



HEDGEROWS BENEFITS AND TYPES

What are Hedgerows?

Hedgerows, also known as shelterbelts or windbreaks, are rows of trees, shrubs, and low-growing plants that divide or border fields and/or suburban lots.



How are Hedgerows Beneficial?

Hedgerows can serve a variety of functions, including wildlife habitat enhancement, privacy screen, windbreaks, water conservation, soil erosion reduction, noise reduction, and pesticide buffers.

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

Hedgerows can utilize pollinator-friendly plants to increase pollinator habitat (such as including milkweed to support monarch butterflies). Similarly, bird-friendly plants can be used to attract bird species.

Refer to JSWCD's "Pollinator Plant List" factsheet.

Privacy Screen

Hedgerows can be a living fence and act as a visual privacy screen from neighbors and nearby traffic.

Windbreak

Hedgerows can create a barrier to serve as a windbreak. Wind can disturb pollination, cause erosion, and damage roots and stems. According to OSU, wind speed can be reduced up to 75 percent by utilizing hedgerows.

Water Conservation

Wind accelerates the process of evaporation. Since hedgerows serve as a windbreak and cast shade, hedgerows can conserve water in reducing the evaporation process.

Soil Erosion Reduction

Similar to water conservation, a reduction in wind also reduces the loss of soil, protecting plants from soil erosion.

Noise Reduction

Hedgerows can serve as a sound barrier, blocking nearby noises such as from neighboring properties and vehicle traffic.

Pesticide Buffer

Hedgerows can serve as a pesticide buffer. This can be a favorable technique for organic agriculture production - or an organic residential garden - to avoid drift from pesticide spray from neighboring properties.

Hedgerow Design

Hedgerow design (including plant varieties and density) and layout will vary depending on its desired location and function (refer to benefits of hedgerows section).

Steps to Hedgerow Design:

1. Determine hedgerow purpose

Why are you wanting to install a hedgerow? Depending on the purpose, designs vary. Refer to page 1 for the types of benefits/functions of hedgerows. Note this is not an all-encompassing list, and you can favor more than one.

2. Determine hedgerow location and layout

Hedgerows are commonly used near fence lines and property borders but can be used to divide sections of a property. Consider property zones, such as between the house and a field or garden. Hedgerows are always longer than they are wide, and commonly in straight rows, although they can be curved depending on property shape.

3. Select plants

Select the trees and/or shrubs to use for the desired hedgerow design and location. Consider height, density, deciduous/evergreen type, water needs, sun/shade needs, and aesthetics/bloom times, if choosing pollinator varieties. Avoid planting trees such as Leyland cypress and Juniper varieties, as they are notoriously flammable. Also avoid planting directly near buildings to avoid fire risk. Refer to JSWCD's "Hedgerow Plant List".

4. Prepare site

Remove any weeds from the area, such as from mowing, hand pulling, and solarization. Amend soils for proper water holding capacity and drainage. For soil amendment tips see JSWCD's "Soil in Jackson County" factsheet.

5. Install plants, mulch & irrigation

Plant desired plants in the planned location, layout, and configuration. Keep in mind which plants require more sun, and which will be casted by surrounding plants' shade as growth occurs. Irrigation is important to establish the hedgerow. Irrigation type will depend on hedgerow and plant size (hand watering, drip irrigation, sprinklers). Mulch around plants to retain moisture and fertilize/amend soil as needed.

6. Maintain hedgerows

Pull weeds, prune tree limbs, replant annuals as applicable, check sprinklers for leaks.

