

# NATIVE LANDSCAPES FOR BIRDS

*Plant Knowledge*

# Symbol Key

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Sun Requirements	Water Requirements
 Shade	 Very Low
 Part Sun	 Low
 Full Sun	 Medium
	 High

# **Canopy/Shade Trees**

Typically grow greater than 25' and  
form a single trunk with greater than  
6" diameter

# Canopy/Shade Trees – Value to Birds

- Nesting habitat if foliage is dense enough; nest building materials
- Snags (upright dead wood) for cavity nesting
- Shelter for birds and other wildlife
- Leaf litter to support and provide shelter for ground foraging birds (and invertebrates that birds may eat)
- Food: seeds, nuts, fruit, invertebrates, foliage, sap, pollen, larval hosts, small vertebrates
- Support for vines

# Ash, White

*Fraxinus americana*

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High



Sally and Andy Wasowski  
[wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)

- Cavity nesting: woodpeckers, owls
- Fall winged seeds: cardinals, finches
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Mourning Cloak



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# Cedar, Eastern Red

*Juniperus virginiana*

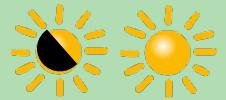


- Evergreen shelter
- Nesting material
- Fall/winter blue berries: Cedar Waxwing, American Robin
- Larval host: Hairstreak Butterflies



# Elm, Cedar

*Ulmus crassifolia*



- Good for nesting
- Winter seeds: finches, chickadees, native sparrows
- Spring buds: small birds
- Larval host: Question Mark, Comma, Mourning Cloak

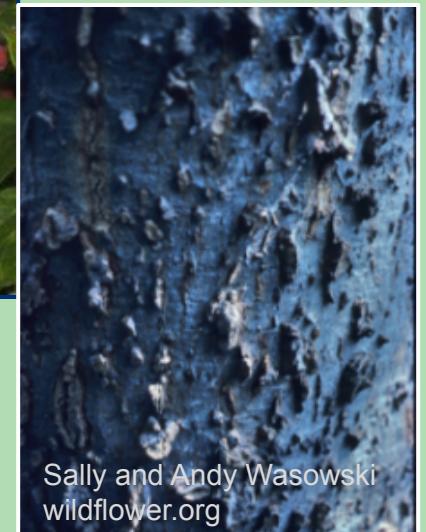
# Hackberry

*Celtis laevigata*

Sugarberry



- Good for cavity nesting
- Fall fleshy fruit high in carbs, fat, protein
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: several butterflies and moths



# Oak, Blackjack

*Quercus marilandica*



Meg Inglis

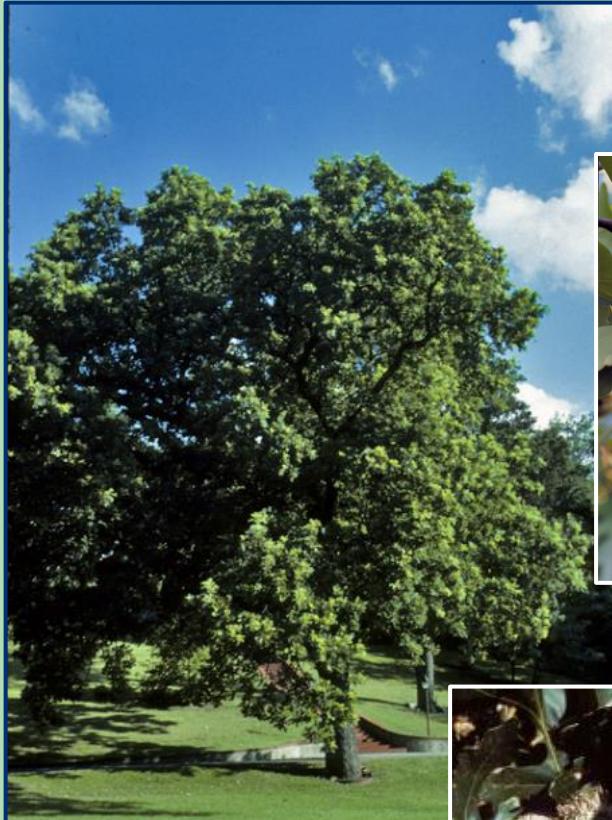
- Good for nesting
- Fall/winter acorns
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Horace's Duskywing, White M Hairstreak



