

(Appeared in the Ferry County View Extra, December 29, 2016)

2017 Spring Plant Sale Ferry Conservation District Event to Offer Natives, Ornamentals and Edibles

Planting trees, shrubs and berries on your property provides multiple benefits. Plants will beautify your property and add to its value. The foliage and fruits of plants provide food for wildlife and for your family. Flowering shrubs attract pollinators, such as butterflies and bees, enhancing the entire ecosystem. Trees can provide shade or act as a windbreak. Reforestation trees enhance the landscape and provide timber and firewood for harvest in the future. Planting in riparian areas (river and stream banks) helps protect river and stream banks, preventing erosion and degradation of water quality.

For its 2017 Spring Plant Sale, the Ferry Conservation District (the District) is offering a variety of plants carefully selected for use in our particular climate (Plants have been chosen which will thrive in Planting Zones 2-5. Most of Ferry County is Zone 4 or 5). Wholesale nurseries in Washington, Montana, Oregon, and Idaho supply healthy, hardy, planting stock grown in the Northwest (asparagus will be supplied by a grower in Michigan). By purchasing in bulk the District is able to provide excellent plants at good prices.

Natives

Native trees and shrubs are an important part of the sale. Why natives? Natives are the plants naturally occurring in an area. This means they are adapted to the local climate and soil conditions and need less irrigation and fertilization than non-native plants. They are more resistant to pests and disease and will better provide food and shelter for native wildlife. This year's selections include two native shrubs and two native conifers.

The **Wood's Rose** (*Rosa woodsia*) is a native deciduous shrub, growing to 6 feet. The pink flowers and red fruit (hips) attract birds, mammals and pollinators. The hips, which were used by Native Americans, are a good source of vitamin C and can be made into jams and jellies. This rose, named after botanist Joseph Woods, tolerates a variety of soil conditions, and prefers moderate to full sun. It spreads by suckers, so it can be very aggressive in your landscape. Fire-resistant. Provides pollinator habitat. Deer resistant. Zone 3.



Mock Orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) grows to 9 feet tall, with large clusters of fragrant white blossoms. Because of its fragrance (similar that of orange blossoms), consider planting near a walkway or driveway. The nectar-rich blossoms of this native deciduous shrub will attract pollinators. The mock orange will tolerate partial shade but may blossom more profusely in full sun. Once established, it will tolerate dry soil conditions. Fire-resistant. Zone 4

This year we are again offering **Ponderosa Pine** (*Pinus ponderosa*) for reforestation. The Ponderosa (reaching 50'-100' and sometimes much higher) grows abundantly in our area on dry south-facing slopes and is very tolerant of high summer temperatures. The Ponderosa Pine, a major source of timber in our region also provides important wildlife habitat, recreation use and aesthetic value. Among the most fire-resistant conifers (Prune branches to 15-20 feet near homes). Deer-resistant. Zone 4.





For the first time in several years, the District is offering **Douglas Fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) as a reforestation tree. This is an attractive conifer whose abundant seeds provide food for many birds and small mammals. The Douglas fir is a valuable timber tree which typically grows to a height of 150 feet and sometimes reaches 200 feet. It likes warm, dry sites, but is more shade tolerant than Ponderosa pine. Deer resistant. Zone 4.

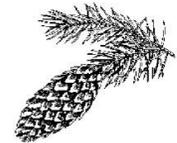
The District is also offering two ornamental shrubs and one ornamental conifer.

Common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*). This familiar shrub grows to 20' (up to 12' wide), producing beautiful fragrant purple flowers in late May. Lilacs thrive in full sun, prefer well-drained soil and are disease and pest resistant. Fire-resistant. Deer resistant. Zone 3.



Hungarian Lilac (*Syringa josikaea*). This ornamental shrub blooms later than common lilac. Deep violet buds open to pale lilac blooms in early summer. Plant grows to height of 7- 13'. Prefers full sun and moist well-drained soil. Fire-resistant. Deer resistant. Zone 4.

