

# Plant Propagation

**Date:** July 3, 2021

**Time:** 7:00-8:45pm

**Host:** Teresa Gagné    **Participants:** Grace Nombrado, Paola Coloma, Denis Gagné, Mya Lopez

## 1. Softwood vs. Hardwood cuttings

- Softwood is younger more flexible stems of plants
- Hardwood is older more woody stems of plants
- For our current purpose this season, we are looking for softwood cuttings

## 2. Technique for softwood cutting

### *On the trail:*

- It is best to take cuttings in the morning (when it is cool).
- Find a softwood stem on a plant with younger leaves about 2-5" long
- Note that there should be about 3 nodes on the stem you will be cutting (nodes are where the leaves join the stem)
- Remove the leaf from the lowest node
- Cut the base of the stem in a diagonal cut
- Collect the cuttings in a bucket with some water in to keep them from being stressed

### *Once you get home:*

- Soak in rooting solution or powder
- Tap off excess rooting solution
- Plant the softwood cutting in a 50/50 mix of peat and sand
- Plant should be in a 1 gal pot ideally
- You can plant 2-3 small cuttings in a single pot
- Water the soil thoroughly
- Cover the pot and plant with clear plastic bag (to retain the humidity and moisture)
- Place the plant outside in a cool, shady location until it roots well in the soil (you will know that the plant is rooting when you notice plant growth)
- Check frequently to water and maintain moisture in the soil
- In the fall, transplant the 2-3 cuttings out of the original pot and into each of their own pots – you can add potting soil or other soil at this time.

## 3. Native plants for softwood cuttings

- Salal
- Ocean spray

- Honeysuckle
- Native trailing blackberry
- Thimbleberry
- Pacific ninebark

#### 4. Advice on salal

- Don't root sprouts that have flowers
- Look for lighter green coloured leaves (which indicate younger sprouts)
- Make sure to check if stem is soft and bendable

#### 5. Hanging basket option

- Can use an old hanging basket pot to root softwood cuttings
- To keep humidity up, bury a pop can full of water into the center of the soil
- Cover with whole hanging basket with plastic
- the can of water will provide natural humidity

#### 6. "Ground" layering propagation technique

- This is a technique for propagating from a living plant without removing a cutting
- If a plant has a low hanging branch (an oceanspray plant is an ideal one to try), you can dig a hole in the ground.
- Then you cut a notch near the end of the low-growing branch and plant it in the soil
- Use a piece of wire to peg/hold it into the ground
- Must provide frequent watering
- In approximately a year it should be well rooted and you can transplant the newly rooted branch to a different location.

#### 7. "Air" layering propagation technique

- Make a notch in the stem of a plant (do not cut off the stem)
- Put wet moss wrapped in saran wrap and twist tie around the notched stem
- Make sure to monitor and keep moss wet
- This technique is good for doing in your own yard, but not practical for a trail area

#### 8. Plan

- Teresa and Mya will be meeting on Wednesday, July 7 to prepare the pots with peat and sand
- On Saturday, July 11 at 9am any interested members (so far: Grace, Paola and Teresa) will be meeting at the east end of Red Alder Trail at Matheson Crescent (near the forested playground).
- We will be taking cuttings on that day and planting them in the pots
- We hope to take a minimum of 2 pots of cuttings (2-3 cuttings in each pot) for each native plant (see list above of native plant options)