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# Oak, Bur

*Quercus macrocarpa*



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- Good for nesting
- Fall/winter large acorns
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Horace's Duskywing, White M Hairstreak

# Oak, Chinkapin

*Quercus muehlenbergii*



- Fall/winter small acorns
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Gray Hairstreak



# Oak, Escarpment Live

*Quercus fusiformis*

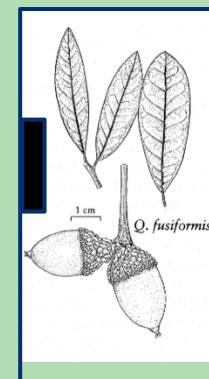


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Joseph A. Marcus

- Semi-evergreen shelter
- Good for cavity nesting
- Fall/winter acorns
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: many species



Flora of North America



Norman G. Flagg wildflower.org

# Oak, Post

*Quercus stellata*



- Good for nesting
- Provides shelter
- Fall/winter acorns
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Horace's Duskywing, Northern Hairstreak



# Oak, Shumard

*Quercus shumardii*



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- Good for nesting
- Provides shelter
- Fall/winter acorns
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Horace's Duskywing



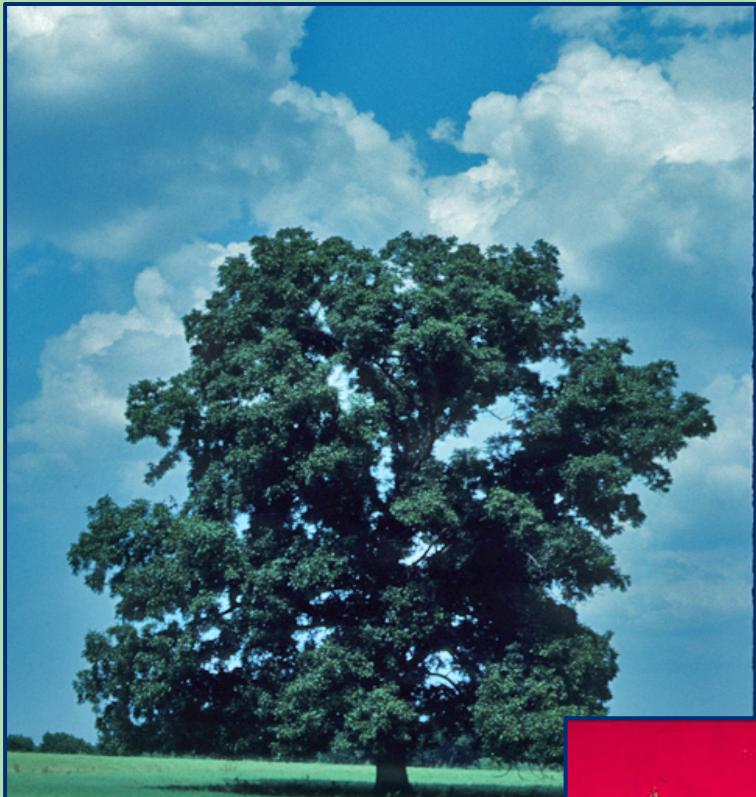
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# Pecan

*Carya illinoiensis*



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- Leaf litter
- Nest building materials
- Fall/winter thin shelled nuts
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: many species

# **Small/Ornamental Trees**

Typically grow 10' to 25'  
Single or multi-trunked

# **Small/Ornamental Trees Value to Birds**

- Nesting habitat if foliage is dense enough; nest building materials
- Potential thickets for shelter
- Shelter for understory movement and from weather
- Fledgling perches
- Nectar for birds and insects
- Food: seeds, nuts, fruit, invertebrates, foliage, pollen, larval hosts
- Support for vines

# Desert Willow

*Chilopsis linearis*



- Nesting materials for native bees
- Spring/summer nectar: hummingbirds, insects
- Fall/winter seeds: doves
- Larval host: White-winged Moth



