



Planting from pots

INSTRUCTIONS

Careful and correct planting techniques are critical to the survival of young potted plants from our nursery.

PREPARING FOR PLANTING

If you can, try not to plant on days with extreme heat or dry cold. Remove the plant from its container immediately prior to planting to minimize root exposure before planting. If the roots are dense you can loosen them with your hand or tool. Collect all necessary tools, distribute plants around the site to their expected locations, prepare the water supply, dig the holes, and make any other arrangements necessary.

DIGGING THE HOLE

Planting holes should be larger than the root ball itself. Twice the diameter and just slightly deeper than the height of the container or rootball is a good general guideline. Replace some soil into the bottom of the hole. The planting hole should be bowl-shaped so that the roots can spread out. The bottom of the planting hole can be loosened with a tool so that the roots can easily penetrate the soil.

PLANTING TIMING

Early fall is a great time for planting from pot. Roots can get established before it's too cold for growth and then

they put on growth quickly through spring with little to no water. Fall planting is particularly important for larger restoration projects where irrigation isn't feasible. However, one of the advantages of planting from pot is that you can plant anytime of the year except when soils are frozen. Planting in spring and summer often requires at least some supplemental watering.

ROOT CARE

Inspecting the roots is important after you have taken your plant out of the pot. With sharp and clean secateurs, prune off any broken, twisted/circling or dead roots. Roots can be loosened with your hand ahead of planting. Careful handling will avoid unnecessarily damaging roots.

PLANTING DEPTH

Place the plant in the hole so that the soil surface in relation to the stem of the plant should be at the same level as it was in the container. Plants that are planted too deeply can kill the plant. It is important not to bury the stem of a plant.

Plants planted too high with roots exposed can also kill the plant. Planting a plant too high is of particular concern in the winter when frost heave can force plants above ground, leaving their roots exposed to cold and dry. Once a hole is dug, hold the plant suspended in the centre of the hole and backfill with your other hand. Backfilled soil can be firmed with your hand around small plantings and with your feet around larger plantings like shrubs and trees. It can be helpful to create a small berm around the perimeter of the planting hole that will hold water. If soil is mounded, water can run-off before penetrating the soil.



PLANTING FROM POTS

WATERING AND MULCHING

After planting, water the plant well. After the first watering, let the water soak down and then water again until the soil is relatively saturated. Different plants will require different watering regimes, so be sure to ask if you are unsure. Shrubs and trees prefer deep watering to watering frequently, but shallowly. Some plants can be over-watered. Mulching can be helpful for holding moisture in the soil and also reducing weed competition from weedy seed banks in the soil. As with soil, avoid mulching to high around the stem of plants.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

Following installation of the native plants, continued maintenance and care for the site is often required to ensure a successful project. The amount of care needed and intensity will depend on a variety of factors from the nature of the site to the expectations of the project. Care can include everything from watering to weeding.

Watering can be avoided if very well-suited plants are planted in fall. In a garden setting, some watering is sometimes preferred to elongate blooming periods and keep plants lush for longer. Some native plants may

initially require watering until they have become established. For example, shrubs and trees, even when planted in fall, often require watering for the first couple years. Very wet and moist sites are an exception.

PROTECTION

Young plants can be susceptible to a range of stressors including herbivory from deer, rabbits, raccoon, birds, and slugs, as well as severe weather, and foot traffic, including trampling from dogs. Very few, if any plants, can compete with severe trampling from people and dogs. There are some deer-resistant plants, but the variety can be fairly limited.

Sometimes, in high herbivory areas, fencing can be considered as a necessary tool for encouraging diverse and healthy plantings. Slugs can be harmful to new shoots and cotyledons (first leaves). There are a variety of tools available to combat slugs, everything from copper wire surrounding plantings and pots, slug bait, killing them by hand, and trying to keep your plants out of reach by elevating pots and trays. For restoration projects, this can be a bigger challenge where close monitoring of fragile plantings is not possible.

Rabbits can be an extreme nuisance as they're often in abundant numbers and can eat large amounts of vegetation quickly. All local rabbits to Victoria are either non-native Eastern Cottontails or European rabbits and should be controlled as not to impact the natural environment.

Raccoons are very curious and industrious creatures with a lot of dexterity. They love to dig up newly planted plants and there are few precautions to take against raccoons particularly in a large planted area. Usually raccoons will lose interest over time and go on to something new.

Birds are often found nibbling seeds, seedlings, and kicking back soil with their feet. Some of our local birds like Spotted Towhees, Golden-crowned Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows, Purple Finches, and House Finches can be particularly troublesome in this way. Covering new seedlings with insect netting can be effective at keeping the birds away while seedlings are getting established.

SOIL AMENDMENTS

Plants that are selected for a particular site and are well suited, typically don't require further amendments when planted out.



Severely degraded sites that are compromised may require amendments and should be addressed on a site-to-site basis. Soil amendments used as a topping over a weedy soil can help to keep weedy seed banks in the pre-existing soil from germinating so can function both for nutrients and weed suppression.



FOR MORE INFO...

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