



The Perennial Word

October 2015

Volume 4, Issue 4

Cedar Mountain Perennials:



Specializes in native plants for the Inland Northwest Garden.

Offering a wide selection of native perennial wildflowers grown from seed or cuttings at our nursery outside Athol, Idaho. We also feature a limited selection of trees and shrubs.

Our plants have been selected to be ideally suited for climate, soils, and moisture regimes of the Inland Northwest.

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Editor's Note:

We hope you enjoy this last issue of the Perennial Word for 2015. Fall is here and we have devoted quite a bit of this issue to fall and to activities that we are often involved with in this season.

We would also like to take a moment to warmly thank all of our customers for their support this past year, this has been one of our best years since our inception in 2010.

Once again we participated in two Farmer's Markets, in Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint, the Spokane Garden Expo and the Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society Plant Sale. This year we donated 20 percent of our sales from the KNPS Plant Sale to the KNPS.

This spring and summer have been one of the driest in recent memory and provide a valuable reminder of the importance of water conservation here in the Inland Northwest. So many of our landscapes, both commercial and private are dominated by large areas of turf which guzzle vast amounts of water each summer. Much of our water supply here in the region originates from the Spokane-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer, a resource that though sizable is far from endless. It is a limited resource, one that could be readily reduced with a few years in a row of below normal precipitation. We hope you will join us in advocating for more extensive use of native plants as well as the concept of xeriscaping in urban and suburban landscapes and landscaping.

We look forward to continuing to produce the highest quality native plants in the future and to seeing you in 2016!



Collecting Native Seeds

By Bob Wilson

There are different ways to create a landscape with native plants. You may purchase plants directly from a nursery such as Cedar Mountain Perennials; or you can do it yourself, by collecting your own seeds and growing your own plants. It can be rewarding to see the fruits of your own labor blooming in your landscape! As we have discussed previously, growing from seed requires a certain level of knowledge and experience in order to create the conditions required for those seeds to germinate and grow. However, if you are interested in taking the plunge, there are many benefits to growing plants that are from a local seed source and are ideally adapted to your local area. Our feature article in this issue is on collecting and preserving native seeds.



Proper species identification is paramount. It is important to scout areas ahead of time and identify plant species of interest. Once identified, typically while blooming, the area where the species is growing may be documented so that you can locate it later when the seeds are ripe. Permission for seed collection should be obtained from the local landowner prior to collection. The best areas for collection will have a significant number of plants, that way your collection will not have an impact on the overall reproductive capacity of that species. Most experts recommend not collecting more than ten percent of the available seed in a given area in a particular year. Harvesting from a larger population may also mean a more diverse or robust population. Collecting from numerous individuals is preferred since individual plants may produce seeds of varying germination rates, so a broader collection may lead to better success overall in germination.



For best results collect seeds when they are mature, when the capsules or pods that they are contained in are dry, brown and beginning to dehisce. Mature seeds are usually dark in color, firm, and dry. Seeds that are green, lighter in color, somewhat moist will generally not germinate or have very low germination rates. Timing can be critical for some species. Some seeds may remain in their capsules on the plants for some time, in other cases, seeds are dispersed immediately upon maturity. Animal predation can be another factor. You may collect the capsules or pods them-

selves and then remove the seeds later or open them by hand at the time of collection. It is best to collect seeds from the plant as opposed to picking seeds off the ground. Seeds collected from the ground are more likely to have mold contamination and seed viability is more questionable.

The best containers for collecting seeds are paper envelopes, bags or fabric. Using plastic bags for collecting is not desirable since moisture retention can promote mold growth. We like to use either small coin envelopes or small paper bags depending upon what we are col-

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Planting for Fall Color

By Jill Wilson

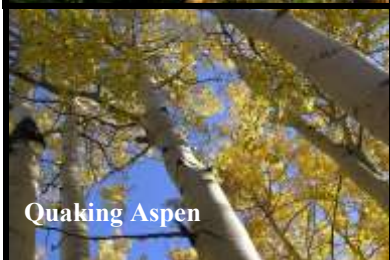
Fall is a colorful as well as fruitful time in the Inland Northwest. Many of the region's trees and shrubs offer a colorful palette from which to choose. So if you are looking to add some color to your landscape in the fall here are some of our favorites.



Western Larch



Western Larch



Quaking Aspen



Quaking Aspen



Red Stemmed Dogwood



Red Stemmed Dogwood

Trees:

Western Larch, *Larix occidentalis*, is unique among our native conifer species in that it is deciduous. Needles of Western Larch turn a brilliant yellow from mid-October to early November throughout the region before falling. This tree may reach 180 feet in height when mature and has a fairly fast growth rate. Western Larch prefers full sun for ideal growth. This species is best for a large landscape, due to its size. It has few insect pests or diseases and is also fairly fire resistant.