Pam Williams wildflower.org



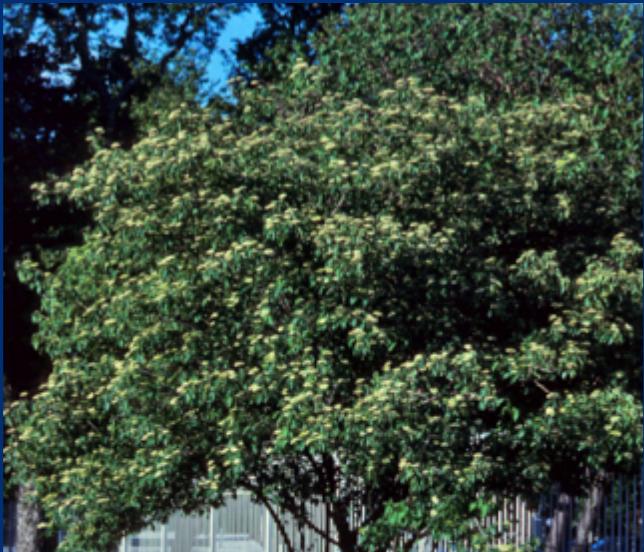
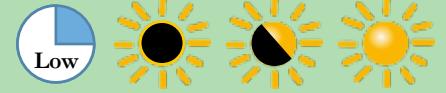
Kathy Saucier



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# Dogwood, Roughleaf

*Cornus drummondii*



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W. D. and Dolphia  
[Bransford wildflower.org](http://Bransford wildflower.org)

- Thicket nesting; shelter
- Spring/early summer nectar
- Fall white berries: 40 bird species
- Supports many insects
- Larval host: Spring Azure



Kathy Saucier

# Holly, Possumhaw

*Ilex decidua*



- Spring nectar: pollinators
- Supports other insects
- Late winter red berries
- Larval host: Dusky Blue Groundstreak, Paw-paw Sphinx Moth



Unknown NPSOT  
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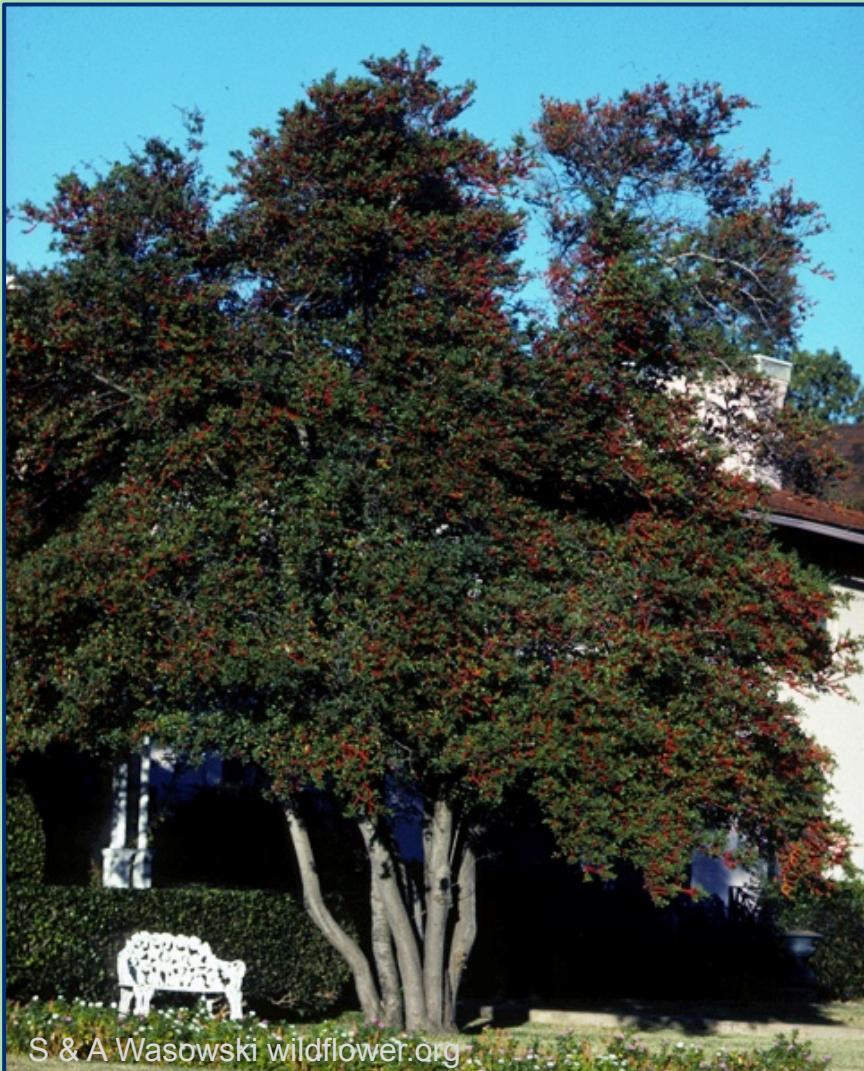
Sandra Fountain



