



## Where and how to buy native plants

Most native plant growers don't have retail sales yards. They are usually happy to sell to the public but you may need to schedule a visit before you come. You should probably have an idea of what you want, though most growers can provide good advice about native plants for a specific site. When you plan to buy native plants, it helps to understand the different forms of plant materials available for purchase.

**Container Plants.** *These are the plants you find at every retail nursery and home center – they come in a pot. You can buy them and plant them at any time of year, but fall is the best time to plant. Container plants are the most widely used type of plant material due to their greater availability and ease of planting. For trees and shrubs, a 1-gallon or 2-gallon pot size is best. Here are some places to buy them in western Washington:*

- **Woodbrook Nursery**, Gig Harbor, WA, 253-857-6808; FAX 253-265-6471  
[www.woodbrook.net](http://www.woodbrook.net). Has a retail yard open Tuesday-Saturday.
- **Storm Lake Growers**, Snohomish, WA, 360-794-4842, FAX 360-794-8323  
[www.slgrowers.com/](http://www.slgrowers.com/)
- **Wabash Farms**, Enumclaw, WA, 360-825-705, FAX 360-825-1949
- **Hanging Gardens Native Plants**, Black Diamond, WA, 253-797-0909, FAX 360-886-2986
- **Tadpole Haven Native Plants**, Woodinville, WA, 425-788-6100, [www.tadpolehaven.com](http://www.tadpolehaven.com).
- **Eatonville Nursery**, Eatonville, WA, 360-832-4345; FAX 360-832-4769
- **Fourth Corner Nursery**, Bellingham, WA, 360-592-2250; [www.fourthcornernursery.com](http://www.fourthcornernursery.com). Primarily bareroot plants, but they have some containers. FAX 888-506-1236
- **Watershed Garden Works**, Longview, WA, 360-423-6456, FAX 360-423-6456.  
[www.watershedgardenworks.com](http://www.watershedgardenworks.com). Has a retail yard, offers a variety of native trees, shrubs, and emergents in containers.

**Bareroot Plants.** *Bareroot plants are grown outdoors in sand beds. They are dug up in winter when dormant, the soil is shaken off the roots and they are stored in cold storage. They are sold in bundles bagged in kraft paper, and may be shipped UPS. They are only available from mid-December until March and they must be planted soon after receiving them. Most growers have minimum orders of 50-100 plants. They are cheaper than container plants, but require greater care during handling and planting. Here's where to buy them:*

- **Conservation District Annual Plant Sales.** Every county has a conservation district and they all have an annual native plant sale in late winter. This is the best place for most people to buy bareroot plants because they sell them in small bundles. Pre-orders are accepted in January, and plants are delivered around the end of February. Kitsap Conservation District annual plant sale information can be found on their website at <http://kitsapcd.org> or by calling 360-204-5529.
- **Fourth Corner Nursery**, see above for details. They are the primary native bareroot grower in Washington State.
- **WACD Plant Materials Center**, Bow, WA. 360-757-1094. WACD grows most of the plants sold at the conservation district plant sales.

**Live Stakes.** *Live stakes or cuttings are straight sections of woody stems, collected while dormant. Only a few species will grow from live stakes, mainly willows, cottonwoods, red osier dogwood, and snowberry. They are available from October through March and must be planted soon harvesting. Here's where to get them:*

- **Bogfoot LLC**, Olympia, WA, 360-349-6163, [ty@bogfoot.com](mailto:ty@bogfoot.com). This is the only source listed here that provides wild-harvested cuttings, and offers the greatest selection of sizes and species
- **Storm Lake Growers**
- **Watershed Garden Works**
- **WACD Plant Materials Center**
- **Fourth Corner Nursery**

**Plugs.** *A few nurseries offer native plants in plugs, which are grown in narrow cylindrical containers and then removed from the pots and bundled for shipping. Species selection is limited and conifer plugs are much more widely available than shrubs. Plug sizes are specified by volume; some common sizes include 10 cu. in and 5.5 cu. in. Plugs offer many advantages over bareroot plants and conventional containers. They are cheaper than most container plants, priced competitively with bareroot plants, most are available for shipping and planting at any time of year, and they may be shipped UPS. Here's where to get them:*

- **Fourth Corner Nurseries**
- **WACD Plant Materials Center** (conifers only)
- **Watershed Garden Works**
- **Plants of the Wild**, Tekoa, WA, 509-284-2848, [www.plantsofthewild.com](http://www.plantsofthewild.com). Located in eastern Washington but they have a good selection of west-side species and they ship plugs UPS.

**Balled & burlapped (B&B).** *B&B trees are trees that have been grown for several years in the field, and dug up with a large root ball which is wrapped in burlap and tied around the base of the trunk. B&B trees are large, heavy, expensive, and difficult to plant. They are used for landscaping, not restoration projects.*

**Seed.** *In western Washington, seed has minimal use for native plant restoration because trees and shrubs are difficult to establish from seed except in a nursery. Other regions dominated by grasslands use seed often. In our area, seed is used mostly for native wildflowers, wetland sedges and rushes, or (prairie restoration. Most western Washington native seed is harvested in the wild, which is expensive. Here's where to get it:*

- **Frosty Hollow Ecological Restoration**, Langley, WA, 360-579-2332. Native plant seed experts; seeds of many trees, shrubs, forbs, and emergents. Tracks seed collection sites.
- **Inside Passage Seeds**, Port Townsend, WA, 360-385-6114, [www.insidepassageseeds.com](http://www.insidepassageseeds.com). Has native and non-native seeds of many species. Tracks seed collection sites.
- **Plantas Nativa**, Bellingham, WA, 360-715-9655, [www.plantasnativa.com](http://www.plantasnativa.com). Collects seeds of a variety of native trees, shrubs, emergents, grasses, and a few forbs. Tracks seed collection sites.
- **Northwest Meadows**, Pt Townsend, WA 360-504-6415 [northwestmeadows.com](http://northwestmeadows.com). The only supplier of farmed (not wild-harvested) seed listed here, included with qualifiers. They sell wildflower meadow mixes with species that are not native to western Washington, and our experience is that "wildflower meadows" are unsustainable here without intensive management, and homeowners are likely to be disappointed with the results after a few years.

**Plant names.** *Botanists and growers like to use scientific names for plants to avoid confusion, because common names can vary widely from place to place and the same common name can apply to several different species. For example, there are three different native species commonly called "Oregon grape", and each one has unique habitat requirements and growth form. If possible, you should know the scientific name of the plants you want to purchase. Even if you don't know how to pronounce them (most trained botanists stumble over pronunciation!), you can spell them out. It will help ensure that you get the plants you want. If you're not sure, describe what you want to the grower and they can help figure it out.*