

Native gardening

Gardening with natives is becoming increasingly popular as our wild spaces are dwindling. It allows us to enjoy the beauty of the Pacific Northwest just outside our door.

Native plants, for us at Portland Nursery, are those that were in Oregon before European settlement. We choose to focus on plants in Oregon, particularly the Portland area, rather than the entire Pacific Northwest. Many native plants, such as *Ribes*, have found their way into horticulture since their discovery by Europeans. Due to limited space, our native section does not include naturally selected cultivars (such as *Ribes* 'King Edward VIII'). Cultivars of native plants are stocked in different areas of our yard

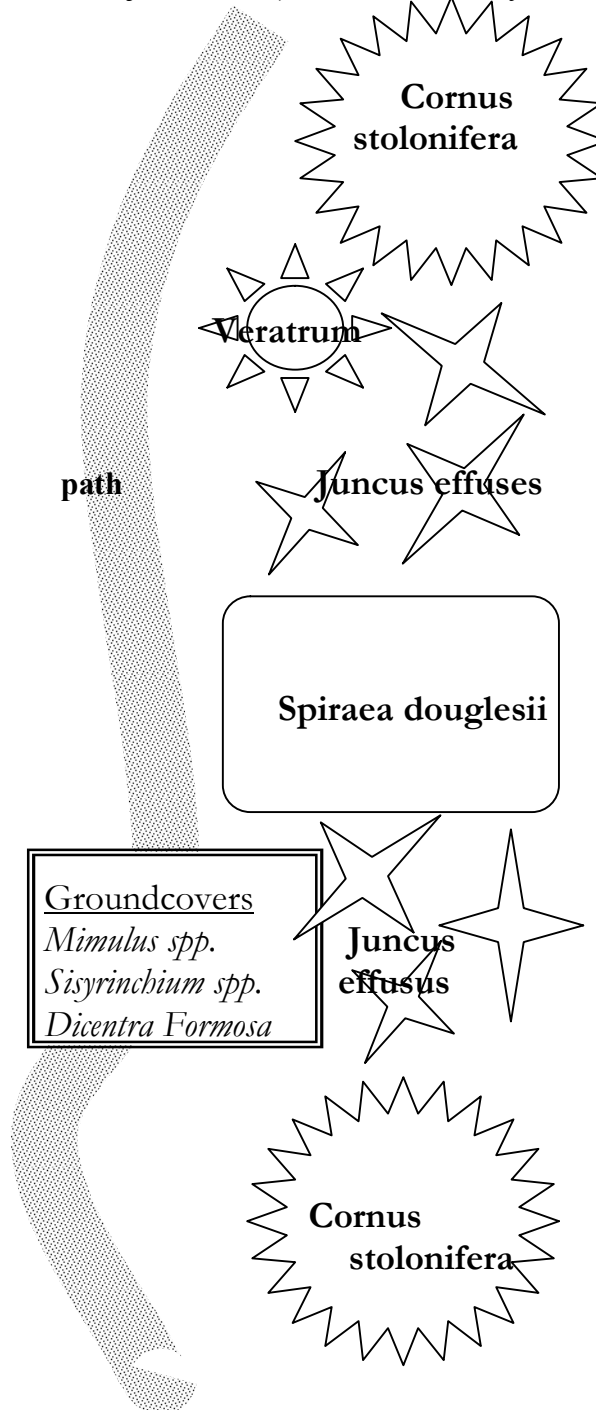
Gardening with natives can be very rewarding. One can have a lush, clean landscape with relatively little maintenance. Additional benefits to native gardening include:

- Attracting wildlife with habitat and food plants
- Drought tolerance
- Acclimatized plants
- Year round seasonal interest
- Ecological restoration
- Erosion control

