Creating Community Gardens

Northwest Indian College Cooperative Extension
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Community gardens are potential places for healing. In a time when families have limited resources including time and money, community gardens can provide nutritious food and medicine. A garden is also a crossroads where diverse people come together to interact and connect. Elders can share their stories and wisdom, while youth can share their energy and enthusiasm. A garden has potential to foster community healing by bringing isolated people together over a common purpose. For many, gardening is a great way to relieve stress and to reconnect with nature.

If you are planning a community garden remember that it does not have to be big or complex to be successful. Starting simple and slowly working up to something elaborate is usually wise. A garden is sustainable when it is supported by a number of people in the community, not just one or two people. This will probably be the greatest challenge to keeping the garden alive.

A garden can be creatively planned around what will be most fun *and* functional. Garden designs are often based on themes including medicine, cooking, food, and art. If you have many weavers in your community, you might want to grow basketry plants. If people are interested in making medicine, you may choose to plant medicinal herbs. If cooking is a big interest, a kitchen garden can be deliciously useful. Some of the best gardens mix themes, so you can plant vegetables, flowers and medicinal herbs together.

Creativity can be far more useful than money when it comes to starting a garden. You do not need fancy new equipment or designer pots. Your project will be more ecologically friendly and unique if you use resources that are at hand. It is amazing what you can create with what some people consider junk. Recycled wood can be used to create plant beds or containers. Fallen tree branches can be transformed into an artful fence. Pieces of concrete, river rocks, tires or old bricks may be the perfect material for making a raised bed, a patio or a walking trail. An old boat can become a playground for kids or a giant garden bed if you use a little imagination. One of the ways we can take care of our planet is to minimize our waste and take good care of the things we *do* have instead of throwing them away and purchasing new resources.

Unfortunately, pollution is something to consider if you plan to grow plants for food or medicine. Some toxins, including lead, can linger in the soil for many years even though they cannot be seen or smelled. These toxins are absorbed by the plants, then ingested by people, leading to potential health problems. Pollution can be present in the soil in urban areas where old dumpsites, factories, gas stations or other industrial grounds may have been turned into housing areas. In the country, agricultural or forestry areas may be sprayed with pesticides or fertilizers that are toxic to humans. If possible, investigate the safety of the land you plan to garden on. If you suspect that your soil might have pollutants, you can get it tested through your county extension office. Avoid using wood that has been painted or pressure treated for building plant beds.

The following planning list may help you to create a successful garden. Every garden is a unique expression of the people who cultivate it and the place where it grows.

Some Basic Steps for Getting Started:

1. **What Kind of Garden Does Your Community Want?** A community garden should be generated out of community interest and support. Turning an idea into an actual garden that a community backs is a monumental chore. Before you break ground you may want to have meetings to see what people actually want. You can get input from elders groups, youth groups, school programs and tribal council. Put an announcement for a meeting in the paper or the daily email. If you feed people they will be more likely to show up for a meeting. Offer ideas and possibilities for the garden, and then have people share what their vision is. This is a good time to get an understanding of what kind of support and resources the community is willing to put toward the garden.
2. **Assess Your Resources at Hand**. What kind of funding do you have? Do you already have a water source, building materials or plants you can use? Even more importantly, who will work in the garden? Will they commit to a season, or several years?
3. **Get to Know Your Space.** Before you plan and *especially* before you plant your garden, get to know the space. This takes time. Is the soil good or will you need to bring in soil? Does the soil have any contaminants? What areas are shady throughout the day? How does shade change with the seasons? Are some areas of the garden windy? Are there warm spots up against fences and other barriers? Do certain areas flood in the winter? What grows there now? This information will be valuable in helping you decide where to place plants.
4. **Plan**. It is easy to catch the gardening bug and plant by impulse, but a little planning in the beginning will pay off later! Take time to think about the bigger vision for the garden. Will you have individual plots or will people garden collectively? Who will be in charge of making decisions? Will you need a place to store tools, etc? Can you create partnerships with local agencies, schools, etc.? Bringing other people in on the planning is a good idea. Create work parties so many people can get involved in the creation of the garden. By making it everyone's garden, everyone will share the benefits and learn along the way.
5. **List the plants you want to grow**. Do a background check on plants you would like grow to make sure they suit your garden conditions. Many plants have specific needs including soil quality and amounts of sun and water. You will find this information in herb and gardening books or by checking out where the plants grow in the wild. If you buy plants, the tag or seed packet usually has sun, water and soil recommendations. Some non-native plants should not be used because they may become invasive weeds that take over native plant habitat. Examples include Scotch broom, St. Johns wort and English ivy. Many herb gardening books will list herbs that may become invasive.
6. **Design.** Consider drawing a map of your garden with measurements in square feet. Find out how large plants will get and draw them in so you know how many to procure. Sketch plants into areas that match their needs for sun, water, soil, etc.