Benny Simpson [wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)

# Holly, Yaupon

*Ilex vomitoria*



- Evergreen nesting, shelter
- Spring nectar: pollinators
- Supports other insects
- Late winter red berries: vireos, waxwings, bluebirds, sparrows
- Larval host: Henry's Elfin



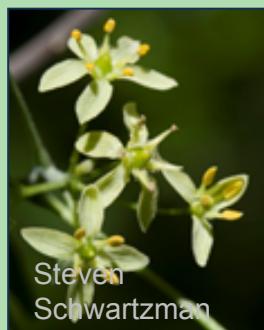
# Hoptree

*Ptelea trifoliata*

Wafer Ash



- Spring nectar: pollinators
- Supports other insects
- Fall seeds
- Larval host: Eastern Tiger and Giant Swallowtails



# Plum, Mexican

*Prunus mexicana*



Dwight Platt wildflower.org



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- Early spring nectar: pollinators
- Supports other insects
- Winter fruit: woodpeckers, vireos, thrushes, sparrows, orioles
- Larval host: Tiger Swallowtail, Cecropia Moth

# Redbud, Eastern

*Cercis canadensis* var. *canadensis*



- Early spring nectar: pollinators
- Supports other insects
- Fall seeds: goldfinches, quail
- Nesting materials and substrate: native bees, bumblebees
- Larval host: Henry's Elfin, Elfin butterflies



# Rusty Blackhaw

*Viburnum rufidulum*



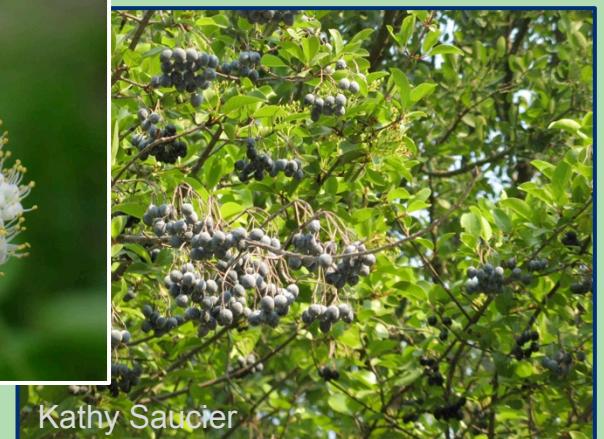
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Kathy Saucier



Sandy Fountain



Kathy Saucier

# Sumac, Smooth

*Rhus glabra*



- Summer nectar: pollinators
- Supports many insects
- Nesting materials: native bees
- Winter red berries: 30 bird species
- Larval host: Red Banded and Banded Hairstreaks



