

Las Pilitas Nursery

Planting techniques for California Native Plants

Do not amend soils or fertilize natives

★ Dig a hole with enough room to comfortably position the un-potted plant with your hands.

★ Gently remove the plant from its pot. Most natives have sensitive roots and will tolerate only minimal disturbance to their root ball. If circular roots are visible, run your finger down the length of one side of the un-potted plant to break the circular motion.

★ Place the plant into the hole.

WARNING: Plant crown should not be below ground level. 1/8 inch – ¼ inch above ground level is preferable. Check level before back filling the hole. Add soil or remove soil from depth as needed to adjust for proper height. Plants placed in the ground too low will drown and die.

★ Back-fill with the same soil removed from the hole by gently packing the soil around the root ball. Once back-filled, firmly press on the soil to make sure the plant is snug in the ground. Some folks actually use their feet for this. They place their feet on either side of the plant stem about 2 inches out from the stem on both sides and proceed to circle the plant until it is firmly planted in the ground. We call this the plant dance.

★ If planting a slope, create a basin around the plant of approximately 2 feet in diameter.

★ Apply 5 to 15 gallons of water to each plant immediately after planting. If planting a large area, install about 20 to 30 plants and then water them in.

★ If available, we highly recommend rocks placed around the plant. If rocks are limited, position rocks on the south and west sides of the plant to provide protection from the sun and to help keep roots cool and moist. Natives love rocks. Be sure not to crush or cover the crowns of your newly planted plants with the rocks.

★ Mulch between the plants and up to the rocks with shredded redwood mulch applied 2 to 3 inches deep. **DO NOT COVER THE PLANTS WITH MULCH OR PLACE MULCH UP TO THE PLANT STEM. THIS WILL SUFFOCATE THE PLANT AND IT WILL DIE.**

★ At this point we highly recommend running a sprinkler on the newly planted area for at least 3 hours or low volume spinners for 6 to 12 hours.

★ Check plants in about a week to determine soil moisture level. When the moisture level drops to about an inch below the surface the plants are ready for more water. Check plants using this method before watering every time to prevent over-watering. Riparian species will generally require more water than chaparral or inland/coastal sage scrub species.

★ Many chaparral and inland/coastal sage scrub species can be weaned off of water entirely within 2 years.

Check our extensive website at www.laspilitas.com for information on California native plants.

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