

WSNLA Washington State Certified Professional Horticulturist Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

1. What common name is used for *Rubus rolfei*?
 - A. Hypericum
 - B. Creeping Bramble
 - C. Boston Ivy
 - D. Blue Star Creeper
2. Which of the following is known as Red Twig Dogwood?
 - A. *Cornus sericea*
 - B. *Corylopsis pauciflora*
 - C. *Buddleja davidii*
 - D. *Cotinus coggygia*
3. What is the common name for *Picea abies* 'Nidiformis'?
 - A. Dwarf White
 - B. Bird's Nest Spruce
 - C. Irish Yew
 - D. Dwarf Mugo Pine
4. Which tree is referred to as *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea'?
 - A. Sweetgum
 - B. Ginkgo
 - C. Copper Beech
 - D. Pacific Dogwood
5. What is the common name for *Cornus florida*?
 - A. Flowering Dogwood
 - B. Kousa Dogwood
 - C. Cornelian Cherry
 - D. Red Maple
6. Which plant is commonly known as Hardy Geranium or Cranesbill?
 - A. *Echinacea purpurea*
 - B. Geranium
 - C. Fuchsia
 - D. Digitalis

7. What is the common name for *Pinus flexilis* 'Vanderwolf's Pyramid'?
- A. Vanderwolf's Pyramid Limber Pine
 - B. Ponderosa Pine
 - C. Lodgepole Pine
 - D. Yellow Pine
8. What is the common name for *Mahonia aquifolium*?
- A. Low Mahonia
 - B. Oregon Grape
 - C. Cascades Mahonia
 - D. English Grape
9. What is the scientific name for the Golden Weeping Willow?
- A. *Salix alba* 'Tristis'
 - B. *Quercus palustris*
 - C. *Styrax japonicum*
 - D. *Tilia cordata*
10. What is the common name for *Tilia cordata*?
- A. Sawleaf Zelkova
 - B. Golden Weeping Willow
 - C. Little Leaf Linden
 - D. Japanese Stewartia

Answers

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1. B
2. A
3. B
4. C
5. A
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. A
10. C

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Explanations

1. What common name is used for *Rubus rolfei*?

- A. *Hypericum*
- B. Creeping Bramble**
- C. Boston Ivy
- D. Blue Star Creeper

Rubus rolfei is commonly known as Creeping Bramble. This name reflects the plant's habit of forming low-growing, sprawling stems that root at the nodes, creating a mat-like appearance on the ground. The term "bramble" is often associated with thorny shrubs in the *Rubus* genus, which includes various species of blackberry and raspberry. In the case of Creeping Bramble, it retains this nomenclature due to its growth characteristics yet differs from more upright bramble types. The other names listed do not correspond to *Rubus rolfei*. *Hypericum* refers to a genus of flowering plants commonly known as St. John's wort. Boston Ivy pertains to *Parthenocissus tricuspidata*, a climbing vine with distinctive leaves that turn red in fall. Blue Star Creeper is commonly associated with *Isotoma fluviatilis*, known for its small blue flowers and spreading habit, but it is not related to brambles. Hence, the name Creeping Bramble fittingly encapsulates the nature and appearance of *Rubus rolfei*, making it the most appropriate common name among the options provided.

2. Which of the following is known as Red Twig Dogwood?

- A. Cornus sericea**
- B. *Corylopsis pauciflora*
- C. *Buddleja davidii*
- D. *Cotinus coggygria*

Red Twig Dogwood is scientifically known as *Cornus sericea*. This deciduous shrub is highly valued for its striking red stems, particularly noticeable in winter when the leaves have fallen. This characteristic not only adds visual interest to landscapes during the colder months but also serves as a valuable feature in garden design for creating contrast against snowy backdrops. *Cornus sericea* is also appreciated for its ability to thrive in wetland areas and its contributions to wildlife habitat. Its flowers, while not as showy as its stems, provide nectar for pollinators, and its berries can serve as food for birds. In contrast, the other options presented refer to different plant species with unique characteristics. *Corylopsis pauciflora*, commonly known as buttercup winterhazel, is appreciated primarily for its fragrant yellow flowers in early spring. *Buddleja davidii*, or butterfly bush, is valued for its fragrant flower spikes that attract butterflies but does not have the distinctive red stems. *Cotinus coggygria*, known as smokebush, is recognized for its whimsical smoke-like flower clusters and purple foliage, which are visually distinct from the features of the Red Twig Dogwood.

