

North Texas Native Landscapes for Birds Plant List

Common Name Scientific Name	Native Region ¹	Height (ft)	Spread (ft)	Light ²	Evergreen/Perennial ³ Seasonal Interest	Color/Feature	Water ⁴	Soil Type	Maintenance	Wildlife ⁵	Comments	
Shade Trees, >20 feet												
1. Ash, White <i>Fraxinus americana</i>	BEF	60-80'	50-70'	S-PS-SH	D	Fall	Yellow to purple leaves	H	Deep, moist soils	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Ashes have excellent fall color and provide nesting, cover and food for birds. Stream bottom woods. Medium growth rate. Superior ornamental to green ash. Wing of fruit ending where body of fruit begins. Leaflets rounded, typically 7.
2. Cedar, Eastern Red <i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	BEFW	25-50'	to 45'	S-PS	E	Fall/ Winter	Evergreen leaves/ blue berries	L	Sand, loam, clay, caliche, limestone, well-drained	No maintenance required	Y	Good screen plant. Can be invasive and cause allergies. Sensitive to fire. Plant a female to avoid pollen and have fruit, which is food for birds. Bark provides nesting material. Usually has 1 main trunk, leaf margins entire under a microscope.
3. Elm, Cedar <i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>	BEFW Uplands or lowlands	50-70'	50-60'	S-PS	D	Fall	Gold leaves	VL	Alkaline, adaptable	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Upright form. Adapted to rocky soils; can withstand heavy, poorly drained clay soils & moderately compacted soils.
4. Hackberry Sugarberry <i>Celtis laevigata</i>	BEFW	60-80'	to 30'	PS	D	Fall	Yellow leaves	M	Sand, loam, clay, caliche, well-drained	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Can be an attractive shade tree, shallow rooted, fast growing, lives 30 years. Favorite feeding stop for birds, larval food for Hackberry Emperor butterfly.
5. Oak, Blackjack <i>Quercus marilandica</i>	EW	14-45'	14-45'	PS	D	Fall	Yellow-green leaves	L	Sandy, gravelly or silty soils, chiefly upland	Prune for shape or to raise canopy, in winter or peak of summer	Y	Important tree of the Cross Timbers. Given good soil and room develops an attractive, symmetrical form. Slow-growing, long-lived, and able to survive on very poor soils. Susceptible to oak wilt. Bell shaped leaves with tiny bristles.
6. Oak, Bur <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	BEFW Stream bottom, upland woods	70-100'	30-50'	S-PS	D	Spring	Large acorns	VL	Limestone, clay, adaptable	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Large, majestic, very adaptable. Needs lots of space & deep soil. In the white oak group.

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7. Oak, Chinkapin <i>Quercus muhlenbergii</i>	BEFW Upland creek bottoms, ravines	45-110'	50-70'	S-PS	D	Fall	Yellow and rust leaves	L	Rock, sand, mildly alkaline	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Stately form; good for deeper soils. Leaves are sharply toothed but with no bristles. In the white oak group.
8. Oak, Escarpment Live <i>Quercus fusiformis</i>	BEFW Limestone outcrops, well-drained soils	20-40'	30-40'	S-PS	E	Winter	Green leaves	VL	Sand, loam, limestone, clay, calcareous well-drained	Prune only during hottest and coldest months; paint any pruning wounds to prevent oak wilt	Y	Oak wilt susceptible; likes large open spaces; briefly drops leaves in spring. Use <i>Q. fusiformis</i> fairly drought & cold tolerant. Leaf blades fairly narrow overall, acorns much longer than broad.
9. Oak, Post <i>Quercus stellata</i>	EW	40-50'	30-40'	S-PS	D	Spring	Golden flowers	L	Sand, acid, well-drained	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Most common oak throughout Texas. This is the ultimate drought resistant tree, but also grows in soggy, flatwoods soils. Its roots are extremely sensitive to disturbance. Slow-growing and long-lived.
10. Oak, Shumard Oak, Shumard Red <i>Quercus shumardii</i>	BE Moist forests, stream bottoms	30-120'	to 60'	S-PS	D	Fall	Red leaves	M	Deep soils	Prune during the hottest and coldest months; paint pruning wounds to help prevent oak wilt	Y	Acorn cups enclose <1/3 of acorn. Conspicuous tomentum on lower leaf vein axils.
11. Pecan <i>Carya illinoensis</i>	BEFW Stream bottoms or slopes or cultivation	100-160'	60-75'	S	D	Fall	Nuts	L	Sand, loam, clay, caliche; well drained	Prune for shape or to raise canopy	Y	Tall impressive tree; nut producing; for good, deep soils only; susceptible to disease and insects; recommended varieties are at texaspecans.org .
Ornamental Trees, 10-20 feet												
12. Desert Willow <i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	T Dry streambeds in West TX	20-30'	15-25'	S-PS	D	Spring-fall	White, pink or purple flowers	L	Well-drained	Prune for shape or to raise canopy; remove suckers	Y	Trumpet-shaped, 3" long flower; need well-drained site; airy foliage casts a light shade for underplantings; attracts hummingbirds.

