

# HEDGEROWS

## (Long Skinny Forests)

### More Than Just a Living Fence

#### Hedgerows for Clean Water

Plant native tree or shrub hedgerows along streams, ditches and other waterways.

- ☞ Shade will reduce water temperatures.
- ☞ A 10' wide hedgerow can reduce sediment in surface runoff by 60-70%.
- ☞ Hedgerows will trap and utilize nutrients that might escape nutrient management systems.
- ☞ Hedgerows will act as a buffer for agricultural chemical applications.
- ☞ Hedgerows increase infiltration and decrease the rate of surface water runoff.

#### Species for Water Quality

- ☞ Willows
- ☞ Pacific Ninebark
- ☞ Red Osier Dogwood
- ☞ Black Twinberry
- ☞ Douglas Spirea
- ☞ Many others

#### Size and Location

- ☞ 10' to 15' wide minimum
- ☞ 2 or 3 rows
- ☞ 3' to 5' shrub spacing
- ☞ 8' to 10' tree spacing
- ☞ Plant close to the water



#### Hedgerows for Pollinators

Plant native tree, shrub or perennial hedgerows as field or garden borders to attract native pollinators and increase crop production.

- ☞ Many insects, birds and small critters, beneficial to gardeners and farmers are found in hedgerows. They help pollinate over 75% of flowering plants and nearly 75% of crops.
- ☞ Native plants in hedgerows serve as sources of nectar and pollen for adult pollinators and provide habitat for nesting and larvae production.
- ☞ Hedgerows provide shelter and overwintering for many pollinators.
- ☞ Plant early, mid and late season blooming plants to provide consistent forage.
- ☞ Mix in native flowering perennials.
- ☞ A hedgerow around 1/3 of a commercial berry field will eliminate the need for commercial honeybee colonies.

#### Species for Pollinators

- ☞ Willows
- ☞ Roses
- ☞ Pacific Crabapple
- ☞ Salmonberry
- ☞ Black Twinberry
- ☞ Many others

#### Size and Location

- ☞ 5' wide minimum
- ☞ 1-2 row minimum
- ☞ Plant adjacent to crop or garden



#### What is a Hedgerow?

A narrow vegetated strip comprised of native trees, shrubs, grasses or groundcovers designed to buffer adjacent land uses and benefit native wildlife. A functioning hedgerow should be a minimum of 5' to 10' wide. The longer the better. Native shrub hedgerows 15' wide are common along rural Whatcom county waterways. A good hedgerow is a valuable asset: it can make a stock-proof barrier, provide shelter, enhance the landscape and benefit wildlife. New hedgerows that link with existing ones or other habitats like a forest or waterway will be particularly valuable.

#### Hedgerows in History

Hedgerow is an old English term that refers to narrow planting strips that grow as field borders, fence lines and waterways. In the Northwest this ancient design method is being expanded to incorporate a diverse number of plant species with a wide variety of functions. Europeans have planted and meticulously maintained hedgerows for hundreds of years to define field boundaries, and to enclose or exclude animals. Hedgerows were also a convenient place to dispose of rocks and other field debris and eventually were a good source of fuel for fire and even some harvestable timber for construction.

During WWII, the "crazy quilt pattern" of hedgerows caused problems for allied troops. They were so problematic, in fact, that their presence led to the development of the "Tankdozer". The historic art of hedge "laying" declined after WWII due to many factors such as the availability of labor, the introduction of machines to cut hedges, wire fences and changes in agriculture that placed emphasis on production from larger fields.

In the US, hedgerows date back to the Homestead Act and to the dust bowl days of the 1930s. Hedgerows in the Midwest were planted primarily as windbreaks. In California hedgerows are commonly used to enhance fruit, vegetable and nut production. They are used today as refuge for pollinators and beneficial insects.

Hedgerows are making a comeback! In Whatcom County hedgerows are commonly used along waterways to improve both water quality and fish habitat. Today we also rely on hedgerows to improve water quality, wildlife and salmon habitat.

**Learn from history, plant a HEDGEROW today!**

#### How to Plant a Hedgerow

- ☞ Choose species that fulfill the desired goals.
- ☞ Choose species that you like.
- ☞ Prepare site in the summer or fall.
- ☞ Plant in late fall, winter or early spring.
- ☞ Think diversity: plant fast growing, and slow growing.
- ☞ Plant tall growing and short growing.
- ☞ Plant evergreen and deciduous.
- ☞ Maintain the plants for 2-3 years or until established.



#### Hedgerows as a Border

Hedgerows can be used as an inexpensive and attractive means to define a property boundary, field border, road buffer, or as a buffer of different land uses.

- ☞ Hedgerows provide a visual screen and reduce noise.
- ☞ Once mature hedgerows can serve as livestock fencing.
- ☞ Hedgerows can make a good windbreak for farms and reduce heating costs for structures.
- ☞ Hedgerows beautify the landscape with foliage, blooms, fruit, and fall color.
- ☞ Open fields are inhospitable to many native songbirds. Hedgerows liven up the landscape by filling it with birds and bird songs.
- ☞ Hedgerows are much more attractive and functional than common borders of tall grass and non-native Blackberries.

#### Species for Delineating a Border

- ☞ Cascara
- ☞ Shore Pine
- ☞ Willows
- ☞ Red Osier Dogwood
- ☞ Roses
- ☞ Many others

#### Size and Location

- ☞ 5' wide minimum
- ☞ At least 1 staggered row
- ☞ 3' to 5' shrub spacing
- ☞ 8' to 10' tree spacing



#### H"edge"rows for Wildlife

Planting native tree or shrub hedgerows creates the diverse "edge effect" critical to songbirds and other wildlife.

- ☞ Hedgerows provide concentrated food, shelter and space in small areas for large variety of bird, insect and mammal species.
- ☞ They provide islands of sanctuary in areas of grassland, cropland or development.
- ☞ Hedgerows also improve habitat for salmon and other aquatic species by providing shade, woody debris, and terrestrial insects (fish food).
- ☞ Along waterways hedgerows also improve bank integrity, protecting aquatic life from fine sediments.

#### Species for Wildlife

- ☞ Cascara
- ☞ Roses
- ☞ Black Twinberry
- ☞ Red Elderberry
- ☞ Pacific Crabapple

#### What size?

- ☞ Minimum of 1 row
- ☞ Wider is better
- ☞ Think diversity, multiple plant species benefit multiple wildlife species

