# Why Naturescape?

By creating a wildlife-friendly yard you spend less time worrying about your lawn, use less water, and have more opportunities to enjoy nature. It's also fun and rewarding to discover the different types of wildlife you can attract to your yard.

Support biodiversity and rare local ecosystems! Many threatened and endangered species and ecosystems occur in Saanich, a region with a majority of private lands. This makes private land stewardship vitally important. The efforts of property owners to protect and restore critically-endangered Garry Oak and Coastal Douglas-fir habitats will be necessary for the persistence of these rare species and ecosystems.



#### Benefits of Naturescaping

- Reduce water use, yard maintenance, greenhouse gases (mowers and weed-eaters), and the use of fertilizers
- Protect and enhance local biodiversity
- Linking Naturescaped yards between natural areas provides wildlife with corridors that are critical for maintaining healthy populations.
- Protect and enhance local biodiversity

"If I could add only one naturescape feature to my yard it would be flowing water. I really enjoy watching the wildlife it attracts. Even in the middle of winter"

Claudia Copley
 Victoria Natural History Society

## What is Naturescape?

It's about restoring, preserving, and enhancing wildlife habitat in your own yard by providing the basics for wildlife: food, water, and shelter. Gardening with native plants provides both food and shelter for native wildlife. Naturescaping is also about learning to know, appreciate, and enjoy nature. Here are the basic principles:

- A commitment to stewardship
- Habitat creation and preservation
- Preservation of biodiversity
- Water conservation

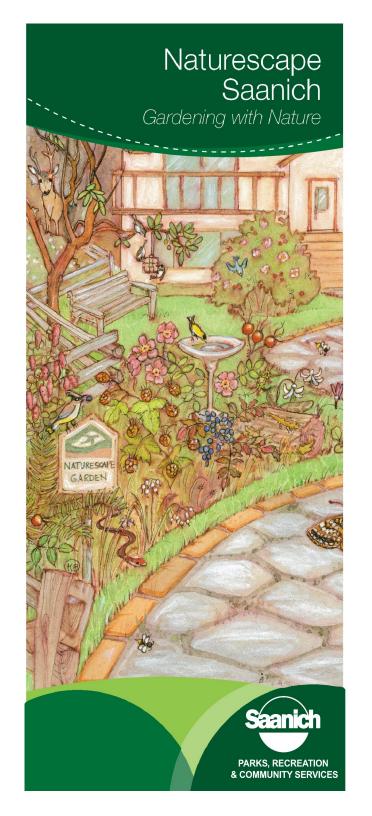


#### **Good Neighbours**

By Naturescaping you are being a great neighbour to wildlife and natural areas, but please remember your human neighbours as well! In urban areas, residents have concerns with weeds and tall grasses, which can be unsightly, invasive, and may pose a fire hazard. In order to find a balance, we recommend:

- Signage: post a Naturescape sign to show your intentions. (Contact Saanich, below)
- Maintain a perimeter: mow a 1m strip around your yard, plus a .5m strip along the path to the front steps and on top of retaining walls
- Address weeds: mow/trim all areas of weeds (including grass areas) before they go to seed
- Create islands: of native plant habitat (including grasses) to reduce mowing
- Control invasives: control or eliminate and stop from spreading beyond your property
- Edge treatments: use creeping native vegetation, bark mulch, and low flowering native shrubs at the property frontage

(250) 475-5522 parks@saanich.ca/



#### **February**

Put out Blue Orchard Bee tubes/boxes

#### March

Clean out old bird houses and put up new ones

above with a hole that drips to make

because mud is needed by nesting

birds and mason bees.

noise (attracts birds). Overflow is fine

#### **April**

Swan Lake Natíve Plant Sale.

#### May

Plant and water new native plants

#### June

Watch for weeds and invasives

### July

Maintain bird bath/ water source

### **August**

Collect natíve plant seeds to propagate

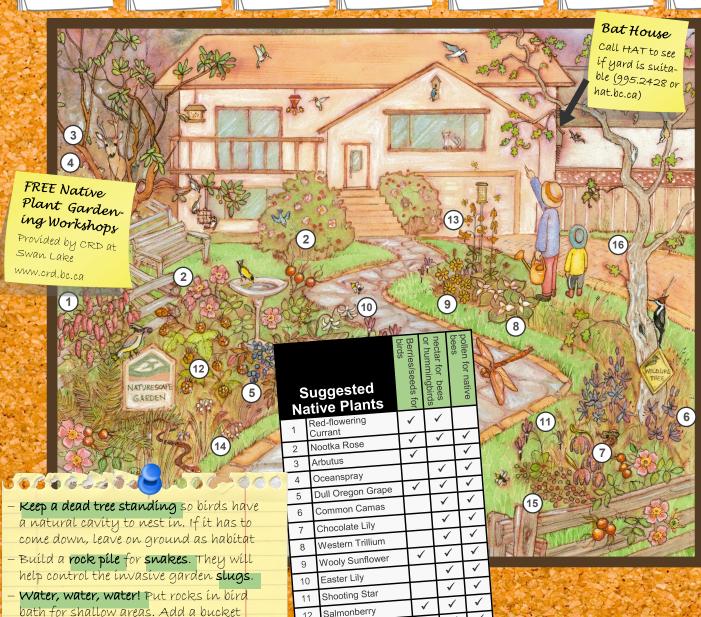
#### Sept

Take cuttings to propagate native plants

### **October**

Start native plant seeds in flats to overwinter

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Tiger Lily

**Nodding Onion** 

Kinnikinnick

Garry Oak

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## Naturescape Tips

- Make a real butterfly garden using native plants (no Butterfly Bush-it's invasive!).
- Sheet mulch some of the lawn with cardboard (Lasagna gardening).
- Make a **brush pile** for the birds. Wrens love it!
- Be a bit "messy." Leave some fallen branches and add a nurse log.
- **Provide layers of vegetation:** trees, shrubs, and ground cover. Gives wildlife a safe route into yard.
- Plan for all season flowering. Think
  of pollinators and hummingbirds.
- Plant berry-producing species for birds.
- Invite neighbours to see that you are gardening with purpose—using native plants and considering wildlife

#### Resource Material

- Garry Oak Gardeners Handbook: native plant propagation, species, nurseries, goert.
- Naturescape Kít: booklets with everything about naturescaping <u>www.naturescapebc.ca/</u>
- Habitat Acquisition Trust: Gardening With Native Plants handout. Www.hat.bc.ca
- Victoria Natural History Society to learn about local flora and fauna www.naturevictoria.ca

#### Books

- Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest (Arthur Kruckeburg, 1996)
- Native Plants in the Coastal Garden (April Pettinger & Brenda Costanzo, 2002)