# Texas Persimmon

*Diospyros texana*

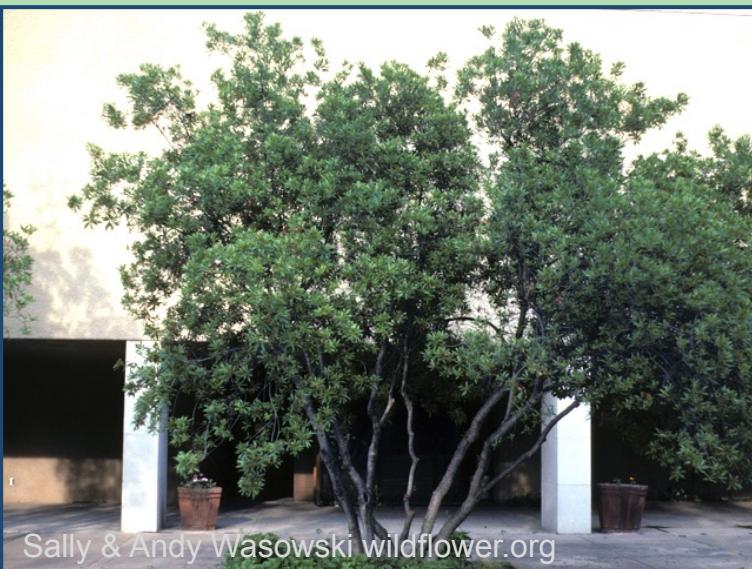


- Semi-evergreen cover
- Spring nectar: bees, wasps, butterflies, other invertebrates
- Late summer/early fall fruit: bluebirds, waxwings, warblers
- Larval host: Gray Hairstreak, Henry's Elfin

Cardinal with persimmon on beak

# Wax Myrtle

*Morella cerifera*



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- Evergreen cover
- Spring nectar: pollinators
- Winter pale blue waxy berries: 40 bird species
- Nectar and larval host: Banded and Red-banded Hairstreak

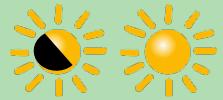


Will Cook  
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## Southern Bayberry, Candleberry



# **Shrubs**

Typically multi-trunked, 3' to 10'  
Woody stems persist through winter

# **Shrubs – Value to Birds**

- Nesting habitat if dense enough; nest building materials
- Thickets for shelter and cover
- Shelter for understory movement and from weather
- Fledgling perches
- Nectar for birds and insects
- Food: seeds, nuts, fruit, invertebrates, foliage, pollen, larval hosts
- Support for vines

# American Beautyberry

*Callicarpa americana*



- Early summer nectar: butterflies
- Long lasting fall/winter purple berries: mockingbirds, orioles, cardinals, others
- If berries remain till winter: Cedar Waxwings, Orange-crowned Warblers, towhees



# Autumn Sage

*Salvia greggii*



Benny Simpson wildflower.org



James Holmes

## Cherry Sage



- Spring through fall nectar: hummingbirds, pollinators
- Supports many insects
- Praying mantises lurk to catch butterflies



Page Lee wildflower.org

# Buttonbush

*Cephalanthus occidentalis*



Randy K. Pensabene



Jane Tillman



Carolyn Fannon  
wildflower.org

- Summer/early fall nectar: hummingbirds, pollinators
- Winter balls of seeds: ducks, waterbirds, 25 species of birds
- Larval host: Titan and Hydrangea Sphinx moths

# Flame Acanthus

*Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii*



- Summer/fall nectar: many invertebrates, hummingbirds
- Larval host: Janais Patch, Texan Crescentspot



# Skunkbush Sumac

*Rhus aromatica*



## Fragrant Sumac



- Spring/early summer nectar: birds, pollinators
- Nesting materials: carpenter bees
- Early summer/winter red berries: finches, thrushes, flickers, crows, phoebes
- Larval host: Red-banded Hairstreak



# Texas Lantana

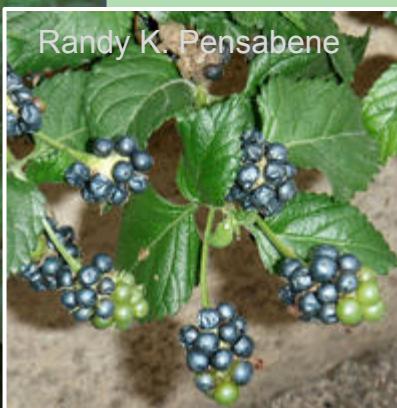
*Lantana urticoides*



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- Spring/fall nectar: hummingbirds, pollinators
- Late summer/fall round, fleshy dark berries: mockingbirds, kinglets, robins, cardinals



