

10 CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR BACKYARD

01

TREE PLANTING

Trees in your backyard can be home to many different types of wildlife. Trees add beauty and so much more.

02

WILDLIFE HABITAT

Even a small yard can be landscaped to attract birds, butterflies, beneficial insects, and small animals. Make a home for them in your yard.

03

BACKYARD POND

Backyard ponds and water gardens are for birds, butterflies, frogs, fish, and you and your family. A pond or water garden will likely become the focal point for all your backyard conservation.

04

WETLAND

A mini-wetland in your yard can provide many of the same benefits that natural wetlands offer. Wetlands filter excess pesticides and nutrients.

05

COMPOSTING

All organic matter eventually decomposes. Composting speeds the process by providing an ideal environment for bacteria and other decomposing microorganisms. Turn household waste into valuable fertilizer and soil organic matter.

06

MULCHING

Mulching is one of the simplest and most beneficial practices you can use in the garden. Mulching enriches and protects soil, helping provide a better growing environment.

07

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

Twenty nutrients have been identified that are required by plants. The other nutrients, referred to as micronutrients, are required in very small amounts. Apply only the nutrients the plants can use.

08

TERRACING

Terraces can create several mini-gardens in your backyard. Use terraces to make flower and vegetable gardening possible on steep slopes or simply to add interest to your landscape.

09

WATER CONSERVATION

Wise use of water for garden and lawn waterings not only helps protect the environment, but saves money and provides for optimum growing conditions.

10

PEST MANAGEMENT

Pest management can be one of the greatest challenges to the home gardener. Early detection and treatment of pests means a healthier growing environment.



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CREATING AN INVITING WILDLIFE HABITAT IN YOUR BACKYARD

There is a lot of wildlife living alongside our homes, whether we actually see them or not! Birds tend to be the most obvious, but salamanders, snakes, lizards, turtles, butterflies and moths, and myriad other species may be in our literal backyards. Wildlife need food, shelter, water, and in many cases, habitat connections to live out their lives. By creating these habitat elements in our yards, we can improve their lives and ours, and get to see some creatures up close.

ATTRACTING BIRDS



Bird feeders and baths are good features to enhance viewing, but larger benefits come from planting and maintaining native trees, shrubs, and perennials. Native vegetation will provide food, cover, and structure that birds (and other wildlife) need, and will support beneficial insect species that birds and other wildlife will feed on. The insects are especially critical as food for hungry nestlings. Many birds nest in trees, others in shrubs, and still others use tree cavities. If it's safe to do so, leave dead trees standing for birds like woodpeckers, wrens, chickadees, bluebirds, and screech owls, though nest boxes can substitute for trees. Also, keep your cats indoors.

ATTRACTING POLLINATORS

Butterflies and native pollinators are great candidates for backyard habitat management. By mowing your yard less often, planting a diversity of native wildflowers that bloom at different times during the growing season and having trees and shrubs which serve as great nectar sources. Even small spaces make great butterfly gardens. These areas will also help to store greater amounts of carbon and help fight climate change.



ATTRACTING BATS



Bats in our region eat night-flying insects, serving an important ecosystem role while giving your backyard some free & organic pest control! Return the favor and help the local bat population by installing a bat box, either on a structure or on a post/pole. Bat boxes offer roosting space for maternity colonies (mother bats and their pups) during the summer, and they should be placed in a sunny spot at least 10 feet high. Trees – live or dead – are also important bat roosts. If it's safe to do so, leave dead trees standing.

ATTRACTING REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

For ground-dwelling wildlife like frogs, salamanders, turtles and snakes, providing vegetative and leaf cover on the ground will help them find reliable habitat and food. Leaving an area of the yard with natural leaf cover and fallen logs, and even a water feature if possible, will create the moist soil and insect food that these species love.