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13. Dogwood, Roughleaf <i>Cornus drummondii</i>	BEFW	10-15'	to 16'	S-PS-SH	D	Spring/ Fall	White flowers, red leaves, white berries	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone, well-drained or poor drainage ok	Can prune into small tree. With no pruning develops into thicket	Y	40 species of birds feed on Roughleaf Dogwood during fall migration. Will grow in dense shade but fruits best in 4 hours of sun. Good for erosion control and screening.
14. Holly, Possumhaw <i>Ilex decidua</i>	BEFW	12-15'	12-15'	S-PS	D	Winter	Red berries	L-M	Sand, loam, clay, caliche, seasonal poor drainage ok	Prune for shape only or to raise canopy	Y	Striking red berries on bare branches in winter; tolerates poor drainage. Fruits best in full sun; must have a female for berries. Buy in fall to insure labeled females produce berries.
15. Holly, Yaupon <i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	T Sandy pinewoods, low woods in East TX	12-25'	8-12'	S-PS-SH	E	Winter	Red berries	L	Adaptable	Prune for shape only, pick prune to regain natural shape	Y	Small shade tolerant tree, females produce red berries in winter that attract birds; free of insects and diseases; poisonous berries.
16. Hoptree Wafer Ash <i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>	BEFW	6-12', up to 20'+	4-10', or more dependi ng on height	S, PS, S	D	Summer to winter.	Seeds clusters.	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone; acid or calcareous.	Prune for shape, if desired.	Y	Shrub to small tree. All parts aromatic. Showy clusters of wafers enclosing 2-3 seeds persist most of winter; flowers usually not showy. Wafers can be brewed as hop substitute. Valuable nectar & larval host plant for butterflies & other pollinators.
17. Plum, Mexican <i>Prunus mexicana</i>	BEFW River bottoms, prairies, and woodlands	15-35'	15-20'	S-PS	D	Spring	White-pink flowers	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone, well-drained	Prune for shape only or to raise canopy	Y	Fragrantly sweet white flowers, edible fruit. Needs good drainage & fair amount of soil. Good in full sun or as understory tree.
18. Redbud, Eastern <i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>canadensis</i>	BEFW Stream bottoms, lower slopes	15-25'	15-20'	PS	D	Spring	Pinkish purple flowers	M	Adaptable. Sandy, silty	Prune for shape or to raise canopy; remove suckers	Y	Thin bright green leaves, usually single- trunked. If you are buying one, try to make sure it is a local seed source.