Will they change the conditions of an area as they grow to full size? For example, some plants may eventually grow into shrubs and shade out other plants that need sun. As you draw in pathways, consider what will be approachable and easy to work with. Are there places where people and animals already walk? Place pathways around or through beds so that weeding and harvesting will be easy. Use pathways that will be easy for elders to travel on. Open spaces can provide kids a place to play. Working with the natural flow of energy in the garden can make your job easier. Natural features like sun, water, slope, trees and soil conditions can work for you instead of against you. If there is an area that has standing water most of the year, put wetlands plants there. They will probably thrive. Tapping into the power of nature will make your garden more sustainable and energy-efficient.

7. **Find Your Plants.** When selecting plants, try to find ones that are native or hearty to your region. These plants can resist disease and harsh weather better than plants that have not historically grown in your area. Starting plants from seed is much cheaper than buying potted plants. It can also become a fun home science experiment. Just remember to factor in the time it will take for the plant to grow to full size. Slower growing plants like lavender and most native berries may be worth buying in pots. You won't have to wait so long for your first harvest.

8. **Plant**. This is the fun part. Plan a work party with community members. Make sure you have an organized plan for this. If you are placing soil or building beds make sure you have enough tools for everyone. Have several helpers who know the plan so one person is not directing everyone. Demonstrate how to dig the right sized hole, massage the roots of the plant, place it at the right depth in the soil and water it in. You may even want to place plants before hand so people know where to dig holes. Celebrate the completion of your work with food or music.

9. **Maintain**. Most plants will benefit from regular care and feeding. There are many commercial fertilizers out there, but here are a few simple and inexpensive recipes to help keep plants well fed and happy. Plants will especially benefit from liquid fertilizers in the early spring when the soil is cold. Apply them once a week or when your plants look like they need an extra boost. Compost will help keep soil healthy along with placing mulch on the garden in the fall.

10. **Invite the Community into the Garden**. Garden celebrations will help keep the community involved in the garden. Have demonstration classes connected to the garden including cooking, medicine making, art, etc. Some communities have seasonal harvest celebrations and feasts. Bring youth and elders into the garden for interactive walks. Some tribes employ youth to work in the garden in the summertime.

Growing Good Soil

Soil is the most important part of your garden. If soil is healthy, it is actually alive. According to Seattle Tilth, one gram of healthy soil is home to as many as 500 million beings including bacteria, yeast, algae, protozoa, etc. These microscopic creatures can fix nutrients, hold water and ward off disease. If the soil is full of nutrients, your plants will be healthy and robust. If soil is poor, your plants will struggle for survival. Just as people get run down when they are not eating enough good food, plants will wilt when they are hungry. One of the best ways to feed your soil is to introduce compost (see box below). You can also feed your soil by mulching with organic material. Leaves are a preferred mulch that almost everyone has access to. As they break down, they re-introduce nutrients into the soil.

Minerals are as important for soil health as they are for human health. Plants grown in soil with low minerals may wilt or rot faster and will be more prone to disease. Unfortunately, soil in our area is generally low in minerals. Rainwater washes it out of the soil, and overuse by farmers or industry has stripped valuable nutrients. You can add minerals back into the soil by adding a balanced fertilizer with minerals. This costs money, so you can get creative and come up with your own mineral soil additions.

There are traditional Northwest Coastal ways of building soil health, but soil health is also improved by animals. For instance, salmon swim up our rivers and into the tiny streams all over the Northwest. The eagles and the bear carry these fish carcasses up into the forest and fertilize the earth.

If you have access to fish carcasses and seaweed, you can introduce balanced minerals back into your soil. These are often a part of commercial organic fertilizers. Salmon carcasses add nitrogen, phosphorous, calcium and trace elements back into the soil. Planting salmon under corn is an old Indian tradition that has proven worthy over the centuries. You can also dig a hole between plants to put the carcass in. Bury it deep enough so that dogs will not dig it up or you will have to deal with the stink later! Some people put crushed up oyster shells or other shellfish into their soil. Seaweeds like bull kelp and bladderwrack are high in potassium and all the trace minerals in seawater. You can go to the beach after a storm and load it up in the back of a truck. Seaweed can be worked into the surface of the soil. You can cut up big pieces so they will compost more quickly. Remember that the minerals that you put back in the soil will be eaten by the plants and then by you. It is worth the effort for your health.

When you go out in an established forest and pick up the soil, it will feel light and loamy. The color is usually dark, and if you look closely, you will see tiny bugs, beetles and other creatures in the soil. This is what we want to create in a garden – living soil. If your soil has a lot of clay and water sits on the surface, you can add compost, mulch and sand to break it up. If the soil is sandy, adding compost will improve it. See the list of gardening books at the end of the chapter for tips on building good quality soil.

