

Creating Backyard Bird Habitat Through Native Landscaping

Birds need food, shelter, and water, all of which you can provide in your backyard (and in your front yard, too).



The best way to support a variety of birds throughout the year is to include a variety of different plants in your yard. The greater variety of nectar, seeds, berries, and insects you provide, the greater variety of birds you will support.

Native plants provide the best habitat, because our local and migrating birds have evolved to eat the particular food that native plants provide. For example, oak trees support more than 500 species of caterpillar, while the non-native ginkgo supports only one!



Another way to support a variety of birds is to provide structural variety in your yard. Some birds hang out up high in the tree tops, others prefer shrubs or small trees. Still others find food on the ground or forage around in the leaf litter under your shrubs. (A good excuse for not raking or blowing away all of the leaves.)



Photo by Therese Heyek

Providing water is another way to support birds in your yard, and many birds seem especially attracted to water with motion. Consider a small bird bath or fountain, and place it at least ten feet from any dense shrubs that predators may use.

Insects are a very important part of birds' diets, so minimizing the use of pesticides in your yard will provide birds with a healthier diet. Insects also provide other benefits like pollinating our vegetable gardens.

