



Elk Root
conservation

Native Plant Project Highlights

Native Plant Educational Demonstration Garden, Native
Plant Field Guide, & Indigenous Collaboration

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PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Since 2017, Elk Root Conservation has been developing its Educational Demonstration Gardens. The gardens currently consist of over two acres of pollinator meadows, horticultural gardens and also approximately 1.5 acres of land that has been restored with 'local ecotype' native plants for educational purposes. This restored area is the Native Plant Educational Demonstration Garden (NPEDG).

In the NPEDG there is a seed library and a plant nursery, which is used to propagate plants to restore the land and will also be used to provide plant material to community members, and an upland pond system that will connect to the riparian zone at ERC. The NPEDG is the site of future learning opportunities at ERC, as it is a beautiful outdoor classroom where we are planning to offer curriculum. ERC has also been creating a Native Plant Field Guide which contains facts, environmental requirements, and taxonomical information about the specific native plants in the garden. The guide is being developed by our team of amazing youth Interns under the mentorship and guidance of our native plant propagation expert, Kate Mizenka. Our Interns are working very hard to ensure the guide is clear, concise and useful for educational purposes.

Throughout the garden, there will be a walking path where visitors can read the signs/interpretive panels that we are planning to incorporate throughout. The walking path will give visitors the opportunity to read educational signs about upland and riparian conservation, native plants, and their traditional uses, and witness a highly active wildlife corridor throughout a sensitive riparian zone.

During the next phase of this project, one of our main goals is to collaborate with local Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to learn about and incorporate the cultural and ecological significance of certain native plants to local Indigenous communities. With permission and acknowledgement, we wish to incorporate this information into ERC's Native Plant Field Guide as well as into the signs/interpretive panels that will be incorporated throughout the garden.

Our intention is for the NPEDG project to be inclusive of the entire West Kootenay Region. The Native Plants that live in the garden and are part of the ERC Field Guide are plants that are native to this region and therefore we would like to incorporate all Nations who have a relationship with the West Kootenay Region and these plants. All cultural and ecological information that is shared will be included with permission, and acknowledgement given to each Nation.

Some of the environmental and educational benefits which we predict to come from the Native Plant Project include; knowledge sharing, collaboration and mutual learning between local Indigenous Peoples and other Basin residents of all ages, educational experiences which will teach participants about the importance of native plants and also the proper protocols regarding interacting with native plants in the wild, as well as the protection of native plants as people will not have to collect seeds from wild spaces as they will be available in the ERC plant nursery and gardens.



How the Native Plant Guide Works...

ERC's Native Plant Field Guide encompasses all of the native plants found on the Elk Root Conservation Farm grounds. This guide contains a general description of these plants (size and distinguishing features such as bloom time and colour), where they can be found ecologically and geographically as well as their light, moisture and soil requirements. Beyond the basics, this guide also contains more advanced, detailed descriptions of each plant, accompanied by pictures and drawings for easy identification

1. The guide is first split into three sections based on moisture preferences:

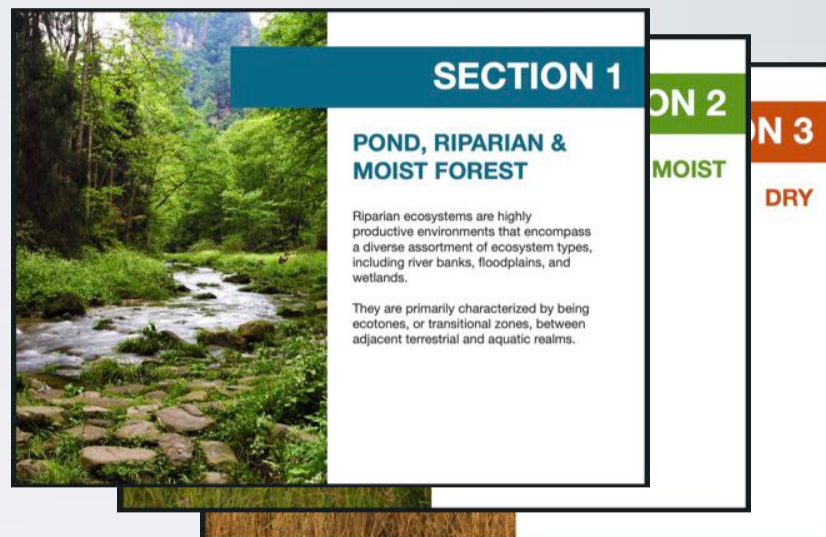
Section 1 - Pond, Riparian & Moist Forest

Section 2 - Medium Moist

Section 3 - Dry

2. Each section is then further divided by category of plant:

- forbs
- shrubs
- grasses
- trees and fungi



What Can You Find in Our Guide?

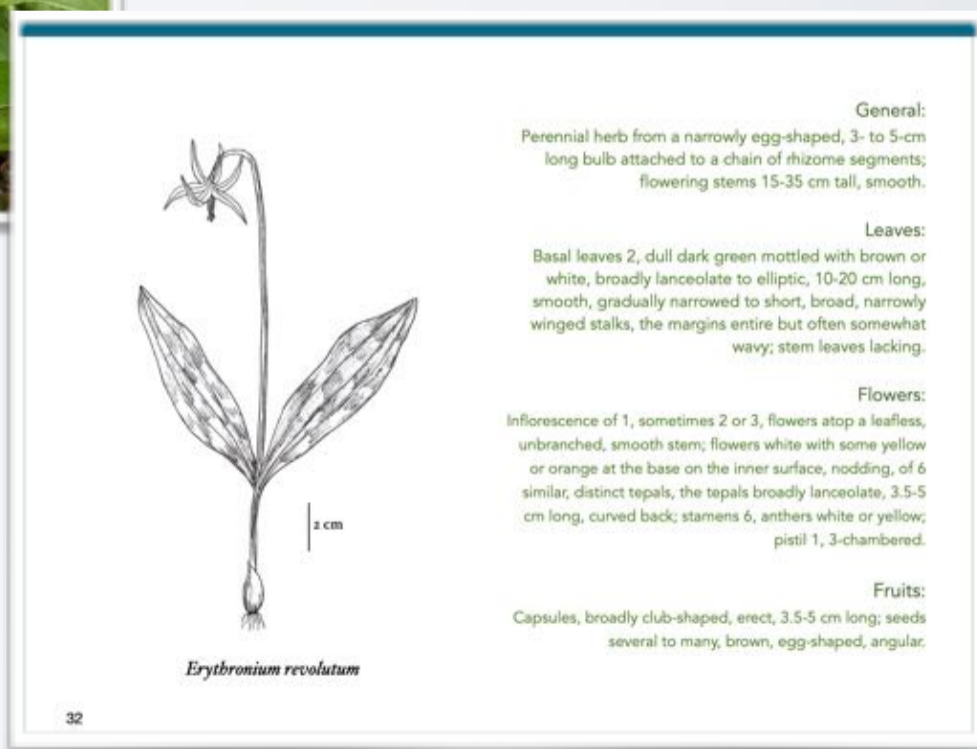


The second page is more technical, describing in detail the different parts of a plant such as its leaves, flowers and fruits. This description is also accompanied by an original biological drawing and scales for reference.

In this way, our Native Plant Field Guide provides a wide range of information that is presented in a concise, easy to follow manner so that individuals of all experience levels can use it for plant identification out in the field!

Information about each plant is covered over two pages. Basic plant information such as the latin name and common name, physical description, growth conditions and geographical regions of growth can be found on the first page of our guide.

This section may also highlight traditional use of native plants by Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest





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