Making Compost

Compost is being made all the time in nature. Watch a forest and you will see life in action as dead plants and animals decay and turn into nutrient-rich soil for living plants. This can not be done without the help of tiny bacteria, microorganisms and insects that live in the soil. We can speed up the process of composting at home by creating the right environment. Rather than sending food scraps and yard waste to the dump, you can turn them into something beneficial for your plants. Compost is a key to a healthy garden.

There are many great books on composting. You can get as simple or as complicated as you choose. Check out books at the end of the chapter for more information. You can compost in an open pile in your back yard, in a hole in the ground, in a container or even in a garbage can.

A Basic Recipe

25 parts dry browns – browns include one, or a combination, of the following: leaves, straw, paper, wood chips, saw dust. You can add woody plant stems, but cutting them down to 4-inch lengths or smaller will help them to break down faster.

1 part wet greens – greens includes food scraps, grass clippings, and manure from cows, chickens, goats or horses. (Some people do not add meat, dairy or shortening to their compost because it may attract rodents and smell foul.)

Soil – you will need a few shovels full of soil to get your pile started.

Water – the pile needs to stay moist to decompose, which is usually not a problem here in the Pacific Northwest until mid to late summer. During dry times spray water on the pile to keep it damp.

To start a quick compost pile you will need about one cubic yard of the basic recipe. This size will heat up and decompose quickly. Smaller piles take longer. Begin by layering with about a six-inch brown layer and a two-inch layer of greens. Repeat. Cover the pile with several shovels full of soil to introduce beneficial bacteria. Water the pile down so it is wet, but not soaking. Every seven to ten days you will need to turn or fluff the pile with a pitchfork so that the critters in the pile get enough oxygen to thrive. You can continue adding food scraps to the pile, but make sure to bury them so you do not attract rodents and raccoons. After a couple of weeks you will notice worms and tiny bugs crawling around in the pile. They are breaking things down for you! Within two to three months you should have beautiful compost that is dark and earthy smelling. When my pile is nearing completion, I start another pile so that I can continue using food scraps.

If your compost pile smells like rotten eggs or ammonia it is probably too wet. Try adding more dry brown ingredients. If it is decomposing really slowly try adding more greens and make sure there is enough water.

To use in the garden: Simply spread compost over garden areas or directly around plants so it covers the surface of the soil one to two inches. Some people like to mulch with leaves over the compost to protect microorganisms that benefit the soil. If you are planting a new bed, incorporate compost into the soil as you plant.

Natural Plant Fertilizers

Compost Tea: Ok, this may seem nasty, but it is guaranteed to make your plants happy. Fill an old sock with mature compost. Place this in a bucket and add about five times as much water as the compost you put in the sock. Set it somewhere outside and place a cover over it. Let this age for a couple weeks and stir it daily with a twig if possible. The mix will begin to foam and stink. When the foaming and bubbling slows down, your compost tea is ready. This concentrate can be diluted by adding one-part tea to five-parts water. Use this to water plants. You can also put it in a spray bottle and spray it on leaves.

Herbal Plant Tea: Nutritive herbal teas are just as good for plants as they are for us. Some favorites recipes for fertilizing plants include teas of horsetail, nettles and kelp. Horsetail is high in silica and other minerals that build strong plant tissue. Nettles are high in iron, sulphur, calcium, magnesium, phosphorous and many trace minerals. Kelp concentrates minerals from the sea and has over 70 growth regulators and growth stimulants in it. To make any of these teas, simply mix one-part fresh herbs with two-parts hot water or one-part dry herb with five-parts water in a bucket or large pot. Let steep over night. Strain herbs and use to water plants.

Creating a Wildlife Garden

Gardens can be a refuge for butterflies, birds and many other creatures. Most children get fewer chances to interact with wild plants and animals. What we are interested in, we learn about; what we learn about, we care for. The next generations must have face-to-face contact with nature if they are going to care for and protect it. Schoolyards all over the country are now replacing sterile cement and grass playgrounds (what could be more stifling to a kid's imagination?) with wildlife habitats that can become outdoor learning spaces. Here are some examples of plants you can put in your garden to call in the wild things:

Butterflies: milkweed, lavender, willow trees, black-eyed Susan.

Hummingbirds: red flowering currant, red columbine, fuchsia, quince.

Birds: berries including huckleberry, Oregon grape, salal and salmon berry, hazelnuts, sunflowers.

Animals also need water and shelter to survive. Putting a birdbath in your yard is a great way to attract wildlife. Make sure to add new water every few days, especially in the summer. Keep the birdbath clean by scrubbing it with a brush. You can provide shelter for wildlife by planting shrubs and trees and by leaving leaf piles and logs for insects and amphibians to hide under. For more information on wildlife gardens check the website http://www.nwf.org/backyard/

Making Stepping Stones

You can buy kits for making stepping stones at most craft stores, but you can also come up with a home-spun version for less than a quarter of the cost. It can be a great project to do with kids and will add your own artistic touch to your garden. There are several things you can use as molds including old cake pans and Tupperware containers.

