

## Groundcovers for Western Washington

Any plant that is relatively low growing and spreading in habit may be used as a groundcover. Groundcover plantings help protect the soil from erosion, and, when well established, can inhibit the growth of weeds.

Turfgrass has been the groundcover of choice for generations, and under the right conditions of adequate sunlight and summer rainfall (or irrigation), there are few other plants that can cover soil and withstand hard use like it can. Unfortunately, many garden or landscape areas planted with lawn grasses present serious maintenance problems. Good turf is difficult to establish and maintain on banks or sloped areas and in shaded locations under trees. Long, narrow areas of turfgrass are very difficult to irrigate without wasting water. Of course, another thing that must be considered is the availability and cost of water for summer turf irrigation. Most groundcover plants are not precise substitutes for turfgrasses, but if lawn areas are being replaced, there are many plants that may be used instead. Also, since some groundcover species and their varieties possess the virtue of drought tolerance once they are established, few, if any, summer irrigation should be required.

The following list presents some groundcovers suitable for use in western Washington. It is by no means an exhaustive list. Effort was made to include mostly evergreen materials for obvious reasons, so many deciduous plants were omitted. For descriptions and cultural requirements of the listed plants, it is suggested that a good plant encyclopedia and manual, such as the *Sunset Western Garden Book* be consulted.

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>
Achillea tomentosa	Woody Yarrow (may be mowed)
Ajuga reptans	Carpet Bugle
Arctostaphylos media	Media Manzanita
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi and varieties	Bearberry, Kinnikinnick
Calluna vulgaris	Scotch Heather (low, spreading types)
Ceanothus gloriosus	Point Reyes
Ceanothus prostratus	Mahala Mats, Squaw Carpet
Ceratostigma plumbaginoides	Dwarf Plumbago
Chamaemelum nobile	Chamomile (may be mowed)
Cornus canadensis	Bunchberry
Cotoneaster dammeri	Bearberry Cotoneaster
Cotula squalida	Brass Buttons
Cystisus kewensis	Kew Broom
Dryas octopetala	Mountain Avens
Duchesnea indica	Indian Mock Strawberry
Epimedium species	Epimediums

Erica carnea  
Erica ciliaris  
Fragaria chiloensis  
Galium odoratum  
Gaultheria shallon  
Genista pilosa  
Hypericum calycinum  
Juniperus rigida conferta  
Juniperus horizontalis and varieties  
Linnaea borealis  
Liriope spicata  
Lithodora diffusa  
Lysimachia nummularia  
Mahonia nervosa  
Mahonia repens  
Muehlenbeckia axillaris  
Pachysandra terminalis  
Potentilla cinerea  
Potentilla tabernaemontanii  
Rubus calycioides  
Sarcococca hookeriana humilis  
Thymus pseudolanuginosus  
Thymus serpyllum  
Vaccinium vitis-idaea  
Vancouveria hexandra  
Vinca major  
Vinca minor  
Waldsteinia fragaroides

Winter Heath, Spring Heath  
Dorset Heath  
Beach Strawberry  
Sweet Woodruff  
Salal  
Creeping Broom  
Aaron's Beard, Creeping St. Johnswort  
Shore Juniper  
Carpet Juniper  
Twinflower  
Creeping Lily Turf  
Lithodora  
Creeping Jenny, Moneywort  
Longleaf Mahonia  
Creeping Mahonia  
Creeping Wire Vine  
Japanese Spurge  
Cinquefoil  
Spring Cinquefoil  
Creeping Bramble  
Creeping Sarcococca  
Woolly Thyme  
Wild Thyme  
Cowberry, Foxberry  
Inside-out Flower  
Periwinkle  
Dwarf Periwinkle  
Barren Strawberry