

Deer and Bunny Issues

Is your garden protected from deer and bunnies?

This guide will help you with exclosures, sprays and trapping of animals

Rabbits and deer may be cute, but they can wreak havoc on native plantings, especially tender seedlings and young perennials. Here's how to protect your garden using humane and effective methods suited for the Pacific Northwest.

What are my options?

In order to protect your garden from animals you can use the following methods:

- Physical barriers
- Repellants
- Trapping

How do I use physical barriers?

- For bunnies use chicken wire or hardware cloth with holes 1" or smaller and make the fence at least 2 feet tall. Bury the bottom 6–10 inches deep to prevent burrowing.
- For deer, holes can be up to several inches and height must be 8 ft.
- Wire cages protect individual plants—great for high-value or newly planted natives.

What are repellents and how can I use them?

- Less effective and short-term
- Homemade sprays such as garlic, hot pepper, or rotten egg-based sprays are common. Apply every 7–10 days, especially after rain.
- Commercial products are available, look for ones labeled safe for native plants and wildlife.

Can I trap and relocate animals?

- Not recommended for most home gardeners, consider hiring a professional
- Live trapping is legal in Washington, but may require permits and licenses, and relocation is restricted.
- Check local laws before using traps

While some plants are less appealing To deer and bunnies most plants will be eaten at some point in their life. Protecting young, small, and recently planted plants are the most important. A list of plants less appealing to deer and bunnies is provided on page 2.

**Go Natives!
Website**

[Rabbits in the
Garden, King County](https://gonativesnursery.com/)

[Preventing Conflicts
With Deer, WA
Department of Wildlife](#)

[Trapping Nuisance
Animals, WA
Department of Wildlife](#)

[https://gonativesnur
sery.com/](https://gonativesnursery.com/)

Plants Less Appealing to Deer and Bunnies



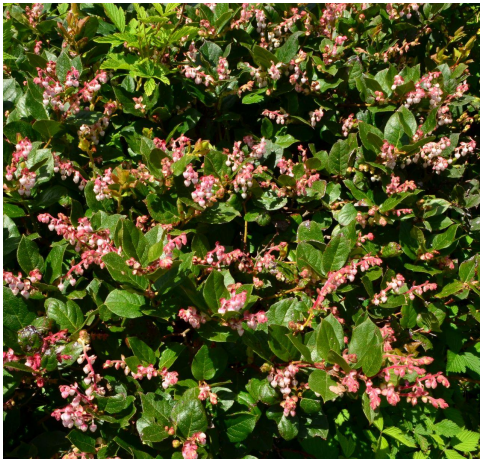
red-osier dogwood
Cornus sericea
Sun-shade, moist-wet



tall Oregon-grape
Mahonia aquifolium
Sun-shade, dry-wet



sword fern
Polystichum munitum
Part shade-shade, dry-moist



salal
Gaultheria shallon
Part shade-shade, dry-moist



red flowering currant
Ribes sanguineum
Sun-part shade, dry-moist



snowberry
Symphoricarpos albus
Sun-shade, dry-moist



kinnikinnick
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
Sun-part shade, dry



inside-out flower
Vancouveria hexandra
Part shade-shade, dry-moist



bleeding heart
Dicentra formosa
Part shade-shade, dry-moist