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19. Rusty Blackhaw <i>Viburnum rufidulum</i>	BEFW Rocky or sandy woods	10-20'	10-15'	S-PS-SH	D	Late Spring and Fall	Cream flowers; red leaves	L	Sand, loam clay, limestone, well-drained	Prune for shape or to raise canopy right after bloom	Y	Good understory tree. For deeper, well-drained soils; slow-growing; yellow, orange & red fall color; fall fruit favored by birds.
20. Sumac, Smooth <i>Rhus glabra</i>	BEFW	3-10'	3-6'	S-PS	D	Fall	Bright red leaves	L	Sand, loam, clay, caliche, limestone, well-drained	Suckers more after mowing or burning	Y	Provides vivid red fall color for weeks in any weather. If the stem is winged, it is flameleaf sumac, if it isn't it is smooth sumac, the more aggressively suckering species. Food for bees, mammals and 20 species of birds.
21. Texas Persimmon <i>Diospyros texana</i>	BEW	10-15', can reach 35'	6-10'	S, PS	D	Bark year around; fruit summer to fall	Peeling bark; fragrant spring flowers	L	Loam, clay, caliche, limestone.	Prune for shape or to raise canopy.	Y	Good accent plant. Peeling bark is highly decorative, reminiscent of Crepe Myrtle. Fine textured, dark green leaves. Dioecious; fruit only on females. Fruits 1-2", shiny black when ripe; important food for birds, deer, other mammals; human edible too.
22. Wax Myrtle Southern Bayberry Candleberry <i>Morella cerifera</i> <i>Myrica cerifera</i> <i>Myrica cerifera</i> var. <i>pumila</i> <i>Myrica pusilla</i>	BE	6-12" Can reach 20'	4-10'	S-PS	E	Fall to Winter	Pale blue berries.	M-H	Sand, loam, clay. Poor drainage ok.	May be pruned to train into small multi-trunked tree, or left in shrub form.	Y	Excellent screen plant. Male & female (dioecious) plants. Aromatic leaves. Needs constant moisture until established, & may need supplemental water outside its natural range. Waxy berries used to make bayberry candles. Now considered one species (in genus <i>Morella</i>); formerly considered 2 different species depending on height (in genus <i>Myrica</i>). Attracts birds & butterflies.
Shrubs, Multibranched, woody stems up to 10', persist through winter												
23. American Beautyberry <i>Callicarpa americana</i>	BE Woods, especially low ground	3-6'	6'	PS-SH	D	Fall	Purple fruit/ yellow leaves	M	Sand, loam, clay, acid or calcareous	Do not prune	Y	Attractive berries in fall and winter. Prefers dependable moisture; good understory shrub. Provides food for wildlife.

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24. Autumn Sage Cherry Sage <i>Salvia greggii</i>	T Rocky soils of West TX	2-3'	2-3'	S	E	Spring- fall	White, red, pink or coral flowers	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone, well-drained	If leggy, cut back by 1/3 to 1/2	Y	1" long blooms; hummingbirds love them! If you keep snipping off the tips, it will bloom constantly spring-frost. Many varieties available.
25. Buttonbush <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	BEFW	6-12'	6-12'	PS-SH	D	June-Aug	White to pink flowers	L-M	Wetlands, clay, loam	Prune to shape	Y	Gather seeds in late summer or early fall before the heads dry and fall apart. Flowers are good bee food, seeds attract 25 species of birds.
26. Flame Acanthus <i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus var. wrightii</i>	T Rocky banks, floodplains in Edwards Plateau	3-5'	3-4'	S-PS	D	Summer- Fall	Red or orange flowers	VL	Well-drained	Cut back in half after first frost or before spring growth	Y	Can be used as a perennial hedge. Reseeds aggressively. Attracts hummingbirds & butterflies.
27. Skunkbush Sumac Fragrant Sumac <i>Rhus aromatica</i>	BEFW	To 3'	To 8'	S, PS	D	Spring to fall	Red berries (females only). Reddish/ orange fall foliage.	L	Sandy, gravelly, or other well- drained.	Prune for shape if desired, or leave <i>au naturel</i> .	Y	Crimson or reddish fruit; colorful fall foliage. Massed plants sometimes pruned for uniformity. Natural form soft, fairly dense. Completely non-poisonous, although leaves resemble small version of Poison Ivy. Excellent food & habitat for gamebirds, songbirds, large & small mammals.
28. Texas Lantana <i>Lantana urticoides Lantana horrida</i>	T Open areas, thickets, S Edwards Plateau and S	3-5'	4-5'	S	D	Summer- Fall	Orange and yellow flowers	VL	Well-drained	Prune in winter to keep from sprawling.	Y	Flowers begin yellow and turn orange. Gets thorny with age. Flowers attract butterflies; fruit attracts birds.
Flowering Plants, herbaceous annuals, biennials, and perennials												
29. Black-Eyed Susan <i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	BEFW	1-2'	1'	S-PS	A, P	May to Sept.	Yellow	L	Well drained sand, loam, clay.	Supplemental watering to encourage blooming.	Y	Long blooming with moderate watering, afternoon shade. True native easily grown from seed. Attracts birds & butterflies.