3. What is the common name for *Picea abies* 'Nidiformis'?

- A. Dwarf White
- B. Bird's Nest Spruce**
- C. Irish Yew
- D. Dwarf Mugo Pine

The common name for *Picea abies* 'Nidiformis' is Bird's Nest Spruce. This cultivar of Norway spruce is characterized by its unique, low-growing, and densely branched habit that forms a nest-like appearance, which is how it got its common name. The 'Nidiformis' variety typically exhibits a rounded mound shape and features short, soft needles, making it an attractive option for garden beds, rock gardens, or as a specimen plant. In contrast to the other options, which refer to different plant species or cultivars, Bird's Nest Spruce specifically highlights the distinct structural form of *Picea abies* 'Nidiformis' and its appeal in landscaping design. Dwarf White is a more general term not specifically tied to the Norway spruce, Irish Yew refers to *Taxus baccata*, and Dwarf Mugo Pine denotes a variety of *Pinus mugo*, hence these options do not relate to *Picea abies* 'Nidiformis'.

4. Which tree is referred to as *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea'?

- A. Sweetgum
- B. Ginkgo
- C. Copper Beech**
- D. Pacific Dogwood

Fagus sylvatica 'Purpurea' is commonly known as the Copper Beech. This particular cultivar of the European beech features distinctive purple leaves that emerge in the spring and maintain their attractive coloration throughout the growing season. The appeal of the Copper Beech lies in its striking foliage, which can offer a dramatic contrast in garden landscapes. The other trees listed, such as the Sweetgum, Ginkgo, and Pacific Dogwood, belong to different genera and species, making them distinctly different from the Copper Beech. Each of these trees has unique characteristics and leaf coloration, but none share the specific botanical identity of *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea'.

5. What is the common name for *Cornus florida*?

- A. Flowering Dogwood**
- B. Kousa Dogwood
- C. Cornelian Cherry
- D. Red Maple

The common name for *Cornus florida* is indeed Flowering Dogwood. This deciduous tree is well-known for its stunning spring blossoms, which are typically pink or white, creating a spectacular display that attracts many admirers. The Flowering Dogwood is native to the eastern United States and is commonly used in landscaping for its ornamental value. Additionally, its distinctive leaves turn vibrant colors in the fall, further enhancing its appeal. In contrast, the other names listed refer to different species or varieties. Kousa Dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) is another species of dogwood with different flowering characteristics and fruit. Cornelian Cherry (*Cornus mas*) is a separate species known for its edible fruit, while Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) is a completely different tree species known for its red fall foliage and is not related to the dogwood family. Understanding these distinctions highlights why Flowering Dogwood is the correct choice for *Cornus florida*.

6. Which plant is commonly known as Hardy Geranium or Cranesbill?

- A. Echinacea purpurea**
- B. Geranium**
- C. Fuchsia**
- D. Digitalis**

The plant commonly referred to as Hardy Geranium or Cranesbill is indeed Geranium. This genus is well-known for its ability to thrive in various conditions and is appreciated for its long blooming period and attractive foliage. Hardy Geraniums are primarily low-growing perennials with a mat-forming habit, making them excellent for ground cover and perennial borders. They offer a wide range of flower colors, from shades of blue and purple to pink and white, further enhancing their appeal in garden design. The designation "Cranesbill" comes from the shape of the seed capsule, which resembles the bill of a crane. This distinctive feature helps to identify Hardy Geraniums. Many species within the Geranium genus are also valued for their drought resistance and ability to attract pollinators, making them a sustainable choice for horticulture. In contrast, Echinacea purpurea is commonly known as Coneflower, Fuchsia is recognized for its drooping flowers and vibrant colors, and Digitalis refers to Foxglove, which is known for its tall spikes of tubular flowers. None of these plants share the characteristics or common names associated with Hardy Geranium or Cranesbill.

