

Landscape with Oregon native plants for ease

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Bondarowicz Snowberry is an easy to grow Northwest native.

If you're spending wet and cold January days imagining how you're going to bring your garden to life once it starts to warm up, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants you to think about planting seeds and wildflowers native to Northwest like broad-leaf lupine and spreading phlox. The plants and flowers will be low-maintenance, they'll thrive and "they'll support native birds, insects and other pollinators that depend on familiar home-grown species for a healthy eco-system."

"Native species evolved in the local environment and have developed complex interrelationships with other area plant species as well as fine tuning to local climate and soil conditions," said Kathleen Blair, an ecologist at Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona, in a statement.

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Many commercially available garden flowers haven't.

"If you plant non-native or exotic species, a whole lot of other local species cannot use them."

A great resource in Oregon is the Native Plant Society of Oregon (<http://www.npsoregon.org/>)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists some other great resources too:

"USDA Nature Resource Conservations Service (<http://plants.usda.gov/>) provides a complete resource for all things plants

Native Plant Information Network (<http://www.wildflower.org/>) houses a native plant database and searchable image directory maintained by the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Plant

Conservation Alliance (<http://www.nps.gov/plants/>) contains links to plant guides by region

USDA Forest Service (<http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/nativegardening/index.shtml>) offers a variety of links ad native plant information

U.S. National Arboretum (<http://www.usna.usda.gov/>) and search "native plants"

Iowa Prairie Network (<http://www.iowaprairienetwork.org/>) recommends prairie resources

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (<http://www.fws.gov/>) and search "native plants"

National Wildlife Federation (<http://www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife/create.cfm>) how to create a wildlife friendly garden.