You will need: powdered cement mix, water, decorative materials including mosaic glass, oyster shells, beads, etc., a large bucket or wheel barrow for mixing, petroleum jelly, paper towels, a putty knife or old butter knife, flat pieces of cardboard, newspaper and disposable plastic gloves to protect your hands.

To make: Lay down newspaper to protect your work surface. It is best to do this project outside under a covered area. Mix up cement as directed on the package so that it is thick and not runny. With a paper towel, rub petroleum jelly over the inner surface of your mold. This will prevent the cement from adhering to it. Place your mold on cardboard (if it has an open bottom) or on a flat surface and fill with cement. Smooth the surface with a knife. Press decorative materials into the surface. You can also use leaves to create impressions. Press them down into the cement and let them sit for several hours until the cement is almost dry. When you remove them you should see a clear impression of the leaf. Do not attempt to remove the steppingstones from their molds until they are completely dry, which usually takes a full day.

Gardening Resources

Books:

Carrots Love Tomatoes. Louise Riotte. A fun book on companion planting.

Food Not Lawns. H.C. Flores. This book is written by an urban activist who has excellent insight into how to design and grow your own garden. She talks about gardens as a way of building personal, community and global health and well-being.

Gaia's Garden. Toby Hemenway. This book introduces permaculture, which is a way of growing plants that mimics how they grow in nature.

Growing 101 Herbs that Heal. Tammi Hartung. A basic description of how to grow herbs along with medicine making techniques. She also has some garden layout ideas.

Growing Vegetables West of the Cascades. Steve Solomon. Some say that this is the bible for growing vegetables in our area. He covers growing and harvesting year round.

Herbal Renaissance. Steven Foster. A guide to growing and using medicinal herbs.

The Maritime Northwest Garden Guide. Seattle Tilth. Great local information.

The Natural Garden Book. Peter Harper. An excellent all-around guide for the natural gardener.

Organic Gardening. Geoff Hamilton. A basic guide to growing herbs and vegetables organically including information about soil, composting and pest control.

Organic Gardening Design School. Ann Lovejoy. This beautiful book introduces garden design in a user-friendly visual way.

You Grow Girl. Gayla Trail. This contemporary, basic gardening book is user-friendly, witty and full of fun garden projects. It offers a fresh perspective.

Organizations and Websites:
American Community Gardening Association. Website: www.communitygarden.org
This non-profit membership organization helps community gardens to share their resources and expertise through an annual conference, workshops, teleconferences, an an email group.

Brookly Botanical Gardens. Website: bbg.org/cg. This website offers many resources for community gardens including specific ideas on how to run a garden and links to other organizations and websites.

GRuB (Garden Raised Bounty). Website: www.goodgrub.org. This non-profit Olympia-based organization gives gardens to low-income families, teaches youth about gardening and helps to build community food security. A great model on how to build healthy communities through growing food.

Northwest Indian College Cooperative Extension. Community classes, train the trainers workshops, books and other resources. http://www.nwic.edu/content/traditional-plants

Washington State University Master Gardener Program. Website: gardening.wsu.edu/ Information, training programs, community events and lectures on gardening in Western Washington.

United Plant Savers. Website: www.unitedplantsavers.org. UPS is dedicated to protecting native medicinal plants and their native habitat while ensuring an abundant renewable supply of medicinal plants for generations to come.

Native Plant Nurseries
Check out the websites www.plantnative.org/index.htm or dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/pi/npnursery.htm for native plant nurseries in your area.

Bank Savers (Stilliguamish native plant nursery)
P.O. Box 2777, Arlington, WA.98223
(360) 435-9365

Sound Native Plants
PO Box 7505, Olympia, WA 98507
(360) 352-4122
www.soundnativeplants.com

Black Lake Organics
4711 Black Lake Blvd. SW., Olympia, WA 98512
(360) 786-0537
www.blacklakeorganic.com/

Tree Frog Farm
3679 Sunrise Road, Lummi Island, WA 98262
(360) 758-7260

D3WX bi Pa lil Gardens

D3WX bi Pa lil is a Lushootseed word meaning a rising up from the dark waters into the light or a return home after a long and difficult journey. It is the spiritual name of the Northwest Indian Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center (NWITC), which mainly serves Indian people from Washington State. This 45-day inpatient program is recognized as a national leader in cultural competence among behavioral health programs. Many tribes refer their people into the NWITC because it is culturally based. Patients are treated from inside their own cultural frame of reference rather than from a superimposed model that does not fit who they are.

The program was developed to affirm patients' cultural identity. One of the ways this is accomplished is through teaching about native plants and foods. Most of the plants, although not all of them, are native plants that patients may be familiar with. As they smell and taste the plants, they often remember relatives who gathered them or their Indian names and uses. Family stories flood back into them. They can see their own cultural wealth.