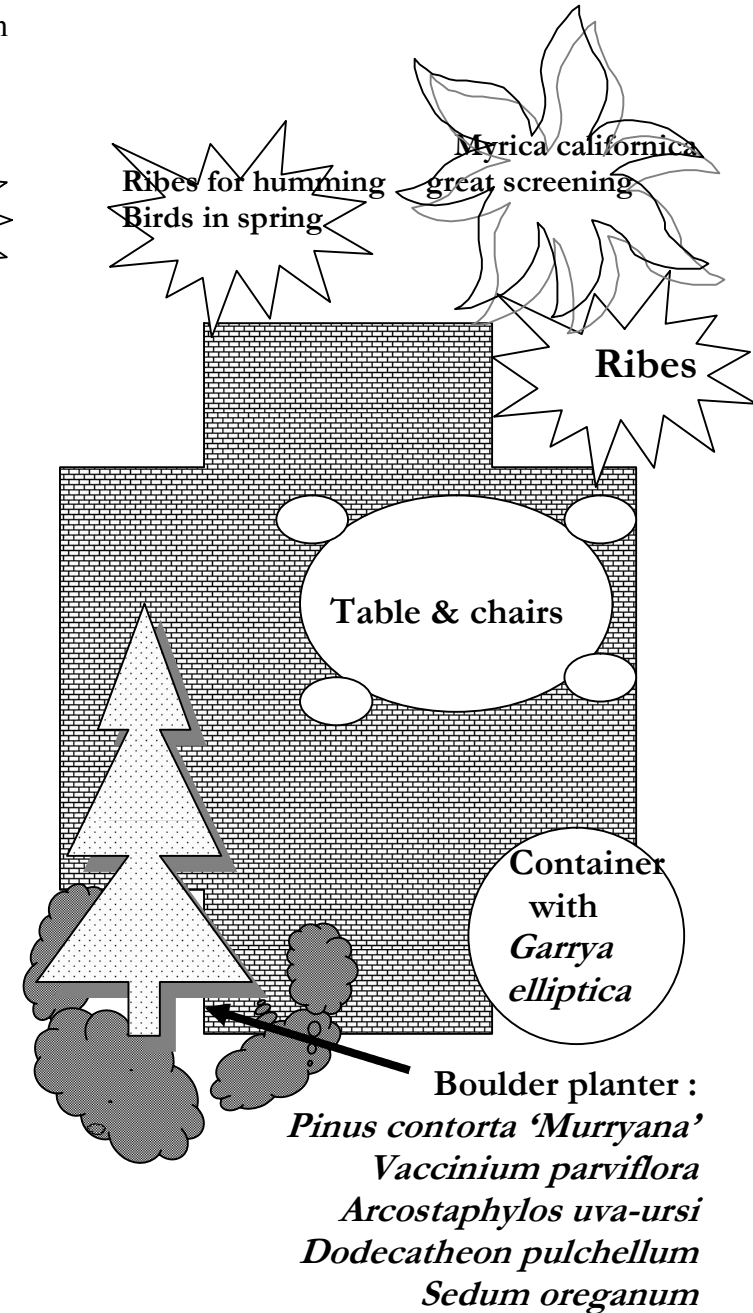


Moist, East facing border

This design utilizes the Riparian (stream and adjacent areas) forest community.



South facing seating area



How to incorporate natives into the landscape

Gardening with natives can mean planting natives exclusively, integrating natives and non natives, or simply strategically placing a native here and there. A native landscape does not need to be messy or bland. Recently many public spaces in Portland have incorporated native plants throughout their designs. These plantings incorporate many aesthetically pleasing specimens in a way that can also be utilized in the home landscape.

Use the same criteria for choosing native plants as you would use to choose any nursery plant for a particular area. First, consider what you want to see in the plant or its desired effect in the landscape. Are you trying to block an unsightly view, or simply trying to add some shade? Second, consider your site requirements such as sun exposure and soil drainage. Oregon has a diverse climate and environment, and therefore has natives that will fit in a wide range of garden situations.

Plant communities can offer some insight on how to combine natives in your garden. They are plants historically associated together, and adapted to particular climatic and geological factors. These communities can be observed on hikes in Oregon's natural areas. The back of this pamphlet lists some resources so you can explore native gardening a little or a lot.

This pamphlet offers two site designs using natives exclusively. These designs are a mere hint as to what is possible with native plants!

Establishing native plants

Just like planting any other nursery plant, natives need a little T.L.C. for the first season. Here are a few tips for successfully establishing natives.

- * Amend your planting area with some compost. This is optional with natives, but they will love rich soil.

- * Water new natives during the hot and dry spells of their first season. We recommend a long slow watering once a week.

- * Mulch with about 2" of compost in the fall.

References

Kruckenber, Arthur, [Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest](#).

City of Portland Bureau of Planning, [Portland Environmental Handbook](#)

Pojar, Jim & MacKinnon, Andy, [Plants of the Pacific Northwest](#).

Bosky Dell Natives:
www.boskydellnatives.com

Native Plant Society of Oregon:
www.npsoregon.org

Plant Native: www.plantnative.org

Written by Laura Altvater

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