



## Land Conservation

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## What Can We Do?

We can participate in biodiversity conservation by increasing our knowledge of environmental issues, increasing our awareness of the impacts of biodiversity loss, and increasing support for government policies and actions that conserve our valuable ecosystems. We can become educators and role models as stewards of the environment by aiding in the recovery of species at risk and preventing other species from becoming at risk. Habitat stewardship consists of activities that range from enhancing the quality of soil, water, air and other natural resources to monitoring and conserving wildlife species and their habitat by donating or leasing property to a land trust.

### Participating in Biodiversity Conservation

- Identify locations of critical wildlife habitat for species at risk and the threats to these areas. Where possible, eliminate threats and maintain natural areas. Leave critical wildlife habitat undisturbed, especially nesting and denning sites. Promote wildlife use by setting up bird and bat houses.
- Eradicate and control introduced weeds on your property. Keep vehicles on main roads to reduce the spread of weeds and disturbance to wildlife.
- Leave native plants undisturbed, and landscape using native trees and vegetation. Native plants are well adapted to local conditions and provide a low maintenance, drought resistant garden and can prevent local flooding. Attract "good" insects by planting pollen and nectar plants.
- Maintain wetlands by conserving water and reducing irrigation. Avoid draining water bodies on your property.
- Construct fences to protect riparian areas and other sensitive habitat from trampling and other disturbances.
- Manage livestock grazing to maintain good quality range conditions. Leave some areas ungrazed to determine range characteristics to manage for.
- Maintain old standing dead trees and mature forest stands. Large dead trees provide nest cavities for many species and mature forest will be replaced by old growth over time.
- Consider donating or leasing property to land trusts, or placing a conservation covenant on your property. This process allows you to protect your land and benefit from potential tax breaks. Under Environment Canada's Ecological Gifts program, a gift of land provides the greatest tax benefit of any charitable gift.

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- Use natural products and methods for pest control such as BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) for caterpillar infestation; use pesticides that have minimal residual effects such as pyrethrins, insecticidal soaps and dormant oil sprays; use a high-pressure water stream from a hose to control aphids; use barriers and collars around plants to keep pests away.
- Monitor and assess your pets' impact on biodiversity. Some domestic animals, especially cats, are predators of wild animals and can devastate local population of native species. Cats have been estimated to kill tens of millions of birds each year in North America.
- Learn as much as you can about nature and share your knowledge with others. Visit ecological interpretation centres, natural history museums and native fish hatcheries to study local ecosystems. Volunteer at an organization that focuses on conservation or restoration of habitat.
- Encourage and support local government initiatives that protect habitat and decrease threats to biodiversity.
- Use environmentally friendly products. Dispose of hazardous material safely. Chemicals that enter the sewer system can contaminate freshwater and ocean ecosystems.
- Recycle, reuse and reduce. Recycling decreases pollution by decreasing energy, electricity, and water consumption and the need for landfills.
- Drive less, walk, ride or carpool more. Learn about low emission vehicle research and availability.



eNews



Priority Projects



Property Maps



Team



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