In 2005 and 2006 patients created a medicine wheel garden and a traditional foods garden at the treatment center. They designed and directed the project as a community. Many participants felt pride in leaving behind a legacy of knowledge so that other patients down the road could learn from the plants. In this way they were a part of something bigger; they received and they gave back. They recovered a part of themselves and brought this to their own communities. The gardens continue to be a place where patients learn to plant, grow and harvest foods and medicines.

The Medicine Wheel Garden

The Medicine Wheel Garden was designed and built by patients as a means to integrate plant medicine into the fabric of treatment. The shape of the garden honors the four directions. Pathways in the garden are made out of oyster shells. Each of the eight beds has a theme. Some are designed with plants for beauty or taste, some for spiritual medicine and some for healing specific disorders. The following is a list of plants grown in the medicine wheel beds:

Coughs, Colds and Immune Support

Astragalus (Astragalus membranaceous): Astragalus root is a Chinese herb that is used for immune deficiencies, anemia, chronic sinus infections and during chemotherapy and radiation treatment. The root is boiled to make a tea or is added to soups as a general immune stimulant. It has a pleasant mild flavor.

Echinacea (Echinacea purpurea): The beautiful purple coneflower of echinacea is named after a sea urchin. The leaf and flower can be dried and made into tea for supporting the immune system. Leaves can be used in topical remedies to speed healing. The root is most often used for medicine as an immune stimulant and an antiviral.

Elecampane (Inula helenium): This large plant has yam-like roots that are dug up in fall and made into honey or dried as a tea for lung congestion, coughs and sore throats.

Indian Tea (Ledum species): This popular tea plant is also known to dry up excess mucus in the lungs and to prevent or alleviate the symptoms of colds.

Licorice (Glycerhizza glabra): The sweet roots of licorice sooth sore throats, coughs, upset stomach, intestinal pain, ulcers and other conditions where a soothing anti-

inflammatory is needed in the body. Licorice has also been shown to have antiviral properties and to support the adrenals after long-term stress. The root can be chewed or made into tea.
Marshmallow (Althea rosea): Marshmallow leaf and root are high in mucilage, a slimy substance that helps to sooth irritated tissue of the lungs, digestive system and urinary system. It is made into a cold infusion and used for coughs, ulcers, upset stomach and urinary tract infections. Marshmallow also has immune supportive properties.
Mullein (Verbascum thapsus): Mullein leaf is dried and made into a tea for strengthening the lungs and helping to prevent asthma attacks. It is a mild-tasting lung tonic that should be used on a regular basis. It is an expectorant, meaning it helps the lungs to expel mucus.
Thyme (Thymus vulgaris): This common kitchen herb is often used in Italian seasonings. It is a strong antimicrobial that helps to fight infections including coughs and colds. The leaves are made into a tea or are used in a facial steam.

Women's and Men's Health
Corn silk (Zea mays): The silk from the corn plant is a soothing diuretic for urinary tract infections and is said to strengthen the urinary system. Corn silk is eaten fresh or dried and made into tea.
Goldenrod (Solidago species): The golden flowers of this native plant emerge in fields and mountainsides in late summer. The flowering tops and leaves are used as a kidney tonic and a lung tonic.
Pumpkin (Various varieties): Pumpkin seeds are high in zinc, which is an important nutrient for preventing prostate inflammation.
Raspberry leaf (Rubus idaeus): The leaves and berries of raspberry are a gentle astringent for diarrhea or inflamed conditions. They are a wonderful tonic for the uterus and are used as a tea during pregnancy to strengthen the womb. The leaves are high in iron and many essential trace nutrients.
Vitex (Vitex agnus-castus): This beautiful bush is also called Chaste tree. It is native to the Mediterranean area and the berries have traditionally been used to balance hormones. It is one of the most useful herbs for helping alleviate the symptoms of PMS and for regulating menstrual cycles.
White Sage (Salvia apiana): This is also called Grandfather Sage. The leaves are a strong astringent that have been traditionally chewed or made into a tea for sore throats and for preventing prostate inflammation. They are also burned as a purifying smudge.

Diabetes and Digestive Support
Burdock (Arctium lappa): Burdock can be a tenacious weed, but the root is a wonderful vegetable that can be sautéed or boiled in soups. It is a nutritive tonic and helps to cleanse the liver. When used long-term, it may help clear skin problems including eczema, psoriasis and acnes.
Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale): This common garden weed is one of our best allies for the liver, skin and kidneys. The whole plant is used for medicine and the root is especially helpful for many problems associated with diabetes.
Fennel (Foeniculum vulgare): Fennel roots are edible and the leaves can be used in salads. They both have a nice licorice flavor. The seeds of fennel are used to ease

