

The Benefits of Native Meadows

Adapted from Northwest Meadowscales

1. FOOD FOR SONGBIRDS AND WILDLIFE

Provides insects and seeds for songbirds and wildlife.

2. HABITAT FOR POLLINATORS

Provides habitat for pollinators including flowers for bees and host plants for butterfly caterpillars.

3. INCREASED WATER INFILTRATION

Increases water infiltration via its deeper root system (when compared to a traditional lawn).

4. LOWER MAINTENANCE COSTS

Lowers maintenance costs. Native meadows only need to be cut or mown once a year. This not only saves time and mowing costs, but also reduces emissions, gas, and energy to operate lawn mowers, weed whackers, and other lawn equipment.

5. DROUGHT TOLERANCE

Once established, the native meadow does not need supplemental irrigation. In fact, irrigation may favor the growth of weed species. Because it is planted with native plants it is able to withstand drought.

6. CARBON SEQUESTRATION

Native plants have deeper root systems than traditional lawns and are better able to store carbon in the soil.

Native bees and other pollinators pollinate approximately 85% of the flowering plants on the planet that produce one-third of the food we consume. With land-use changes causing the decline of native habitat, native pollinator populations are declining with some species at risk of extinction.

But all is not lost! It turns out the best thing any individual can do is to convert “unused” land, garden or lawn space to a native wildflower garden, otherwise known as a native meadow. These native meadows are aesthetically beautiful and provide many other benefits, like increased water infiltration and lower maintenance costs.

If you are interested in learning more about native pollinators or installing native pollinator meadows visit www.xerces.org for additional resources or www.snohomishcd.org to schedule a site visit.

Interested in buying native flowers, trees or shrubs? Visit www.theplantsale.org to learn more about our Annual Plant Sale in February.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN MEADOW ESTABLISHMENT

- Most wildflowers and flowering shrubs require full sun throughout most of the day to thrive.
- Site preparation is key, controlling any weeds by sheet mulching, tilling or herbicides.
- Knowing your soil type is important for plant selection.
- Once planted, controlling neighboring weeds by preventing them from moving into your newly planted meadow will help ensure success.
- You can use marginal lands such as septic fields, parking strips, or roadsides to establish your native meadow. Be sure to first check your HOA restrictions, if applicable.
- Meadows can be any size. You can plant small backyard gardens or acres.



SONGBIRD

POLLINATORS

DEEP ROOT SYSTEM

