



Washington Association Of Conservation Districts

**PLANT MATERIAL CENTER**

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**SALAL**  
***Gaultheria shallon***

**Distribution:** Salal is native west of the Cascades at low to mid elevations.

**Growth Habit:** Salal is spreading, low-growing broad-leaved evergreen shrub. Its height can vary from 6" to 3 feet tall. It spreads by underground runners.

**Adaptability:** Salal is adapted to grow in a wide variety of sites. It grows in sun or shade, and in soils that range from damp to dry. It does better in rich, moist soils.

**Comments:** Salal is one of the better ground covers for this region. Few are adapted to grow in such a wide variety of sites as this one. Its only draw back as an ornamental ground cover is that it can grow too tall and rangy. This can be handled however by cutting established plantings back to the ground every 2 to 3 years, preferably in the spring. It has many uses as a conservation species. Its roots and underground stems are good for soil stabilization. The purple berries it produces in late summer are a favored food source for wildlife. Those same berries were also an important food source for native peoples historically. In fact they are still used today for jams and preserves, and are prized for their flavor and juiciness.

