



April is Native Plant Appreciation Month!

Native plants play a very important role in our ecosystems. Ecologists, wildlife biologists, and entomologists have shown that native plant species are more favorable for supporting local wildlife, from the smallest insects such as our tiny native bees to the largest such as our endangered Orca. Native plants feed the creatures at the bottom of the food web that then provide meals for creatures on the next part of the web.

Over the past century, urbanization has taken ecologically productive land and replaced it with lawns and exotic ornamental plants. The modern obsession with highly manicured "perfect" lawns alone has created a green, monoculture carpet across the country that covers over 40 million acres. The plants that would naturally occur are the ecological basis upon which life depends, including birds and people. Without them and the insects that co-evolved with them, local birds cannot survive.

Unfortunately, a lot of the landscaping plants available in nurseries are alien species from other countries. These exotic plants not only interrupt the food web, but many have become invasive pests, out-competing native species and degrading habitat in remaining natural areas.

Landscaping choices have meaningful effects on the populations of birds and the insects they need to survive. The bottom line is this—homeowners, landscapers, and local policy makers can benefit birds and other wildlife by simply selecting native plants when making their landscaping decisions. To do your part, you can use Audubon's handy database to discover native plants in your area and which types of birds they'll attract. Just enter your zip code, and it's as easy as that.

[www.audubon.org/native-plants/search?
zipcode=98273](http://www.audubon.org/native-plants/search?zipcode=98273)

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, native plant species are an important part of Washington's heritage, providing important aesthetic, economic and ecological contributions that make Washington a special place to live; and

WHEREAS, Washington enjoys an amazing biodiversity with over 3,000 native plant species, from rain forest plants on the Olympic Peninsula to the desert species in Eastern Washington; and

WHEREAS, preserving native plant eco-systems is critical for protecting wildlife, birds, fish and water quality in our state; and

WHEREAS, native plant ecosystems protect our watersheds by recharging natural aquifers, modulating stream flows, filtering water and reducing erosion and flooding; and

WHEREAS, over 350 of our native plant species are listed as rare by the Washington Natural Heritage Program; and

WHEREAS, invasive species present a great threat to sustaining our native plant ecosystems and biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, climate significantly impacts Washington's native plants and their habitats, requiring action to protect them from climate change;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2021 as

Native Plant Appreciation Month

in Washington, and I encourage all people in our state to join me in appreciating, enjoying and celebrating our floral diversity by learning more about our native plants and their habitats.

Signed this 19th day of January, 2021

Governor Jay Inslee