The Colorado Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens*) is a bluish-green conifer which may reach a height of 50 feet or more. The distinctive color and generally even shape of this conical tree make it an attractive ornamental. Blue spruce trees thrive in full sun to partial shade and moist, well-drained soil. Deer-resistant. Zones 3-7.



Edible fruit and berries



The **Liberty Apple** (*Malus domestica*) produces a medium-sized fruit, sporting brilliant red color over yellow. The flesh is pale yellow and juicy. The Liberty needs a pollinator (the Ruby Jonathan and the Manchurian Crab will pollinate it.) Zone 4-7. *

The **Ruby Jonathan Apple** (*Malus domestica*) is a medium sized sweet apple, with a touch of acid, good for eating fresh and for cooking. This apple needs a pollinator (the Liberty and the Manchurian Crab will pollinate it.) Zone 4-8. *



Manchurian Crab Apple (*Malus baccata*). Fragrant white flowers open from pink buds in spring. Small fall fruit attract birds and may be made into jelly. Manchurian crab apple will pollinate many apple varieties, including the Liberty and the Red Jonathan. Fire-resistant. Zones 4-8 *

*All three of these apples are grown on M-7 rootstock, which is very winter hardy (Zone 4), does well in a variety of soils (prefers well-drained soil) and is moderately disease tolerant. All three are semi-dwarf, growing to 10' to 12', but may be held to desired height by pruning. They may need support in their early years.



The **Chinese Apricot** "aka Mormon" (*Prunus armeniaca*) is an early blooming and early bearing variety. The fruit is small to medium, with yellow to orangeish skin and flesh, and sweet mild flavor. Self-pollinating. Zone 4-9

The **Wenatchee Moorpark Apricot** (*prunus artmeniaca*) bears large-sized fruit, yellow in color, with greenish-yellow flesh. Good for drying and home canning. Self-pollinating. Zones 4-8.



Albion Strawberry. This large firm strawberry has an excellent sweet flavor. A “day-neutral” berry, it will produce fruit from July to October. This winter hardy (Zone 4-8) plant is moderately disease resistant. Zones 4-8.

The **Shuksan Strawberry**, developed at Washington State University in 1970, produces ripe berries for a three-week period in late June and early July. These deeply red berries have a wonderfully sweet flavor. Zones 4-10



A pair of **Blueberries**. The **Top Hat** and the **North Country** varieties (self-pollinating, but will produce larger fruit and better yields grown together) are being sold as a pair. These “half-high” varieties are the perfect size for growing in containers. Blueberries demand very acidic soil for good growth. Garden soil can be prepared for growing these plants, but proper acidity will be easier to maintain in containers. These plants, when mature, will produce 2 to 8 pounds of berries per bush. Zones 3-7.

Asparagus

Back by popular demand, the District is including **asparagus** at the 2017 plant sale. **Mary Washington Asparagus**, touted as the best all-around variety for home garden use, will grow in acid, alkaline, clay or any type of black soil. Zones 4-8



Plants which are fire resistant, deer resistant, and plants that provide pollinator habitat are designated as such. Though fire-resistant does not mean fire-proof, careful use of these plants along with other “firewise” practices may reduce your risk from wildfire. (In 2017, the District will host public Firewise workshops to help homeowners prepare for wildfire. Free home assessments will also be available.) Neither is the designation of deer resistant a guarantee. All trees and shrubs are vulnerable to deer damages until they reach about 4 feet in height. The best deer-proofing is a proper deer fence. The Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/deer.html>) provides some good information on the subject.

To order plants, look for a flyer in the mail or visit the District website at www.ferrycd.org. Complete the form and mail it back to the District without payment by January 27, 2017. Orders will be filled on a first come-first served basis. Confirming invoices will be sent out detailing the plants ordered and the cost. Most plants arrive as dormant, bare root stock. Plants will be available for pick up at the Ferry County Fairgrounds on Friday, April 21 from 10am – 4pm and on Saturday, April 22, from 9am – 1pm. If you have any questions regarding plant availability or what type of plant(s) would best suit your needs, please contact the District at 775-3473 (ext. 100).

Ferry Conservation District is a non-regulatory agency. Our services are available to all without discrimination.