indigestion, gas and bloating. A tea made from fennel seeds and catnip herb is given to nursing mothers to treat babies with colic. The aromatics in the plants pass over into the breast milk.
Fireweed (Epilobium angustifolium): Fireweed is usually one of the first plants to return to burned or logged areas. The leaf and flower tea is used long-term as a digestive tonic for improving the tone of the colon. It is an anti-inflammatory and has a normalizing effect on both diarrhea and constipation.
Oregon grape (Mahonia nervosa and aquifolia): Oregon grape is a common native plant with edible, but sour, blue berries and yellow flowers. The root bark is a strong anti-microbial and stimulant for the liver and digestion.
Peppermint (Mentha piperita): Peppermint is cooling and antispasmodic. It may help with indigestion, fatigue and the onset of colds. Most people love the taste and use it to flavor teas.
Yellow dock (Rumex crispus): You often see this abundant wild weed on roadsides or disturbed places. The long taproot is dug and used in tea or vinegar to support the liver, ease constipation and help build blood iron levels for people who are anemic.

Depression, Anxiety and Insomnia
Catnip **(**Nepeta cataria): Unlike the response cats have to catnip, people usually find it to be a calming tea that aids in restlessness and digestive irritability. It is specific for gas and colic in infants.
Chamomile (Anthemis nobilis or Matricaria): Chamomile is used world-wide as a calming tea. It aids digestion, sooths the nerves and helps with spasms and inflammation. The tea bags can be used as a topical poultice for sore eyes or irritated skin.
Lavender (Lavendula species): Lavender is renowned for its calming aroma that sooths the nerves and helps with insomnia. The flower buds are picked and dried in spring. They can be added to tea, infused in oil, made into herbal honey or added to sachets or bath teas.
Lemon Balm (Melissa officinalis) Often called the gladdening herb, lemon balm is calming and encourages a brighter mood. It is used for nervous irritability, ADD, and insomnia. It also has antiviral properties and can be used at the onset of colds or flu. The leaves taste lemony and exude a delightful odor when rubbed or made into tea.
Skullcap (Scuttelaria species): Skullcap is a calming tonic that helps with over stimulated nerves or nerve pain. It is gathered when flowering and can be dried for tea.
St. Johns Wort (Hypericum perforatum): This "herb of the sun" usually blooms on summer solstice, the longest day of the year. The flowering tops are used for medicine internally and topically. St. Johns wort is a well-known antidepressant, but it also has antiviral and nerve tonic properties. The infused bud oil is used topically for bruises, swelling and pain.
Valerian (Valerian officinalis): The root of valerian is used for insomnia, menstrual cramps and muscle spasms. Valerian has a distinctive smell and causes feelings of euphoria in small mammals including cats and rodents, but most people consider the smell revolting.

Edible flowers
Violets, Pansies, Borage, Calendula, Nasturtium, Chives, Rose, and Wild Onion are grown in this area. Many common native plants have edible flowers. Kitchen herbs like rosemary, thyme, chive, sage and oregano can be added to salads or cooked in dishes for beauty and flavor. Other edible flowers include lilac, rose petal, tulip petal, hawthorn, lavender, chamomile and any of the edible berry flowers including salmonberry, huckleberry and raspberry. For a recipe on how to make candied violets or other candied flowers refer to Chapter Two, *First Foods Feast*.
Stevia is also included in this bed because it is used as a sweetener for foods and tea. It is over 100 times sweeter than sugar and actually lowers blood sugar. You can dry the herb and add it to tea (just a little will do) or you can buy the refined powder, which is water soluble and easy to use when cooking.

Kitchen Herbs
Basil **(**Ocimum basilicum): Basil is a favorite kitchen herb that is used in spaghetti sauce, pesto and countless other dishes. Fresh Basil leaves are delicious with sliced tomatoes, cheese and crackers. It is easy to grow in summer and is used fresh or carefully dried.
Chives (Allium schoenoprasum): Chives have an onion-like flavor and help support the lungs and the immune system. They can be cut up and used like green onions. The flowers are tasty when added to salads, including potato salad.
Cilantro (Coriandrium sativum): This herb is often used in Mexican and Thai cooking. The seeds are called coriander. It helps to detoxify the body from heavy metal exposure and can be used liberally on many foods.
Oregano (Oreganum vulgare): The zesty hot flavor of oregano makes it popular in Italian cooking. Oregano was used with rosemary to help preserve sausage. It has strong antibacterial and antifungal properties and is used for colds and *Candida* infections.
Parsley (Petroselinum crispum): Parsley is loaded with vitamins and minerals. It is a soothing diuretic that helps with water retention. It should not be used during pregnancy.
Rosemary (Rosmarinus officinalis): This is called the herb of remembrance because it aids in memory retention and eases headaches and mental fog. Rosemary is excellent for circulation. It is also an antioxidant.
Sage (Salvia officinalis): Sage leaf and flower is used for cooking, especially with meats. It is used medicinally for excess mucus secretions including a runny nose or a wet cough. It should not be used by breastfeeding mothers because it dries up breast milk.