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30. Canada Goldenrod <i>Solidago canadensis</i>	BEFW	3'-6'	1'	S-PS	P	Fall	Yellow plumes of flowers near top of stem	M	Adapts to most well drained soils.	Height determined by soil fertility and moisture available.	Y	Valuable fall nectar source. Attracts birds, butterflies, bees. Spreads by rhizomes. Use only strong outer rhizomes when dividing. Moderate deer resistance.
31. Heartleaf Skullcap <i>Scutellaria ovata</i>	BE	1-2'	1-1.5'	PS, SH	SE	Spring, fall, winter.	Blue-violet flowers. Green winter foliage.	L	Shallow, rocky, loam.	Winter: thin, divide, transplant.	Y	Great foliage plant in cooler months; flowers in spring. Dormant in hottest months; returns & colonizes from fleshy roots and/or seeds. Pair with late spring plants such as <i>Salvia coccinea</i> , Turk's Cap, & Texas Lantana to maximize interest. Nectar source for butterflies & hummingbirds.
32. Horsemint Lemon Mint <i>Monarda citriodora</i>	BEFW	1-2'	9"	S, PS	A	Spring, summer	Unusual stacked whorls of lavender/pin k/white flowers	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone.	Summer: leave flowers/ seedheads on stalks for wildlife, or gather to dry for potpourri or seeds.	Y	Lightly fragrant flowers dry naturally on stalks; good for potpourri. Leaves lemony scented when rubbed or crushed; use raw or cooked for flavoring salads, cooked foods, tea. Self-sows generously. Attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.
33. Mexican Hat Prairie Coneflower <i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	BEFW	1-3'	1-2'	S, PS	E	Blooms May - Oct; winter rosette.	Flowers yellow or dark red w/ variable amounts of yellow.	L	Sand, loam, clay, caliche, limestone.	Thin, transplant in spring & fall. Cut back in fall to late Feb; leave winter rosette.	Y	Showy flowers. Best on dry side to prevent excessive, weak growth. May cut back in fall, leaving winter rosette, or in late Feb. May deadhead to reduce seeding, but doing so reduces food for wildlife. Attracts pollinators & granivorous birds; deer browse flowers.
34. Purple Coneflower <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	T	2-3'	1-2'	S, PS	D	Blooms April- Sept.	Pink or purple blooms; showy seedhead	M	Sand, loam, clay, limestone.	Spring: thin, transplant. Late Feb: prune to new growth.	Y	Popular & widely available in nurseries. In Texas, only native in NE corner; <i>E.</i> <i>angustifolia</i> , <i>E. atrorubens</i> & <i>E. pallida</i> are NTX natives, but not widely available. Long-lasting, 3" wide blooms. Nectar attracts butterflies & hummingbirds; song & gamebirds relish the seeds.

