



Manada Conservancy

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Supporting Birds in our Gardens

Birds Need

Food Seeds, fruits, nuts, leaf litter, flowers, nectar, buds, insects, caterpillars, soil invertebrates

Water For bathing and drinking

Nesting Sites Different bird species utilize various nesting sites – shrubs, trees, platforms, hanging baskets, cavities and nesting boxes

Cover Protection from wind, rain, snow, sun and predators – coniferous and deciduous trees, shrubs, vines, brush piles

Planning and Planting

Doing an Inventory What plants do I already have? What habitat do I have? What are my growing conditions? What birds do I have?

Decide What to Plant and Where What bird would I like to attract? Plan for a diversity of plant species and habitats. Plant in layers – ground level (lawn, groundcovers and leaf litter), herbaceous layer (flowers and grasses, even weeds) understory layer (shorter and larger coniferous and deciduous shrubs and shorter trees) canopy layer (coniferous and deciduous trees). Plant food sources for different seasons. Consider planting hedgerows for food, cover and nesting sites and include shrubs that fruit at different times of the year.

Provide Water Sources Bird baths, fountains, small or large ponds, drippers and misters. Situate a few feet away from shrubs where cats might linger or make sure birdbath is elevated.

Dust Bathing Areas 3 foot square area, excavated about 6 inches deep and refilled with a mixture of 1/3 sand, loam and sifted ash. You can border with stones, bricks or boards to prevent vegetation from moving in.

Erect Nesting Boxes Build or buy according to recommended designs for birds you hope to house

Helpful Attitudes and Practices

Plant Native Plant Species Native plants feed native insects and birds better than exotics

Plant for Insects The more insects you attract, the more birds you will have!

Eliminate Pesticides See above. Allow a balance between birds as predators and insects as prey develop.

Reduce Lawn Consider replacing some of your lawn with plants beneficial to birds

String a Guywire As birds perch on a wire stretched over a tilled or dug out area a natural hedgerow will grow from seeds that are lodged in the birds' droppings

Rethinking Weeds Consider leaving an area where weeds are welcomed rather than eradicated. Weeds can be great seed sources.

Leave Leaves Alone Let leaves accumulate under trees and shrubs to provide habitat for small soil invertebrates and as fertilizer. Consider bringing in leaves from your neighbors to mulch your gardens.

Create a Self-feeding Food Patch Leave an intentional patch of weeds (ragweed, pigweed, lamb's quarters, panic grasses, sunflowers) as a foraging area.

Re-use your Christmas Tree After the season, set your tree out in the yard through the winter to provide cover.

