



landscapes

CONSERVING AND CARING FOR THE LANDS AND WATERS THAT SUSTAIN CENTRAL OREGON.

DESCHUTES LAND TRUST NEIGHBOR NEWS {FALL 2022}

DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG/NEIGHBOR-NEWS

LARCH LIGHT UP OUR FORESTS

Fall is a fleeting thing in Central Oregon. One minute you are lamenting the loss of summer and then before you know it, winter arrives and you didn't get a chance to soak in the delights of the season. So, take heed, now is the time to enjoy fall and one great way to do that is by enjoying the seasonal colors of the Western larch.

Western larch (*Larix occidentalis*) is a large coniferous tree native to Central Oregon that can grow 100-150 feet tall. It has a narrow shape with relatively short branches and has furrowed, cinnamon brown bark like that of the ponderosa pine. Its cones are bristly and small, 1-1 3/8", and its needles are soft and short, (1-1 3/4") and are arranged on twigs in a series of little tufts. The magic of larch is in those needles because as a deciduous conifer they turn a spectacular yellow each fall!

Deciduous trees are those that lose their leaves—or needles in this case—each fall. Most conifers—or cone-bearing trees—do not lose their needles and remain evergreen year round (hence the common name evergreen). The Western larch is one of a handful of deciduous conifers in the conifer world—others include dawn redwood and some cypress trees in the genus *Taxodium*. Here in Central Oregon, our larch trees usually begin to change color in mid-October. First the needles will begin to show a hint of yellow and then they'll transition into a brilliant yellow that will eventually carpet the forest floor. Forests with lots of larch trees, like in the Metolius region, are particularly spectacular in the fall as their golden needles offer a strong contrast to the sea of green ponderosa pine and Douglas fir.

Western larch is a long-lived tree (some live 700-900 years!) that grows quickly and is very resistant to fire. Its thick bark, deep roots, lack of lower limbs, and needles with high moisture content help it survive the regular low-intensity fires that occur in our region. A wide variety of wildlife use Western larch. Rodents and squirrels eat its seeds, birds look for insects and nest in its branches, deer and elk will browse on its needles, and bears eat its sweet sap in spring.

Despite the many uses and benefits of this native tree, the delight it brings each fall may be one of the most tangible. Take some time this fall to see Western larch in all their fall glory—they'll be gone before you know it. ➤



CATTIN EDDOLIS

JOIN US ON A FALL OUTING!

Each year volunteers lead free walks and hikes at Land Trust Preserves, including our Metolius Preserves.

Whether it's a geology hike, fall colors walk, or fairy houses for kids, you are guaranteed to learn a little more about your backyard!

Land Trust Walks + Hikes are offered through October. Details:

deschuteslandtrust.org/hikes



JAYMATHER



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LAND TRUST

POLLINATOR PLANTS TO GROW

Did you know that fall is a great time to plant new native plants? Fall planting allows native plants to concentrate on growing roots and getting established before hot summer weather arrives. If you are considering planting this fall, why not plant native pollinator plants to help bees and butterflies like the monarch butterfly thrive. Here are five natives to get you started:



MA WILLSON

Wax currant (*Ribes cereum*): A spring blooming shrub that grows up to six feet tall, wax currant has white/pale pink flowers that hang in clusters at the tips of branches. It attracts a large number of native bees as well as hummingbirds. Wax currant enjoys full sun in dry to moist well-drained soil and is not tolerant of shade.



CHEBAWNEY

Lewis' flax (*Linum lewisii*): This spring blooming blue-purple flower is a showstopper! Flax forms a mound of densely clustered, thin stems that grow 8-24 inches tall. Lewis' flax prefers sun and moist to dry, sandy or rocky soil. It makes an excellent choice for rocky gardens and containers. They will self-sow once established. Lewis' flax attracts butterflies and bees.



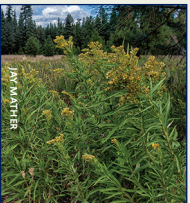
JOHN LONG

Showy Townsend daisy (*Townsendia florifera*): Pollinators love the summer blooming showy Townsend daisy! Bees, butterflies, and other insects love this daisy. Plants have 18-30 pink, pale lavender, or white ray flowers. The stems are leafy and grow 2-8 inches. They enjoy full sun and are drought tolerant.



DARLENE BENTLEY

Showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*): This native milkweed has showy rose-purple flowers in late summer. Leaves are widely oblong with the plant growing 18-50 inches tall. Milkweed likes sun and can handle less water. It grows via rhizomes, so be careful because it will spread! Milkweed attracts hummingbirds, butterflies (it's a host plant for Western monarch butterflies!), moths, and native bees. Get free milkweed seeds from the Land Trust!



JAY MATHER

Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*): A 2-5 foot tall plant topped with a large club-shaped cluster of yellow flower heads that blooms in early fall. Goldenrod spreads via rhizomes, so plant carefully! It likes full sun to part shade, medium water, and tolerates a variety of soil types. Goldenrod provides nectar for bees, monarchs, hummingbirds, and other insects.

Learn more: deschuteslandtrust.org/pollinator-garden



JAY MATHER

VOLUNTEER!

Fall is planting season! Join the Land Trust for a variety of volunteer planting parties this fall. We will be planting new native grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs at the Metolius River Preserve and several of our Sisters-area Preserves. Get your hands dirty and have fun while improving habitat for native plants and animals in Central Oregon!

Learn more:
deschuteslandtrust.org/volunteer



THE DESCHUTES LAND TRUST IS PROUD OF OUR GENEROUS FAMILY OF SUPPORTERS. JOIN US TODAY: [DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG/JOIN](https://deschuteslandtrust.org/join)

LANDS IN TRUST PROTECTED FOREVER



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