

You are now the proud owner of a Garry oak tree!



This is the only oak tree native to our area and it's also the flagship of the Garry oak ecosystem – one of the rarest and most threatened ecosystems in British Columbia.

The Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

(GOMPS) formed in 1992 because local citizens were concerned that native Garry oak woodlands and meadows were rapidly disappearing as a result of expanding human habitation in the Capital Regional District.

We are a 100% volunteer-based society dedicated to the preservation, protection and restoration of Garry oak stands and their natural habitats.

This mini guide will introduce you to the Garry oak and provide some basic planting and care instructions.

Thank you for your support!

Planting your seedling

The Garry oak is a tree of the future which can easily adapt to warming climates. This seedling could live more than 100 years if you start it off right and provide initial care to help it establish in your garden or yard.

Your little oak may grow too slowly in the shade so **choose a site that is well lit**. Imagine what the site may look like in 50 years and don't plant close to buildings, roads or sidewalks. Be certain to avoid utilities such as sewer or natural gas lines and overhead wires. Check www.bconecall.bc.ca for help locating underground services.

Remember the gardener's motto:

Right plant, right place!

When you are ready to plant your seedling **clear away any grass and weeds from the site**. They will compete for nutrients, moisture and may even outgrow the young tree robbing it of valuable sunlight. The best time to plant a Garry oak seedling is in the fall.

Before you remove the seedling from the pot take note of the soil level and where it meets the trunk. When you plant it in the ground be sure not to plant it deeper than that level.

When the seedling is in the ground water it gently so there is moisture available. **Apply a thin layer of mulch over the top of the area**. Mulch will help cool the ground, reduce weeds and, as it decomposes it will provide nutrients and a home for beneficial organisms like insects.

Detailed tree planting instructions can be found on this site from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA):

www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/plantingatree

Protecting your seedling

In the first 5 – 10 years it will be necessary to protect your seedling. Rodents, deer, rabbits, voles and/or human vandals may harm it. **Construct a wire cage** using welded wire fence, chicken wire or even plastic construction fence to create a barrier around your seedling. Be sure to check on the cage regularly to ensure it is intact and not prohibiting the young tree's growth. Adding an extra wrap of material means your tree cage can expand as the tree grows.

Establishing the seedling

Just because this is a native tree doesn't mean it can survive without your help. The seedling needs help to establish which means you must weed around it and **be sure to water it regularly through the hot dry days of summer**.

This little seedling has the potential to grow great and tall providing a legacy for your children and grandchildren. A true tree for our future.