Quaking Aspen, *Populus tremuloides*, has spectacular fall color with its brilliant yellow and sometimes even orange to red foliage contrasted against the white bark. Aspen is definitely one of the premiere trees for fall color in the region, though it can be more difficult to grow in an urban landscape setting. Aspen suffers from a variety of diseases and insect pests that affect the stem and leaves. It is a relatively short lived trees species and seems to have an even shorter life span when grown in an urban setting. It does have a rapid growth rate which can be a plus in a new landscape. It is best to plant aspen in a more protected location such as a north or east exposure and in a soil rich in organic matter.

Shrubs:

Red Stem Dogwood, *Cornus sericea*, is a large shrub, reaching 15 feet in height, often found growing in moist, well drained soils in our region. It may also be seen growing on upland soils. This species tolerates both seasonal flooding as well as drier conditions during the summer. The foliage of Red Stem Dogwood turns red in the fall. Plants also produce white berries which mature in late summer to fall. Red Stem Dogwood grows best in full sun to partial shade.

Black Hawthorn, *Crataegus douglasii*, grows as a large shrub reaching up to 15' tall. The foliage can take on deep fiery-red hues in fall, often mixed with green or yellow. Although it is drought-tolerant, it prefers to grow near moisture and you can find it near lake shorelines and streams. Like most hawthorns, it bears large thorns and needs to be located

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lecting, whether seeds or pods. We record the genus and species of the plant, date of collection and location on the bag when we collect.

Depending upon the species of plant and the method of collection, some processing may be required before seeds are placed in long term storage. For pulpy fruits, seeds need to be separated from the fleshy fruit. Seeds of other species often require some processing to removing dirt, leaves, stems, pieces of capsule, stems and chaff to reduce bulk for storage and more importantly remove potential sources of moisture that may lead to mold formation during storage. For species, such as those in the Aster family in which lots of chaff



Propagation of Native Plants - Unlocking Nature's Secrets

Bob Wilson will be giving a presentation for the Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society on propagation of native plants from seed and stem cuttings. This will be held in Sandpoint at 9:45 AM on Saturday, Oct. 24 at the Community Hall. Admission is free and open to all. Bob will be sharing his experiences from more than 25 years of growing natives in Idaho and Flagstaff, Arizona.



may be present within the inflorescence, separating the seeds from the chaff may help remove insect eggs, mold spores and other disease vectors and seed predators. For these plants the easiest way to separate seeds from other material is to rub the collected material against a coarse screen with a gloved hand. The first screening will allow passage of seeds but prevent passage of coarser material. Passing seeds through a second finer screen will collect the seeds but allow finer waste material to pass through to finish the process.

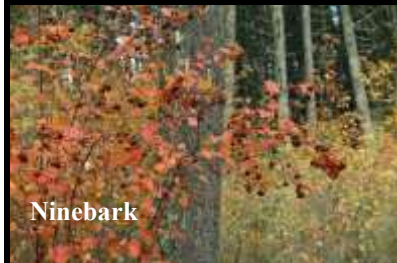
Most seeds survive best when stored at temperatures below 50 degrees and humidity levels less than 50 percent. A constant temperature is ideal. Using paper or cloth containers are ideal, plastic containers can retain moisture which again may promote mold. We store our seeds in small coin envelopes in our basement which stays cool and with a reasonably constant temperature. Seeds may be stored in a refrigerator (not freezer) if they are first thoroughly dried, then sealed in a plastic zip-lock bag. Exceptions to this rule are seeds from fleshy fruits. These must be kept moist to maintain viability. This type of seed is best planted immediately or mixed in a one to one ratio of moist sphagnum moss or a peat and perlite mixture before being stored in a cool place.

The length of time that seeds may remain viable varies by species. Some may be viable after 10 years of storage while others may no longer germinate after only two. For that reason best to try to use those seeds within the next year or two if possible.





Black Hawthorn



Ninebark



Ninebark



Chokecherry



Western Mountain Ash



Rocky Mountain Maple

away from foot traffic.

Ninebark, *Physocarpus malvaceus*, is very common throughout the region, growing on a wide variety of sites. This species is a shorter in stature than the other species discussed here, reaching a maximum height of around 6 feet. Ninebark is one of our more drought tolerant shrubs in the area and prefers to grow in full sun. The main fall attraction is the foliage which turns a rusty red in color. Ninebark is one of the first species to turn color in the area often starting its show in August. Ninebark does best in full sun but tolerates some shade.

Chokecherry, *Prunus virginiana*, is definitely one of our favorite shrubs for fall color. In fall in this region the leaves on this rather large shrub turn a brilliant orange to red color. Reaching 25 feet in height, this species is one of our largest shrub species. Chokecherry also produces reddish-purple spherical fruit in late summer to early fall that are prized by birds. It is a good plant for wildlife as it is favored as a browse by some species. However for that reason may not a good choice for a deer resistant landscape. Chokecherry is a thicket forming shrub, spreading by rhizomes. It can be susceptible to several diseases including X disease, Black knot, shot hole, and *Plowrightia stansburiana* (a canker disease). Chokecherry may be grown in full sun or part shade.

