

Wildlife Gardening

One of many benefits of living in our region is the diversity of wildlife we live amongst. As we look around us, we can take cues from to create an inviting and habitable garden in which wildlife may live. The following are simple additions and/or changes you can make in your own garden to attract birds and butterflies.

BIRDS

An avian invitation includes providing options for shelter/cover, food and water. Protect your avian friends by **LIMITING CHEMICAL USE!**

Shelter/Cover

- Birds tend to assemble in areas they feel safe and secure. To a bird, safety means a spot to get out of the elements (i.e. rain and wind) and watch for predators such as cats and other birds. For this reason, it is imperative to provide layers of vantage points for your feathered friends.
 - Trees—evergreen and deciduous, 20+ tall; (i.e.) conifers, maples
 - Eye-level Shrubs—dense, 6+ feet tall; (i.e.) redbud, dogwood, *Osmanthus*
 - Low shrubs and plants—1-5 feet tall; (i.e.) *Daphne*, dwarf *Pieris*, large ferns
- Keep in mind that a diverse palette of plants means a broad variety of birds!
- Birds need perching and nesting options, as well as food sources, so avoid extensively tidying up your garden. To us thick tangles of branches, brush piles, mud puddles and exhausted flowers may be an eyesore, but to our feathered friends, those things are shelter, a bath tub and dinner.

Food

- Different species of birds depend on assorted sources of food. Nuts, fruits, berries, seeds, grains, nectar, and insects are typical diets of birds in our region.
- As with humans, nutritional needs change as activity does. For instance, during nesting time, sugary berries will be sought after; whereas during winter fatty nuts are desired.
- Diversity in the garden provides much-sought after food sources.
 - Trees—seeds, nuts, fruit (i.e. dogwood, cedar)
 - Shrubs—berries, fruit, insects (i.e. Oregon grape, evergreen huckleberry)
 - Flowers—seeds, nectar, insects (i.e. coneflower, salvia)
 - ****Note:** if you do not wish to share berries and fruits you're growing for consumption, remember to place bird netting over the plants!
- Feeders give birds the opportunity to easily and readily consume seeds, grains, and fruit.
 - Place feeders at a safe height, in a safe location: 5-6 feet above ground and 6-8 feet away from shrubs (protection from cats and tenacious squirrels!).
 - Sheltered locations away from wind and rain are much appreciated.
 - If you place more than one feeder in the same location, leave a few feet between feeders.
 - Regularly clean feeders with a brush and white vinegar/white solution (1 part vinegar, 20 parts water) or a mild detergent. Rinse WELL.
 - Hummingbird feeders need to be cleaned (as above) every 3-5 days
 - Nesting time is an opportunity to get feeders cleaned and replenished with fresh seed. Parent birds usually return with their fledglings at the end of summer.
 - NEVER use a honey solution in hummingbird feeders, as there's the potential for them to contract a fatal fungal disease.

Water

In many ways we are no different than birds, including ways in which we need and utilize water: drinking and bathing.

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- Place bird baths among low-level plants
- Adding a rock or two that projects out of the water provides a nice landing spot
- Maintain fresh water in baths, trays, saucers, etc.
- When possible, ensure fresh, unfrozen water when temperatures dip below freezing. This allows access to a precious and vital resource *and* invites birds that aren't usually attracted to feeders.

The following are some plants that bear flowers hummingbirds just can't resist!

Anise hyssop/*Agastache*

Fuchsia

Lupine/*Lupinus*

Sage/*Salvia*

Red-hot poker/*Kniphofia*

Beard tongue/*Penstemon*

Cape Fuchsia/*Phygelius*

Phlox

Montbretia/*Crocasmia*

Speedwell/*Veronica*

Pincushion flower/*Scabiosa*

Coral bells/*Heuchera*

Delphinium

Currant/*Ribes*

Rosemary/*Rosmarinus officinalis*

Abelia

Strawberry bush/*Arbutus unedo*

Wild Lilac/*Ceanothus*

Lavender/*Lavendula*

Elderberry/*Sambucus*

Weigela

Trumpet honeysuckle/*Lonicera*

Manzanita/*Arctostaphylos*

Lilac/*Syringa*

Flowering maple/*Abutilon*

Bottle brush/*Calistemon*

BUTTERFLIES

Little gleaming gems of happiness dancing in the sky, butterflies range in size, color and (species dependent) times of year during which we see them. Invite them into your garden by supplying them with the following necessary and specific links to life and reproduction.

Larval Host Plants

Butterfly larvae are what we commonly call 'caterpillars.' Each species of butterfly has its own distinct, limited menu of food options. For this reason, planting known host plants will attract butterflies to your garden; mama butterflies lay their eggs on or near such plants so that when they mature into pupae/caterpillars they have food readily available.

Pupal Hiding Places

Following the laborious task of eating and growing, caterpillars must find a protected hiding spot to build a cocoon (chrysalis). Commonly found safe locations are in a bush, tall grasses or even piles of sticks. Once the hiding spot has been determined and the cocoon built, the caterpillar will 'pupate' into a lovely winged, mature butterfly.

Nectar Plants For Adults

So they may energize and begin the entire process anew, mature butterflies promptly take flight in search of food. Food for an adult butterfly comes in the form of nectar (and sap or rotting fruit for some species). Providing flowering plants and the occasional plate of overly-ripe peaches, melon or banana is just what they are searching for.

Moisture (minerals & salt for adults)

Sugary nectar may give butterflies energy, but it cannot provide trace minerals and water needed to thrive. Such nutrients are found in clay deposits, animal urine and bird droppings. They will also visit mud puddles, even those that you intentionally make for them. Create a

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small depression in the ground that you line with pebbles and add water to each morning. Choose a location where the water dries by day end.

Opportunities For Warmth/Sun

Everything needs time for rest and relaxation, and butterflies are no exception. In fact, butterflies *need* to be warm in order to fly. Ideal lounging areas for them are places such as warm rocks in sunny areas. Consider adding decorative rocks and boulders to your landscape.

Protection From Wind

Plan your butterfly garden in an area that is protected from wind. Large shrubs, a hedgerow or fence will do the trick.

Hibernation/Overwintering Sites

Species dependent, butterflies spend winter as eggs, larvae, pupae or adults. When it's time to clean up your garden at the end of the season, give thought to leaving some areas less tidy. Common winter homes include leaf litter, loose bark and piles of debris or logs. A couple of weeks prior to cold weather arriving, make debris and/or log piles around the edges of your garden to tuck in your winged friends for the winter.

Protect the butterflies you invite to your garden—NO INSECTICIDE USE!

The following are some plants that provide butterfly food and habitat:

Larval Host Plants

Dill/*Anethum graveolens*
Butterfly weed/*Asclepias*
Hollyhock/*Alcea*
Lupine/*Lupinus*
Aster/*Aster*
Bleeding Heart/*Dicentra*
Oregon grape/*Mahonia aquafolium*
Spirea/*Spiraea*
Snowberry/*Symphoricarpos*

Adult Nectar Plants

Yarrow/*Achillea*
Bee balm/*Monarda*
Goldenrod/*Solidago*
Coneflower/*Echinacea*
Wallflower/*Erysimum*
California lilac/*Ceanothus*
Abelia/*Abelia*
Elderberry/*Sambucus*
Mock orange/*Philadelphus*