

Native Bare-Root Trees and Shrubs

Timing

Bare-root plants should be planted as soon as possible after purchase, ideally within a day or two. If you need to wait a few days to plant the bare roots, make sure the plants remain moist and place them in a cool, shady place where the plants won't freeze. Alternatively, you may choose to pot up bare root plants in a small container and provide close care for a year to allow time to grow larger. Either option is a good one.

Location

Follow the old adage of "the right plant for the right place". The plants in our sale have varying soil, sun, and moisture requirements. Check out our Native Plant Database (www.bentonswcd.org/plant_cat/native) for details on each plant's specific preferences before planting.

Site Preparation and Placement

Once you have established the best location to plant, dig a hole that is twice the diameter of the root spread. The hole should be deep enough to accommodate the roots without crowding or bending. One of the main causes of plant death is planting too deep. The plant crown should be right at soil level.

Partially fill the hole, mounding the soil beneath the roots. Add in the remaining soil. It should be firmly packed. Create a raised berm in a ring about 12" out from your plant to keep water in.

Water deeply within the bermed area. After the water has soaked in, spread a 2" deep layer of mulch around the base of the tree, but not touching the trunk.

Ongoing Care

In general it is better to water for longer less often, than watering for a shorter time more frequently. Watering deeply encourages the roots to spread downwards rather than along the surface.

It is NOT recommended to amend the soil with compost or fertilizers. Native plants are suited to our soils, so the best preparation you can do for your plants is to plant in the right location, as mentioned above.

If you have problems with pests, using tree tubes, caging, or even aluminum foil around the trunk may be beneficial while the plant is young.

Supplemental watering during the first few summers will be beneficial for bare-root plants. After establishment, most native plants will not need supplemental water, except during the hottest, driest periods of the summer.

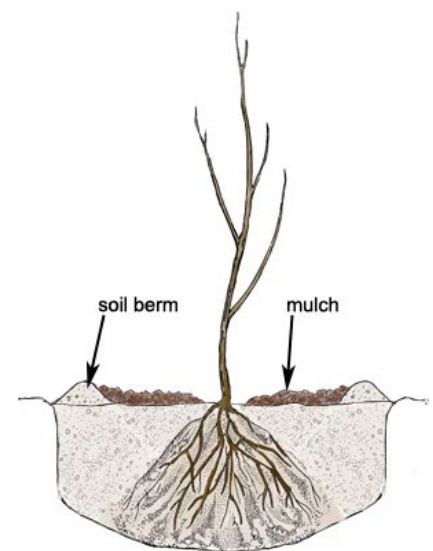
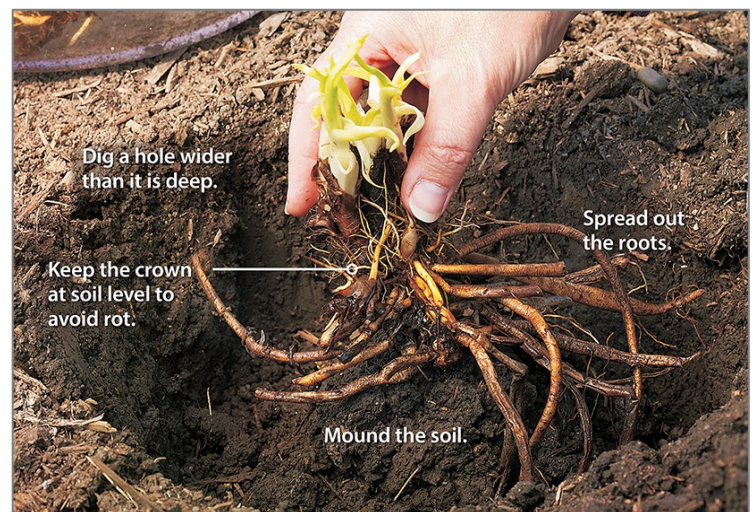


Image credit: Garden Gate (top), Gardener's Supply (bottom)

Native Bulbs and Seeds

Timing

The best time to plant bulbs and seeds is in the Fall after the first rains, when soils are cool but not hard. This generally occurs in late October in our area. If you need to wait a few days to plant the bulbs, make sure they are kept moist. Put them in a plastic bag with ventilation holes and keep the bag in your refrigerator or a cool, dry place until you can plant. Keep in mind that you should store bulbs away from fruit, as the ethylene off-gassing can damage the undeveloped flower within the bulb.

Location

Follow the old adage of "the right plant for the right place". The bulbs in our sale have varying soil, sun exposure, and moisture requirements. Check out our Native Plant Database (www.bentonswcd.org/plant_cat/native/) for details on each plant's specific preferences before planting. For example, most bulbs like well-drained soils, but Camas plants need plenty of winter moisture.

Site Preparation and Placement

Once you have established the best location to plant, loosen the soil to a depth of 5 - 8 inches. Smaller native bulbs should not be treated the same as the much larger daffodil and tulip bulbs you may be used to. A shallow planting hole is best for natives. A good rule of thumb is to plant bulbs as deep as they are tall.

Native bulbs have a bigger visual impact - and greater benefits for pollinators - when planted in groupings of three to five or more. Place the bulbs in the planting hole with the roots pointing down. If it's hard to tell which end grows roots, then it's safe to lay the bulb on its side. Cover the bulbs with soil and tamp lightly.

Seed Placement

For best results, plant in the fall or before April 1. Sprinkle seeds on prepared soil and cover with a thin layer of soil or compost. Keep damp during germination. Surround seedlings with mulch or sawdust to reduce water loss. Weed the area regularly.

Ongoing Care

You can pretty much leave your bulbs alone for the rest of their life. They don't want supplemental irrigation or fertilizing, but a top coating of compost once in a while will be appreciated.

The first year your bulbs may not flower, but by the second year you will have native flowering bulbs for wildlife and you to enjoy!

If you have problems with moles or other burrowing pests, then you may wish to consider enclosing bulbs in an underground wire mesh container.

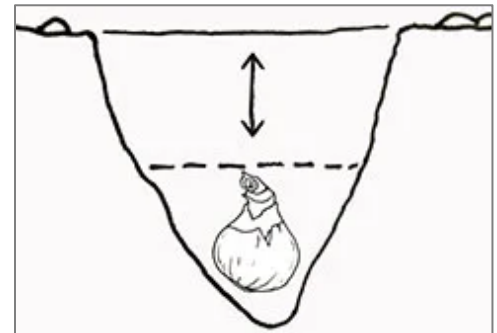


Image credit: *Empress of Dirt* (top), *American Meadows* (bottom)