Western Mountain-Ash, *Sorbus scopulina*, is a multi-stemmed medium to large sized shrub that may reach 12 feet in height. It is an attractive species for a fall landscape with its clusters of bright red berries and orange to red foliage. Leaves of Western Mountain-Ash are compound and consist of 9 to 12 leaflets. Western Mountain Ash suckers slowly from the roots to form a multi-stemmed thicket. Western Mountain-Ash will grow best in full sun to part shade with moderate moisture. The berries are prized by birds and so like both Chokecherry and Highbush Cranberry, this species is excellent for attracting song birds in fall and winter.

*Special Projects: John Brown Elementary School
by Jill Wilson*

John Brown Elementary School is very fortunate to have fourth grade teacher Fonda Stewart on their faculty. Fonda is a tireless promoter of the school, an avid gardener, somewhat of an entrepreneur, as well as a teacher with a keen imagination. In August Fonda contacted us about a project she envisioned to bring native plants to her school's grounds and in the process teach her students something about planting, plant care, providing habitat for native wildlife. Most importantly she wanted to give



her students the experience of taking ownership in the new landscaping, to foster more pride in their school and hopefully encourage them to become more passionate about their community and environment. Her goal was to create display and wildlife habitat gardens along the front of the school which she registered with the National Wildlife Federation. One of the gardens is specifically focused on attracting different pollinators.

In August Fonda contacted us to see if we might be willing to donate plants for the project, we looked over our inventory and came up with a number of plants to donate and some additional plants that Fonda and her fellow teachers and school community raised money to purchase. We also directed her to several other native plant purveyors in the region who offered a slightly different species selection to fill out her needs. She came away with some sizeable donations from all of these nurseries for the new landscape project.



On September 11th, community volunteers, teachers and their classrooms joined together to plant the gardens. We delivered our plants that day and assisted with setting out all the plants into suitable spots within the gardens and then helped some of the classrooms with the planting. One by one, children accompanied by their teachers came out to plant their portion of the project. It was clear to us that they enjoyed getting to do something different! We look forward to watching these gardens grow through the

seasons!



Cedar Mountain Perennials

Products and Services

Wildflowers:

Our selection includes over 60 species of local, regional and western native wildflowers.

Shrubs and Trees:

We carry a broad selection of native shrubs and some trees.

Pricing:

We offer retail sales through the Kootenai County, Sandpoint Farmer's Markets and the Six Rivers Market. Volume discounts are available to landscapers and those purchasing in quantity

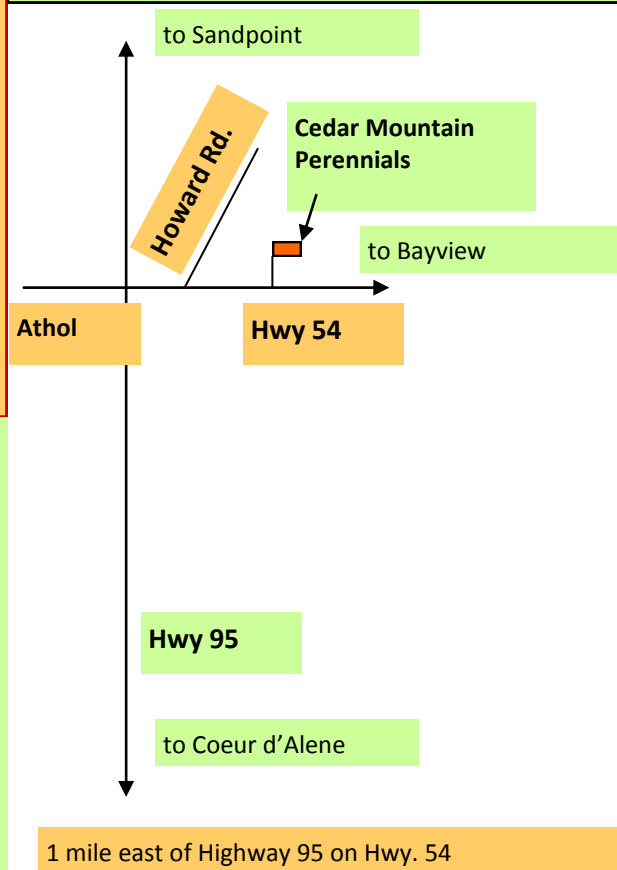
Consulting:

- Site Evaluations
- Plant Identification
- Plant Selection
- Pest and Disease Diagnosis
- Training



Balsamorhiza sagittata:
Arrowleaf Balsamroot

To Find the Nursery:



RETAIL LOCATIONS:

Saturdays:

Kootenai County Farmer's Market
Highway 95 and Prairie Ave.
Hayden, Idaho
Note new time 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM

Wednesdays:

Farmer's Market at Sandpoint
Farmin Park, Sandpoint, Idaho
3:00 to 5:30 PM

Fridays:

At the Nursery
9:00 am to 4:00 pm

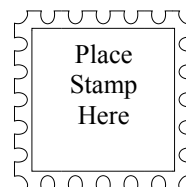
By Appointment:

The Nursery
7875 E Highway 54
Athol, Idaho
Please call first
(208) 683-2387



Erigeron speciosus
Showy Daisy

Cedar Mountain Perennials
7875 E Highway 54
Athol ID 83801



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