7. What is the common name for Pinus flexilis 'Vanderwolf's Pyramid'?

- A. Vanderwolf's Pyramid Limber Pine**
- B. Ponderosa Pine**
- C. Lodgepole Pine**
- D. Yellow Pine**

The common name for Pinus flexilis 'Vanderwolf's Pyramid' is indeed Vanderwolf's Pyramid Limber Pine. This cultivar is a variant of the Limber Pine species, which is native to the Rocky Mountains and known for its unique growth habit. 'Vanderwolf's Pyramid' is specifically appreciated for its pyramidal shape, making it an attractive choice for landscaping. The name "Limber Pine" comes from the tree's flexible branches, which allow them to withstand heavy snow without breaking. This resilience, combined with its distinctive form and the ability to thrive in various landscapes, contributes to the popularity of this cultivar among horticulturists and landscapers. Understanding this specific identification is crucial for proper planting, care, and landscape design, as it helps individuals make informed choices about suitable trees for their environments.

8. What is the common name for Mahonia aquifolium?

- A. Low Mahonia
- B. Oregon Grape**
- C. Cascades Mahonia
- D. English Grape

The common name for Mahonia aquifolium is Oregon Grape. This plant is native to the Pacific Northwest region of North America, and it is particularly associated with the state of Oregon, where it thrives in a variety of habitats, including forests and open areas. The name "Oregon Grape" comes from the plant's dark blue, grape-like berries, which are not only visually similar to actual grapes but also feature a tart flavor, often used in jams and jellies. Additionally, Oregon Grape is valued for its ornamental qualities, such as its evergreen leaves that resemble holly and its yellow flowers that attract various pollinators. This species plays an important ecological role, contributing to local biodiversity, making it significant within the ecological framework of the Pacific Northwest. The other options do not accurately reflect the widely accepted common name for Mahonia aquifolium.

9. What is the scientific name for the Golden Weeping Willow?

- A. Salix alba 'Tristis'**
- B. Quercus palustris
- C. Styrax japonicum
- D. Tilia cordata

The Golden Weeping Willow is scientifically known as Salix alba 'Tristis.' This designation reflects its lineage as a cultivar of the species Salix alba, commonly known as the white willow, with 'Tristis' indicating the weeping form that is characterized by its graceful, drooping branches adorned with bright green leaves that turn golden in the fall. Understanding the nomenclature is crucial in horticulture, as it allows for precise communication regarding plant identification and care. The other options provided do not accurately represent the Golden Weeping Willow. For example, Quercus palustris refers to the pin oak, a completely different species, while Styrax japonicum is known as the Japanese snowbell, and Tilia cordata is the small-leaved lime tree. Each of these species has distinct characteristics and growing requirements that differentiate them from Salix alba 'Tristis.'

10. What is the common name for *Tilia cordata*?

- A. Sawleaf Zelkova**
- B. Golden Weeping Willow**
- C. Little Leaf Linden**
- D. Japanese Stewartia**

Tilia cordata is commonly known as the Little Leaf Linden. This tree is well-regarded for its heart-shaped leaves, which are typically small compared to other linden species, hence the name "Little Leaf." It is often valued in landscaping for its fragrant flowers, which attract bees, and its ability to provide ample shade. This tree is also recognized for its ornamental qualities and adaptability to various soils and urban conditions, making it a popular choice in parks and alongside streets. The other options, such as Sawleaf Zelkova, Golden Weeping Willow, and Japanese Stewartia, refer to entirely different species. The Sawleaf Zelkova is a different type of deciduous tree known for its serrated leaves, while the Golden Weeping Willow is known for its graceful, drooping branches and is a variant of the willow family. Japanese Stewartia is an entirely different genus that features unique flowering characteristics not found in *Tilia cordata*. Thus, identifying *Tilia cordata* specifically as the Little Leaf Linden aligns with both its scientific classification and its common usage in horticulture.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://wsnlawaprohorticulturis.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!