Sacred Herbs

Indian Tobacco (Nicotiana sp.) This is often called coyote tobacco. It is used as a smoke and as a spiritual offering. Tobacco is also a useful insecticide.

Kinnikinnick (arctostaphylos uva-ursi): The leaf of this groundcover is used in smoking mixtures and medicinal teas for bladder infections.

Mugwort (Artemesia sp.): Local mugworts are used as a smudge for their aromatic qualities. They can also be made into a wonderful bath tea.

Sweet Grass (Hierochloe oderata): The long grass-like leaves of sweetgrass are braided and made into a cleansing and purifying smudge.

White Sage (Salvia apaina): Also called Grandfather Sage, this plant grows wild in the Southwest. The leaves are used for making incense, smudges and smoke mixtures.

First Aid and Skin Health

Alum root (Heuchera glabra): Alum is a beautiful native saxifrage that grows in moist areas along streams or mountain slopes. The leaves and root are high in tannins that work well as an astringent for inflammation including a sore throat, sore gums or diarrhea. The powdered root can be sprinkled on cuts to stop bleeding.

Arnica (Arnica species): This is one of the most popular remedies for bruising, injuries and arthritic joints. Arnica oil or the homeopathic remedy works by increasing circulation and the immune response at the site of the pain or injury. It should not be used on open wounds or hot throbbing swollen injuries. Arnica is a common ground cover along the forest floor and open hillsides in the Olympic and Cascade Mountains.

Calendula (Calendula officinalis): The bright orange flowers of this plant add beauty to any garden. Calendula is used for healing skin that is irritated, bruised, inflamed or injured. It helps to speed cell regeneration and is a common ingredient for healing salves. The tea is used for mouth and stomach ulcers.

Comfrey **(**Symphytum officinale): Comfrey leaf is a soothing herb that promotes the healing of skin. It is often used as a poultice for cuts, scrapes and irritated skin. If you are using it to treat a wound, make sure to use an antimicrobial with it. The plant is also called bone knit and it is used as a tea, compress or poultice over broken bones, sprains and torn ligaments.

Plantain (Plantago major or lanceolata): Plantain leaf is used as a drawing agent for splinters, pus, and boils and venomous bites or stings. It is an astringent and helps to close up wounds. The leaves can be chewed and put directly onto the site of injury. The long leaves make a great forest band-aid.

Yarrow (Achillea millefolium): Yarrow is an ancient remedy that is used to stop bleeding and to heal injuries. Yarrow tea helps to induce sweating for high fevers and is used internally for hemorrhage, colds, flu and many other conditions.

People of the River Healing Garden

Skokomish Indian Nation, Tuwaduq Family Services, Spring 2006

Edible Berries Area

Coastal strawberry (Fragaria chiloensis)
Evergreen huckleberry (Vaccinium ovatum)
Gooseberry or Wild current (Ribes sp.)
High bush cranberry (Vibernum edule)
Oso berry (Oemleria cerasiformis)
Red huckleberry (Vaccinium parvifolium)
Salal (Gaultheria shallon)
Salmonberry (Rubus spectablilis)
Serviceberry (Amelanchier alnifolia)
Thimbleberry (Rubus parviflorus)
Trailing blackberry (Rubus
Lingonberry (Vaccinium vitis-idea)
Buffalo berry or Soap berry (Shepherdia canadensis)

Native Shade Plants

Trees
Shore pine (Pinus contorta)
Lodgepole pine (Pinus contorta var. latifolia)
Hawthorn (Crataegus laevigata)
Cascara (Rhamnus pershiana)

Shrubs
Hazelnut (Corylus cornuta)
Mountain hemlock (Tsuga mertensiana)
Red flowering current (Ribes sanguineum)
Pacific rhodedendron (Rhodedendrom macrophyllum)
Vine maple (Acer circinatum)
Mock orange (Philadelphus lewisii)
Red osier dogwood (Cornus sericea var. stolonifera)
California wax myrle (Myrica californica)

Ferns
Deer fern (Blechnum spicant)
Lady fern (Athyrium filix-femina)
Licorice fern (Polypodium glycyrrhiza)
Mainden hair fern (Adiantum pedatum)
Spiny wood fern (Dryopteris expansa)
Sword fern (Polystichum munitum)

Groundcover
Alum root (Huechera sp.)
Bleeding heart (Dicentra Formosa)
Dwarf dogwood (Cornus canadensis)

Bedstaw (Galium mulitflorum)
False lily of the valley (Maianthemum dilatatum)
False Solomon's seal (Smilacina racemosa)
Inside out flower (Vancouvria hexandria)
Rattlesnake plantain (Goodyera oblongifolia)
Sweet sicely (Osmorhiza occidentalis)
Trillium (Trillium ovatum)
Vanilla leaf (Achlys triphylla)
Wood sorrel (Oxalis oregana)
Evergreen violet (Viola sempervirens)
Red columbine (Aquilegia formosa)

