

Western Washington Plants for Birds

Beaked Hazelnut

Corylus cornuta



Photo by Mick Thompson, Eastside Audubon

Steller's Jay

(Cyanocitta stelleri)

Steller's jays are native to Evergreen forests of western North America, but they are commonly found in campgrounds, picnic areas, and backyards, where they have been known to steal food. As with other jays, they are known for their intelligence, boldness, and noise. They also will raid the nests of other birds.

A true generalist, the Steller's jay will eat insects, seeds, berries, nuts, small animals, eggs and nestlings. They are also known to eat garbage and almost anything from a bird feeder. With large nuts, they will carry several at a time in their mouth and throat, then bury them for the winter, much like a squirrel.



Photo by Fayla Schwartz and Donna Franklin, Washington Native Plant Society

Beaked Hazelnut

Beaked hazelnut is a deciduous shrub that can reach 20 feet high and 10 feet wide. It produces long yellow (male) catkins and inconspicuous (female) flowers at the end of twigs in spring. These lead to nuts in fall. Beaked hazelnut prefers partial shade and grows best in moist, well-drained sites in open forest or edges.

This shrub provides food for jays and shelter for jays, crows, warblers, waxwings, finches, sparrows, grosbeaks, vireos, wrens, thrushes, and chickadees.

In a garden, it is one of the earliest shrubs to bloom and its autumn, yellow leaves add color later in the year. Its pollen, however, is a major allergen.



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