

# Oak Harbor Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*) Acorn Planting

10/09/14 by Brad Gluth

## **Acorn Acquisition**

- 1) Garry oak acorns have to be collected and planted in the Autumn that they are shed from the trees unless stored in refrigeration.
- 2) Gather acorns from beneath local trees only. Oaks hybridize easily and we are trying to preserve the genetics of the local trees.

## **Acorn Selection**

- 3) Float test the acorns. Place the acorns in a container of water. Remove and discard those that float. This is a density test and the floating acorns have been compromised through pests or other causes. Select the largest acorns from those that sank for planting. The larger acorns have more vigorous seedling growth.
- 4) Do not allow the acorns to dry out. It is best to not store them indoors.

## **Planting Containers**

- 5) Pots should be a minimum of 10" deep with drain holes. (Garry oaks quickly develop a deep tap root of up to 10" in the first season.)

## **Soil Mix**

- 6) The soil mix should be a well-draining mix. Sand mixed with potting soil works well.

## **Planting**

- 7) Soak acorns in water for 5 to 10 minutes prior to planting.
- 8) Plant 2-3 of the largest acorns on their side in each pot. Cover each acorn with about 1/4" of soil. (If more than one acorn germinates, the seedlings can be thinned, or separated from the pots for replanting.)
- 9) After planting, 1" of mulch should be placed on top of the soil. If available, oak leaf mulch is recommended.

## **After Planting Care**

- 10) After planting, protect the pots from freezing by keeping them in a greenhouse or heating them in mulch or soil. If rabbits or deer are a concern, protect the pots with fencing or chicken wire.
- 11) The acorns will first develop a tap root in the fall and winter. In spring a seedling stem will appear.