

Preface

Linda Chalker-Scott

The love of gardens has focused mostly on the colorful and the exotic, kindled by showy plants from other lands that grow with ease in outdoor and indoor gardens. But around the country, the urge to grow native plants in one's own garden or at the summer cabin is very much on the upswing. . . . It is time that such a book on native plants of the Pacific Northwest catered to the large gardening public in that region and in other temperate climates. That is the object of this book.

ART KRUCKEBERG, JUNE 1981

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS after Art first presented about 250 of his favorite native plants in the first edition of *Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest*, the third edition now includes over nine hundred native trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses, and annuals. Each species has been carefully selected as garden-worthy, setting this book apart from encyclopedic tomes containing all native plants.

I arrived as a coauthor of this book through a long and circuitous route. First, you should know I am not a taxonomist. It is a field that would require too many of my aging neural nooks and crannies to master. Nevertheless, I do have a childhood history with native plants: collecting dogwood blossoms for May Day baskets to hang on neighbors' doors; pressing, mounting, and identifying native flowers; and sampling the diversity of edible red, blue, and purple berries in the wildlands next to our housing development. But the pull of the Pacific Ocean was too strong to resist, and I left native plants to study marine biology through a master's degree.

Despite my intentions to earn a doctorate in marine biology, I ended up with one in horticulture instead. In this new career I evolved into an urban horticulturist, helping to develop the practical plant and soil sciences gardeners need to create healthy and sustainable landscapes. Part of this process

necessitated challenging common misconceptions regarding gardening practices and products; an output of this effort was a two-volume set of garden myths published by the University of Washington Press in 2008 and 2010.

Soon after this, the press contacted me with an intriguing proposal: would I be interested in helping Art Kruckeberg revise his highly popular *Gardening with Native Plants*? It had been almost twenty years since the second edition was published and updates were desperately needed. It was necessary not only to add more color photography to illustrate the book, but to change much of the taxonomy as well. The advent of molecular genetics had turned this classical field onto its head, much to the frustration of gardeners and scientists alike who were now faced with new designations for species, genus, and even family names for numerous native plants. While this book uses the newest taxonomy, we include older scientific names as well.

What else is new in this book? You'll find an entirely new chapter on selecting and managing native plants in your landscape using the newest horticultural science. The focus of this chapter is to help the gardener create a healthy, sustainable landscape with minimal soil disruption and chemical inputs. Subsequent chapters present trees and shrubs, perennials, grasses, and annuals, with

descriptions of key features and uses in the garden. We've added icons to indicate optimal site conditions for those species who are a bit temperamental in their demands. As in previous editions, both scientific and common names are included.

We've removed a few things found in earlier editions, such as the appendix of plant name derivations and that of the historical uses of native plants. The advent of an easily searchable internet makes these appendices unnecessary. But most important, there are no longer instructions on collecting and propagating native plants: we are in agreement that this practice must stop if we are to retain many of our rare, threatened, and endangered species. It's a better ethical and ecological choice to purchase native plants from reputable nurseries that have

propagated and cultivated their plants without endangering native populations.

Art's 1996 vision for native plants in home gardens is just as applicable today: "Pacific Northwest natives can satisfy aesthetically, practically, and ecologically; grow and enjoy them. Whether you 'go native' all the way or mix natives with plants from other lands, you can expect pleasure from the beauty that natives can bring to your garden." He and his wife, Mareen, brought his vision to reality with the creation of the Kruckeberg Botanic Garden nearly sixty years ago. This free, four-acre public garden, which blends native and introduced species in ways that are both environmentally sustainable and aesthetically pleasing, is worth visiting.

FEBRUARY 2019