Women's Herbs

Ladies mantle (Alchemilla vulgaris)
Black cohosh (Acteae racemosa)
Blue cohosh (Caulophyllum thalictroides)
Wild ginger (Asarum caudatum)
Motherwort (Leonurus cardiaca)
Chaste tree (Vitex agnus-castus)
Violet (Viola canadensis)

Edible Foods

Cow parsnip (Heracleum lanatum)
Crab apple (Malus fusca)
Fireweed (Epilobium angustifolium)
Lupine (Lupinus polyphyllus)
Low Oregon grape (Mahonia nervosa)
Tall Oregon grape (Mahonia aquifolia)
Spring bank clover
Wild carrot (Daucus carota)

Kitchen herbs

Basil (Ocimum basilicum)
Chives (Allium schoenoprasum)
Cilantro (Coriandrum sativum)
Dill (Anethum graveolens)
Fennel (Foeniculum vulgare)
Garlic (Allium sativum)
Marjorum (Oreganum marjorana)
Nodding onion (Allium cernuum)
Oregeno (Oreganum vulgare)
Parsley (Petroselinum crispus
Thyme (Thymus vulgaris)

Raised bed

Lavender (Lavendula angustifolia)
Spanish lavender (Lavendula stoechas)
Lemon verbena (Aloysia triphylla)
Rosemary (Rosmarinus officinalis)
Sage (Salvia officinalis)

Herbs for pain and inflammation – first aid

Arnica (Arnica sp.)
Calendula (Calendula officinalis)
Meadowsweet (Filipendula ulmaria)
Plantain (Plantago lanceolata)
St. John's wort (Hypericum perforatum)
Wild geranium (Geranium sp.)
Yarrow (Achillia millefolium)

Cough, Cold and Immune area

Astragalus (Astragalus membranaceous)
Echinacea (Echinacea purpurea)
Elecampane (Inula helenium)
Hyssop (Hyssopus officinalis)
Grindelia (Grindelia integrifolia)
Licorice (Glycyrrhisa lepidota)
Marshmallow (Altheae officinalis)
Swamp tea (Ledum groenlandicum)

Edible Flowers (kids area)

Borage (Borago officinalis)
Chamomile (Chamaemelum nobile)
Oxeye daisy (Chrysanthemum leucanthemum)
Bergamot (Monarda didyma)
Nastersium (Tropaeolum majus)
Pansy (Viola sp.)

Sacred Herbs

Amaranth
Mountain mugwort (Artemesia ludoviniana)
Coastal mugwort (Artemesia suksdorfii)
Sweet grass (Hierochloe oderata)
Indian tobacco (Nicotiana quadrivalvis)
Uva ursi (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi)
White sage (Salvia apiana)

Nootka rose (Rosa nutkana)
Baldhip rose (Rosa gymnocarpa)
Rugosa rose (Rosa rugosa)

Prairie Plants

Blue camas (Camassia quamash)
Great camas (Camassia leichtinii)
Garry oak (Quercus garryana)
Tiger lily (Lilium columbianum)
Brachen fern (Pteridium aquilinum)
Grass Widow (Sysrinchium sp.)
Violet (Viola adunca)

Basketry Plants

Bear grass (Xerophyllum tenax)
Dogbane (Apocynum cannabinum)
Wild Cherry (Prunus virginiana)
Rye Grass (Elymus glaucus)
Gary Hammer Rush (Juncus pallidus)
Hardstem bulrush (Scripus lasustris ssp. acutus)
Slough sedge (Carex obnupta)
Bronze sedge (Carex buchauii)

Community Garden Teaching Notes

Benefits of a community Garden

- Brings the community together – a crossroads for many types of people
    - Multigenerational. Breaks isolation.
    - Helps people to come together over a common purpose
    - Gives elders a place to teach youth
- Provides good quality food, medicine or art materials
- Provides beauty
- A connection to nature – healing for mental health, etc.
- Can teach about where food comes from, ecology, soil, animals and birds
    - Brings in math, science, anatomy and phys., family planning (TANF)
    - Teaches about planning and following through
- Hard work, both mentally and physically – disease prevention

The challenges

- Keeping people involved
- Broad community knowledge and support
- Resistance to gardening – not cultural – Lummi farmers
- Getting people to do physical labor
- Continued funding
- Vandalism and theft

Some steps to getting started…

Worksheets

Elizabeth, starting from seed

Tour Gardens and look at specific plants

Books and other resources

Community Garden Worksheet

Northwest Indian College Cooperative Extension

What type of garden are you creating?

Who will the garden serve? What are their interests?

How will you get community members involved in planning?

Who will make decisions about the garden (design, budget, workers, etc.)

Do you have some specific design ideas about the garden?

What resources are already in place for creating the garden? (water, soil, plants, building materials, fencing)

What resources to you need to build, plant and maintain the garden?

Can you create partnerships to help maintain the garden and get community support?

How do you envision the garden serving the community?