<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	sun/dry to moderate	24 - 30 in
Lily, Sand	<i>Leucocrinum montanum</i>	sun/dry	3 - 4 ft
Lupine, Sicklekeel	<i>Lupinus albicaulis</i>	sun to part shade/ dry	1 - 2 ft
Lupine, Silvery	<i>Lupinus argenteus</i>	sun to part shade/dry	2 - 3 ft
Monkey Flower, Dwarf Purple	<i>Mimulus nanus</i>	sun/dry	2 - 3 in
Monkey Flower, Purple	<i>Mimulus lewisii</i>	sun to part shade/moderate	1 - 3 ft
Monkey Flower, Yellow	<i>Mimulus guttatus</i>	sun to part shade/ moderate	20 - 24 in
Oregon Sunshine	<i>Eriophyllum lanatum</i>	sun/dry	8 - 12 in
Penstemon, Davidson's	<i>Penstemon davidsonii</i>	sun to part shade/dry	4 - 8 in
Penstemon, Lowly	<i>Penstemon humilis</i>	sun/dry	8 - 12 in
Penstemon, Cutleaf	<i>Penstemon richardsonii</i>	sun/dry	1-2 ft
Penstemon, Showy	<i>Penstemon speciosus</i>	sun to part shade/dry	1 - 2 ft
Penstemon, Shrubby	<i>Penstemon fruticosus</i>	sun to part shade/dry	12 - 16 in
Phlox, Spreading	<i>Phlox diffusa</i>	full sun/dry	2 - 4 in
Rosy Pussytoes	<i>Antennaria microphylla</i>	sun/dry	4 - 8 in
Strawberry, Chilean	<i>Fragaria chiloensis</i>	sun to part shade/dry	10 - 12 in
Strawberry, Wood's	<i>Fragaria vesca bracteata</i>	shade/moist	10 - 12 in

Resources for finding native plants for your landscape

Detweiler, A.J. 2006. [Central Oregon's Plant Resource Guide](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/2018-08/co_plant_resource_guide_0.pdf) (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/2018-08/co_plant_resource_guide_0.pdf)

[Oregon Association of Nurseries Directory and Buyers Guide](http://www.nurseryguide.com/) (<http://www.nurseryguide.com/>)

For more information

Detweiler, A.J. 2017. [Water-wise Gardening in Central Oregon](https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9136) (<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9136>), EM 9136

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Jensen, E.C. and C.R. Ross. 2005. *Trees to Know in Oregon*. Oregon State University Extension Service publication EC 1450, Corvallis, OR.

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Horticulture

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