Backyard Stewardship

Are you trying to attract wildlife to your backyard? To create a dynamic habitat you need to provide these three essentials:

**Food**
- Choose plants which provide nutrition for wildlife and support vital insect populations.
  
  For example:

  - Black cherry (Prunus serotina) trees support 456 butterfly and moth species. The young of many bird species are reliant on caterpillars and insects as a food source. Also the fruit is eaten by 54 species of birds.

  - Oaks (Quercus) support 534 species of butterflies and moths and 29 species of birds. Acorns feed numerous animals, i.e. squirrels, deer, mice, turkeys, ducks, jays, and other birds, to name a few.

  - Goldenrod (Solidago) is not an allergen. Its pollen can only be carried by insects. One of the most important plants for pollinators, it supports 115 species of moths and butterflies.

**Shelter**
- Include refuges to protect animals from the elements and predators.

  - Brush piles offer important food and safety for insects, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds.

  - Dead trees and nesting boxes provide cavities for shelter and raising young.

  - Animals, especially birds, use forest stories or layers. Your landscaping should replicate these layers — building from the bottom up with rocks, small plants, brush, shrubs, young trees and then mature trees.

**Water**
- Provide water for a variety of wildlife species by incorporating a pond or stream in your landscape.

  - Black willows (Salix nigra) are commonly found near water. They support 455 species of moths and butterflies.

  - Consider a birdbath. Keep water changed two to three times a week to avoid breeding mosquitoes.

  - Maintain your birdbath throughout the year especially when water is scarce.

---

**Why plant native species?**

- Native plantings provide habitat, food, cover, and breeding areas for indigenous wildlife.

- Native insects have evolved as specialists on specific native plants on which they are dependent. Insects are the very foundation of most species’ existence, including people.

- Native plants support pollinators that fertilize food sources for indigenous animals and people, too.

- Native plants are an integral part of a diverse habitat community and help reverse species loss.

- Native plants are more adaptive, and once established take less care than exotic species.

- Exotic species are often invasive and out-compete native species that are essential for our region’s wildlife.

---

For more great ideas about attracting nature to your yard consult Doug Tallamy’s book Bringing Nature Home and Pat & Clay Sutton’s website:

http://www.patandclaysutton.com

---

**Your backyard habitat can…**

- supply animals with important food sources that may be in short supply.

- create critical oases or links between protected tracts of land providing for numerous species.

- replace lawn areas that are high maintenance and require harmful fertilizers, mowing and pesticides.

- provide shelter using a brush pile of fallen branches with larger logs and limbs at the bottom. Leave openings for entry points.

---

Flying squirrels eat seeds, nuts, fungi, fruit, and insects. They need to shelter in tree cavities.

---

You Can Help!

Para obtener versión en español, visite: cumauriceriver.org/signs/011s.html

---

CU Platte River
WheatonArts
And Cultural Center