



Plants for Privacy

NATURAL APPROACH

- More informal looking with a diverse yet harmonious selection of plants
- Plants are chosen to be compatible with site conditions and with their mature size and shape (habit) in mind, in order to reduce future maintenance needs
- Create habitat to support the local ecosystem, especially pollinators and birds

DOWNSIDE TO TRADITIONAL HEDGES

- Require a large amount of maintenance/resources to keep up
- Repeated shearing is unhealthy for plants over time
- Build-up of dense, dead material within a shrubs interior (from shearing) is a fire hazard
- Potential for rapid spread of pests/disease in a monoculture hedge
- Lack of biodiversity and year-round interest

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SCREENS/WINDBREAKS (Permaculture perspective)

- Enhance wildlife habitat and provide for pollinators
- Add to the productive quality of your landscaping (be more self-sustaining) or diversify farm income – food/fiber/forage/medicines
- Beautify and privatize property
- Reduce soil erosion
- Decrease wind damage
- Conserve water (by blocking drying winds)

PLANNING/DESIGN

- Start by assessing your goals: What are you trying to screen?
What is the maximum size needed to accomplish that goal?
What method of screening would be most efficient?
What kind of space do you have for planting?
- Evaluate your conditions – sun exposure, soil, slope, water availability/irrigation etc.
- Be thoughtful about the impact of your planting on views, sun (blockage) and space – not just on your property, but your neighbors' as well
- Consider style: of existing landscaping, of your home and/or other structures, or whatever you are drawn to in your community/magazines/internet
- Measure your space and even try drawing it up on graph paper

- Visit your local nursery to find out what is available/appropriate for the region
- With research, create a plant list that fits your conditions/style
- Consider mature plant size and how your choices affect future maintenance needs – patience vs. instant gratification
- With spacing, think about the mature width and the overall shape/habit of each plant – some overlap is ok
- Pair plants with contrasting shapes so they fit together like puzzle pieces
- When arranging plants look for contrast in texture/foilage color, try to stagger bloom times and thread evergreen foliage throughout the composition

MIXED HEDGES

- Combine a variety of compatible species, including: broad-leaf evergreens, conifers, deciduous shrubs/trees and grasses
- Take advantage of the visual interest offerings of a diverse palette – foliage texture and color, fall color, blooms, berries/nuts/cones, colorful/peeling bark and stems
- If there is ample space, use groupings and repetition for balance
- Incorporate nitrogen fixing shrubs (if possible) throughout for self-sustained fertilizing
- Create a food forest by adding edibles (if protected from deer)
- Consider the benefits of living mulches
- Diversity = health and habitat

STAGGERING/LAYERING

- Creates a more natural/informal look than a straight row
- Screens from more angles
- Establishes depth and flow in a planting with more visual interest
- Gives individual plants more room to reach maturity
- Can prevent disease/pest/fire problems down the road with better air flow
- If space allows, layer multiple staggered rows with taller plants either in the middle or back (depending on the vantage point) and tapering down
- Maximizes potential for habitat creation

BERMS/RAISED PLANTING BEDS

- Many ways to create fully contained beds using wood, metal, stone, concrete block etc., or even large stock tanks!
- Can be more free form with individual islands/berms of mounded soil (potentially with boulders)
- Gives an instant height advantage
- Useful when native soil has poor drainage or is very rocky/hard to work with
- Creates a more effective sound barrier

SMALL/NARROW SPACE SOLUTIONS

- Utilize upright/columnar/compact/dwarf cultivars of trees/shrubs/grasses
- Explore espalier options

- Vines on individual trellises or added to the top of a fence to extend screening
- Container plantings
- Strategic fence/sculptural panels

VINES

- Can be much faster to fill in than shrubs/trees and can even be used for interim screening
- Variety of options, from deciduous to semi/evergreen– type of vine/trellis dictates the density of the screen
- Can beautify an ugly fence
- Many fragrant choices
- Be heedful of ultimate size, aggressiveness, style of attachment, looks with age and pruning needs

BAMBOO

- Creates a certain lush, Asian look/feel
- Prefers ample water (and fertilizer if used in containers)
- Can grow very fast (though clumping species tend to be a bit slower)
- Clumping and running species/cultivars – choose wisely, take appropriate precautions and consider you neighbors!
- Be mindful of sun exposure and reflected heat off buildings/hardscape, and research the preferences of different species accordingly
- Can sustain damage in heavy snow

INCLUSION OF WATER

- Water features (even small/simple) provide effective noise cancelling qualities
- Essential part of creating habitat

DEER RESISTANCE

- Stick with what works: aromatic foliage/highly poisonous/stiffly barbed leaves/thorny
- Grasses are reliable and quick to fill in
- Protect new/young plantings initially and especially in fall when bucks rub slender trunks (cage/spray/trunk protectors)
- Avoid overwatering/fertilizing – lush new growth is especially tasty

DROUGHT TOLERANCE

- Look to natives or plants native to sister climates – hot/dry summers and cold/wet winters
- Work with your aspect – use heat lovers to create a shade buffer for those needing respite
- Set your planting up for success with deep, but infrequent watering – this will ensure deeply rooted plants that can withstand periods of drought and intense heat
- Plant at the right time of year to get root systems established before summer heat – Fall into early Winter is great for deciduous shrubs/trees and conifers; early Fall or Spring is great for broadleaf evergreens and plants that are sensitive to water-logged soils
- Mulch! Aim for a minimum of 2-3”

FIREWISE

- Avoid highly flammable plants (especially conifers) within 30' of structures
- When mixing flammable plants into a privacy planting, try to isolate them between fire-wise choices
- Space plants appropriately, from each other and from structures, to allow for mature growth without crowding or the need for extensive pruning
- Maintain your defensible space, particularly just before and during fire season – keep plantings irrigated, cleared of dry debris and ladder fuels, and pruned away from structures
- Leave a buffer zone between major plantings and structures

Shooting Star Nursery

3223 Taylor Road

Central Point, OR 97502

541-840-6453 phone

541-665-5892 fax

www.roguevalleynursery.com

bonni@roguevalleynursery.com