

The long awaited Conservation District Native Plant Workshop and Sale is Saturday January 18 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Silverdale Community Center Banquet Room, 97299 Silverdale Way NE. For workshop information or to reserve a seat please call Sandy Jacobson at 360-337-7171 Ext 10 or email sandra-jacobson@wa.nacdnet.org.

This yearly sale sponsored by the Conservation District is an excellent way to learn about native plants for our Northwest gardens and to purchase plants at a steal of a price. If you've put your name on the Conservation District's mailing list hopefully by the time you read this column you'll be pouring over the newsletter and filling in your order for ground covers, trees and shrubs to enhance your landscape.

Another not-to-be-missed event on Wednesday, January 29, at 7 p.m. at Kingston Junior High School, "Wild Wise," is part one of a three part series, "Discover Your Wet and Wild World" sponsored by Cutthroats of Carpenter Creek. The multimedia program by the Woodland Park Zoo will tell about Washington's wildlife and habitats. It's part of a statewide "road show." This event is billed as "an interactive, fun, entertaining session" and is recommended for the whole family. For more information call Stillwaters at 360-297-2876.

Native plants are ideal for home gardeners and at the same create a habitat for wildlife. Additionally, Native Plants are mostly disease and pest free plus survive very happily in our relatively wet winters and springs with drought-like summer months. Native plants rarely need fertilizer. In all honesty, I've never fertilized any of the abundant native plants in my own garden. A few of the natives festooning our garden are: Oceanspray *Holodiscus discolor*; salal; fir; cedar; twinflower *Linnaea borealis*; Mahonia (Oregon Grape); Trillium; Red Huckleberry *Vaccinium parvifolium*; Evergreen Huckleberry; Red Elderberry *Sambucus racemosa*; Salmonberry *Rubus spectabilis*; and Red-Flowering Currant *Ribes sanguineum*. All of these plants provide great habitat (and food) for myriad creatures plus give continuous interest to our garden.

Washington State University Cooperative Extension has a great website on native plants. Key in <http://gardening.wsu.edu/nwnative> to find abundant information. You can also go to the home page at <http://gardening.wsu.edu> then click on the publications button and key in MISC0274 or MISC0273 for details about two outstanding publications available for six dollars plus tax and shipping. Or stop by the County Extension Office at 715 Sidney Monday through Friday during the hours of 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. to pick up a copy at \$6.52 which includes tax. Call the office first at 360-337-7157 to make sure we have enough copies on hand. We can also help you navigate the website if you have any difficulties.

MISC0274 "Winter in the Woods: A Winter Guide to Deciduous Native Plants in Western Washington" gives tips on identifying bare plants by their twigs, texture and features such as leaf scars and fruits and seeds. The guide includes a glossary of scientific terms to aid in identification, plus notes on commonly confused plants. Another extremely valuable publication is MISC0273 "Grow Your Own Native Landscape: A Guide to Identifying, Propagating and Landscaping in Western Washington With Native Plants." Once you see this publication, you'll want it.

In eight short weeks on March 14 through 16 come see the Native Plant Informational Exhibit at the Home and Garden Expo at the Pavilion at the Fairgrounds. Members of Kitsap County Solid Waste, The Native Plant Society of the Olympic Peninsula and WSU Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners will create this exhibit and be on hand to show you how to use native plants to enhance your landscape and create earth friendly environments. I'll be telling you more about this great project in a future column.

In the meantime you can also visit our local libraries or your favorite bookstore and peruse "Gardening With Native Plants" by Arthur Krukeberg, "Landscaping for Wildlife" by Russell Link and "Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast" by Pojar and MacKinnon. Also check out these two books on our wildlife for fun but educational reading: "Brittle Stars and Mudbugs" and "Passionate Slugs and Hollywood Frogs" by Patricia K. Lichen with illustrations by Linda M. Feltner.

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