References

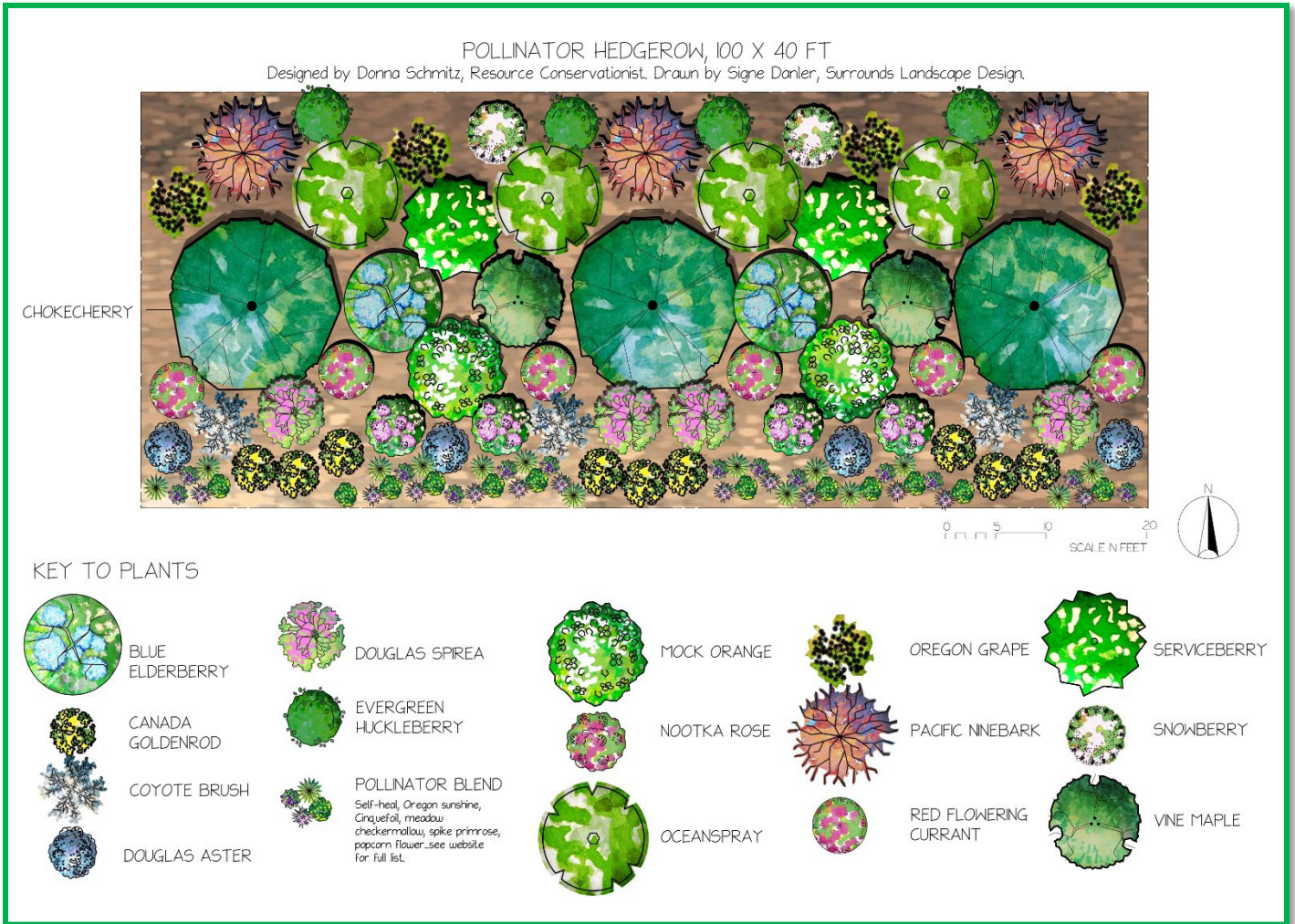
A Guide to Multifunctional Hedgerows in Western Oregon, OSU Extension 1998.

Benton Soil & Water Conservation District

Hedgerow Planting (422) for Pollinators: Western Oregon & Washington, Xerces Society, 2013.

JSWCD Factsheets: Pollinator Plant List, Hedgerow Plant List, Soil in Jackson County

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Example hedgerow design and plant varieties. Source: Benton Soil & Water Conservation District