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35. Sunflower, Maximilian <i>Helianthus maximiliani</i>	BEFW	4-6'	3'	S-PS	P	Aug-Oct	Yellow flowers	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone; well-drained	Divide and replant every 3 years to keep under control.	Y	Grow among tall grasses or in the back of the garden. Leaves below blooms die back. Less moisture leads to smaller, but no less vigorous plants. Good for pollinators, seed for birds.
36. Turk's Cap <i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i> <i>var. drummondii</i>	T Woodlands in Rio Grande Plains, S Edwards Plateau	2-3'	3-5'	S-PS-SH	P	Late spring-fall	Red flowers	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone, moist	Prune back to ground in winter	Y	In NTX winters, may freeze to ground; very reliably returns from roots. Spreads aggressively, may also be used as tall flowering groundcover. Fruit & nectar for wildlife; attracts hummingbirds & large butterflies.
Grasses and Sedges, flat leaves with parallel veins												
37. Blue grama <i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	W	3-4", 12" in flower		S	P	Spring-Fall	Fine leaved turf	VL	Sand, loam, clay; calcareous; well-drained	Water occasionally or grow tall to encourage rhizomes	Y	Blue grama is a good meadow grass, has blue-ish cast to its seed heads. Often mixed with buffalograss to give extra cover. Fine leaves, seed heads look like eyelashes.
38. Bushy Bluestem <i>Andropogon glomeratus</i>	BEFW	2'-5'	2'-3'	S	P	Fall, Winter	Salmon-orange in fall.	M-H	Clay, loam, sand. Moist. Relatively sterile. Poor drainage OK.	Rake and/or cut to 6" in February.	Y	Handsome bunchgrass for moist, low-lying areas. Full sun and moisture essential. Attractive year-round. Good for erosion control. Plumes nice in dried flower arrangements. Sometimes mistakenly called "Brushy" Bluestem instead of "Bushy". Provides seeds & cover for birds & small mammals; occasionally browsed by deer.
39. Indiangrass <i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	BEFW	3-8'	2-4'	S-PS	P	Fall	Red/rust awns	L-M	Sand, loam, clay, limestone, poor drainage	Loves moist, rich soil, and watering	Y	Deep yellow flowers and blue-green blades make a nice garden accent or are nice in a moist swale with seep or Gulf muhly.

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40. Inland Sea Oats <i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i> <i>Uniola latifolia</i>	BEFW Along streams and in moist woods	2-4'	2-3'	PS-SH	P	Summer-Fall	Ivory seeds	L-M	Sand, loam, clay, moist, poorly drained ok	Cut back to 6" in February	Y	Graceful, drooping wheat-like seed heads; spreads freely by seed, can be used as a tall groundcover for woodland; good understory plant; prefers moist areas. Easily transplanted.
41. Little Bluestem <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	BEFW Prairies and woodland openings	2-5'	1-2'	S-PS	P	Fall	Copper leaves	L	Sand, loam, clay, limestone; well-drained	Cutting back optional, do not add compost	Y	Basic component of prairies. Lovely fall copper foliage form nice columnar clumps. Needs good drainage, little watering, & un-enriched soil.
42. Side Oats Grama <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	BEFW	1-3'	1-3'	S-PS	P	Summer-Fall	Red, yellow, orange flowers dangling from side	VL	Sand, loam, clay, limestone, igneous, well-drained	Mow once up to June and again in February	Y	State grass of Texas. Dangling oat-like seed heads on the side of the stem provide a nice texture in a garden. Good for meadows. Stoloniferous, rhizomatous grass. Seeds provide good bird food.
43. Switchgrass <i>Panicum virgatum</i>	BEFW	3'-6'	3'-5'	S, PS	P	Blooms Aug - Nov.	Reddish-purple, airy seed panicle.	M	Sandy, loams, clay, limestone-based.	Rake and/or cut to 6" in February.	Y	One of "Big Four" tallgrass prairie grasses. Upright form. good rust-colored winter accent; bluish to bluish-green in growing seasons. Dry to moist soils; poor drainage OK. Numerous cultivars. Seeds for songbirds and game birds. Cover and nesting material. Larval host for Delaware Skipper and Dotted Skipper. Numerous cultivars.
Groundcovers. Low growing plants that spread easily to cover large areas.												
44. Frogfruit <i>Phyla nodiflora</i> <i>Lippia nodiflora</i>	BEFW Low, moist disturbed areas	3-6"	2'+	S-PS	SE	Spring to fall	White flowers	L-M	Sand, loam clay, limestone, poorly drained ok	Cut back to 3" in February	Y	Spreads rapidly; small flower provides nectar for skippers, larval host plant for butterflies.
45. Pigeon Berry <i>Rivina humilis</i>	BEFW	to 18"	18"	PS-SH	P	Spring-Fall	White flowers/red berries	M	Sand, clay, loam, rocky with irrigation	Remove browned top after first frost	Y	Spreads rapidly; tolerates moist or dry soil. Attractive red berries are prized by birds.

