Pacific Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra formosa*)
Fumitory Family

**Why Choose It?**

This perennial’s lacy leaves and delicate pink flowers belie its rugged disposition. Pacific bleeding heart’s blue-green foliage and heart-shaped blossoms lighten up full to part shade, either as an accent plant or as a groundcover.

**In the Garden**

Pacific bleeding heart grows easily, looks great all summer, and combines well with other shade lovers like ferns, hellebores, and primroses. Hummingbirds will visit its dangling flowers for nectar, and it’s a food plant for butterfly larvae.

**The Facts**

Pacific bleeding heart grows 10 to 20 inches tall in full to part shade. The leaves emerge from the ground from February to March, and it starts to bloom in late March. If you keep the flowers picked, it may bloom all summer. While it loves moist soil, it’s not particularly fond of standing water. Water it well during its first two years in your garden, and it can handle dry shade and our droughty summers without additional water.

**Where to See It**

You can see this herbaceous perennial growing in moist woods from sea level to mid-elevations west of the Cascades.
And, hey, what’s that white thing on the seeds?

The black seeds of Pacific bleeding heart are borne in 1-2 inch long, sort of rude looking pods. On each seed, that small white bit is actually made up of fat. Ants lug the fat, and the seed, home, and it’s a win-win. The ants get the food, and the seed gets transported to a new place to grow.

You can find out more information about native plants, including where to buy them, from the Washington Native Plant Society.

www.wnps.org
206-527-3210 or 1-888-288-8022