

Little used native plants for big impact!  
Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott, WSU Associate Professor and Extension Horticulturist

### Trees

- *Alnus viridis* ssp *sinuata* - attractive and more compact than the more ubiquitous *A. rubra*
- *Juniperus communis* or *J. scopulorum/maritimum* - shrubs or small trees, drought-tolerant slow-growers to modest size

### Shrubs

- *Arctostaphylos* spp - many larger spp in this large genus such as *A. patula* and *A. canescens* are underused compared to the low-growing *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*
- *Calycanthus occidentalis* - large, aromatic, deciduous, with elegant and exotic dark-red camellia-like flowers. Several cultivars of closely related spp long available in trade
- *Chamaebatiaria millefolium* - very showy dryland plant, deciduous in colder zones, evergreen in mild winter areas
- *Linnaea borealis* - woodland groundcover with evergreen leaves, easy to grow once established

### Perennials

- *Abronia latifolia* - coastal dune plant, succulent leaves, attractive flowers, bee plant
- *Aralia californica* - large herbaceous shrub, great for wet areas
- *Asclepias* spp - the exclusive larval food of the monarch butterfly, but also nectar food of several spp. Consider *A. fascicularis* and *A. speciosa*
- *Balsamorhiza* spp - showy, yellow sunflower-like flowers, best in sunny, well-drained conditions
- *Geum triflorum* - lovely flower heads, bee plant suitable for drier habitats
- *Lewisia* spp - succulent foliage, showy flowers, tidy plants
- *Lomatium columbianum* - large plant with attractive gray-green divided foliage, showy pink flowers
- *Monardella odoratissima* - low mounds of blue-gray foliage with lavender flowers; pollinator plant
- *Oenothera cespitosa* - showy, pinkish-white, low-growing; best in well-drained, sunny conditions
- *Opuntia polyacantha* and *O. fragilis* - like all cacti, these do best in well-drained, sunny locations
- *Parnassia fimbriata* - very showy flowers, does best in moist, shady conditions
- *Penstemon* spp - showy flowers mostly in the red-blue-purple range, pollinator plants, some evergreen spp
- *Sphaeralcea munroana* - tall, with showy, deep orange flowers that pollinators love
- *Synthyris lanuginosa* - deep blue flowers upon woolly mound of foliage; try in rock gardens
- *Townsendia* - large, low-growing, very showy daisylike flowers in pink, blue, or lavender hues
- *Vancouveria chrysantha* - more evergreen than *V. hexandra*, with yellow "inside out" flowers

### Bulbs

- *Lilium columbianum* - common in the wild, but little grown in gardens; easy to cultivate
- *Triteleia hendersonii* - strikingly attractive flowers, pale with dark midveins
- *Trillium albidum* - surprisingly easy to grow, especially in containers, with large, showy flowers
- *Xerophyllum tenax* - iconic alpine plant. Purchase container plants to start; they spread over time

### Annuals

- *Clarkia pulchella* - showy light pink to lilac flowers, often with bright pink splotches
- *Collomia grandiflora* - tall, showy, generally pale orange but also white or light yellow, bee plant
- *Gilia capitata* - periwinkle blue puffs that readily rebloom and self-seed. Very drought-tolerant and highly desirable pollinator plants
- *Plectritis congesta* - unusual, showy pink flower with bee value; coastal and relatively xeric

### Grasses

- *Festuca californica* - tall bunchgrass, coastal

### Wetlands:

- *Juncus patens* - gray-green, evergreen, clumping, tolerates some droughty periods
- *Juncus ensifolius* - bright green, flat blades, attractive dark brown flowers
- *Carex macrocephala* - large, showy, beach plant
- *Carex spectabilis* - very showy, white inflorescence; montane

## Regional sources of native plants (curated by Sami Gray)

Alplains (Colorado, online only) - seeds, xeric/high elevation - includes many natives such as *Townsendia*, *Synthyris lanuginosa*. <http://www.alplains.com/>

Bosky Dell Natives (West Linn, OR, online) - native plant nursery, informative web site. Many spp., including a large selection of native *Penstemon*. <http://www.boskydellnatives.com/>

Center for Native Plants (Montana, online) - extensive perennials list includes *Parnassia fimbriata*, *Ratibida columnifera*, numerous *Penstemon* spp. <https://centerfornativeplants.com/>

Derby Canyon Natives (Peshastin, WA, online) - all natives; bulk seeds of native grasses; live stakes of shrubs; container plants for all categories. *Alnus viridis*, *Linnaea*, many perennials including *Balsamorhiza*, *Monardella*, *Penstemon* spp., *Sphaeralcea munroana*.  
<https://derbycanyonnatives.com/>

Desert Jewels Nursery (Spokane, online) - specializes in rock garden plants and ground covers; includes *Penstemon*, *Eriogonum*, and *Sedum*. <https://www.desertjewelsnursery.com/>

The Desert Northwest (Sequim, WA, online) - specializes in dry-climate plants - carries several cultivars of the native *Opuntia* spp. <https://www.desertnorthwest.com/>

Fourth Corner Nurseries (Bellingham, online) - bare root and container plants, wholesale quantities but no license or reseller permit needed. <http://fourthcornernurseries.com/>

Inside Passage Seeds (Port Townsend, online only) - all native, species and populations in the Puget Sound region, including *Abronia*, *Aruncus*, *Balsamorhiza*, *Geum triflorum*, several *Lupinus* spp, *Penstemon*, *Xerophyllum*. <http://www.insidepassageseeds.com/>

Klamath-Siskiyou Native Seeds (online only) - includes *Aralia californica*, *Aruncus dioicus*, *Asclepias speciosa* and *A. fascicularis*, *Balsamorhiza deltoidea*, *Darmera* (peltiphyllum), *Eriogonum* spp., *Erytranthe cardinalis*, *Lupinus leucophyllis*, *Pedicularis densiflorus*, *Xerophyllum*.  
<https://klamathsiskiyouseeds.com/>

North American Rock Garden Society seed exchange (online only) - includes natives such as *Townsendia*. <https://nargs.org/seed-exchange>

Plants of the Wild (Tekoa, Washington, online) - substantial catalogue includes container-grown native trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses. <http://www.plantsofthewild.com/>

Xera Plants (Portland, online) - a good selection of showy native annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs. Includes several *Arctostaphylos* selections, *Juniperus* spp, *Vancouveria chrysantha*, *Gilia* spp., *Ratibida*, *Romanzoffia*, *Geum triflorum*, *Polemonium carneum*. <https://xeraplants.com/>

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