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Vines, Climb trees and fences with tendrils or twining												
46. Coral Honeysuckle <i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>	BEFW Stream banks or hillside woods		6-12'	S-PS	SE	Feb-June, Fall	Red to yellow flowers	M	Any, poor drainage ok	Prune to direct and control growth	Y	Coral tubular blooms attract hummingbirds; berries attract birds. Much tamer than Japanese honeysuckle.
47. Crossvine <i>Bignonia capreolata</i>	T Moist woods SE and E TX		8-30'	S-PS-SH	E	Mar-May	Red to yellow flowers	L	Any, poor drainage ok	Prune to direct and control growth	Y	Tendrill vine attaches to wall; aggressive climber. Attracts hummingbirds.
48. Passion Flower <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	BE	6'	6-15'	S-PS	P	May-Aug	Lavender flowers	L-M	Sand, loam, well-drained	Prune to direct and control growth, cut back unwanted suckers	Y	Tendrill vine. Exotic-looking flower said to represent aspects of the Passion at Easter time. Host plant for several species of butterfly larvae. Fruit consumed by birds. Humans use for tea and medicine, as well as consuming fruit.
49. Trumpet Creeper <i>Campsis radicans</i>	BEFW	To 35'		S	P	June - Sept	Red, orange, yellow flowers in 3 - 4 in panicles.	L	Sandy, loams, clay, limestone- based, caliche.	Keep off buildings, roofs, etc. to prevent damage. Prune and/or mow to control suckers.	Y	Woody vine. Sap may be skin irritant. Attracts hummingbirds. Larval host for Plebian Sphinx. Vigorous climber, can damage roofing, wood, stone and brick. Can be extremely aggressive. Cultivars may be somewhat less aggressive, but hybridized with exotics.
50. Virginia Creeper <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	BEFW Along creeks, wooded areas		3-40'	S-PS-SH	D	Fall	Red or purple leaves	L	Any, poor drainage ok	Prune to direct and control growth	Y	Vigorous cover; good groundcover as well. Best foliage color & berry production in full sun. Many birds compete for the berries.

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Key											
Native Region¹											
B: Blackland Prairie, E: Eastern Cross Timbers, F: Fort Worth Prairie, W: Western Cross Timbers, T: Texas, but not North Texas											
X: Hybrid with native Texas parents											
Light²											
S: Sun (in full sunlight for 6 hours), PS: Part sun (in sunlight 2-6 hours or lightly shaded all day), SH: Shade (in the sun less than 2 hours per day)											
Evergreen³											
E: Evergreen, SE: Semi-Evergreen, D: Deciduous, P: Perennial											
Water⁴ Refers to the plant's water needs after establishment. All plants need more water the first 2 years.											
VL: Very Low (Water occasionally during very dry conditions, L: Low (Water thoroughly every 3-4 weeks if no rainfall)											
M: Medium (Water thoroughly every 2-3 weeks if no rainfall), H: High (Water thoroughly every 5-7 days if no rainfall)											
Wildlife⁵											
Y: Texas native plants provide greater wildlife value than hybrid, non-native and/or exotic plants.											
Flowers, leaves, nuts, seeds, and berries provide food for wildlife including butterflies, insects, birds and/or mammals.											
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