# Flowering Plants

*Perennials*: have a life-cycle of more than 2 years;  
may be herbaceous or woody-stemmed

*Biennials*: grow vegetatively 1st year,  
flower and fruit 2nd year before dying

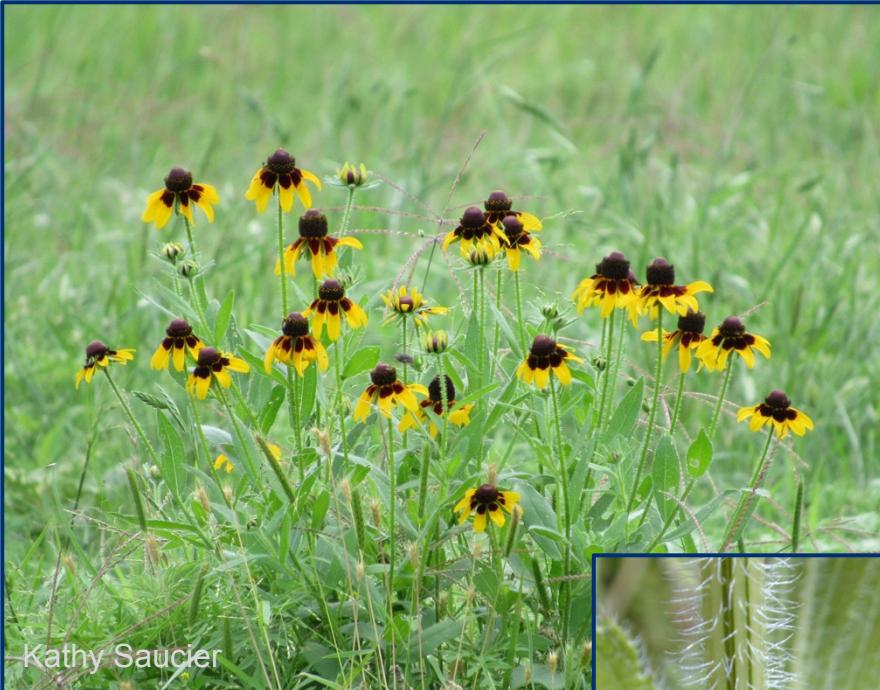
*Annuals*: live only one growing season

# **Flowering Plants – Value to Birds**

- Ground level nesting and shelter for some birds
- Nectar
- Food: seeds, fruit, invertebrates, foliage, pollen, larval hosts

# Black-eyed Susan

*Rudbeckia hirta*



- Fall nectar source: insects, bees, butterflies
- Winter seeds: goldfinches
- Larval host: Gorgone Checkerspot, Bordered Patch



# Canada Goldenrod

*Solidago canadensis / S. altissima*

Tall Goldenrod



Harry Rose Flickr Creative Commons

- Shelter for birds
- Fall nectar source
- Visited by at least 380 insect species
- Winter seeds: chickadees, woodpeckers
- Larval host: 115 species of Lepidoptera



James G. Holmes



Andreas Rockstein Flickr Creative Commons

# Heart-leaf Skullcap

*Scutellaria ovata*



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- Spring nectar source: hummingbirds, butterflies
- Gray green fall/winter foliage: shelter for some birds, invertebrates



R. W. Smith wildflower.org



Randy K. Pensabene

# Horsemint

*Monarda citriodora*

Lemon Mint



- Spring/summer nectar: hummingbirds and insects
- Special value to native bees
- Fall seeds: seed-eating birds



# Mexican Hat

*Ratibida columnifera*

Prairie Coneflower



- Summer/winter nectar: bees, butterflies, other insects
- Winter seeds
- Special value to native bees



# Purple Coneflower

*Echinacea purpurea*



- Summer nectar
- Fall seeds: song and gamebirds



# Sunflower, Maximilian

*Helianthus maximiliani*



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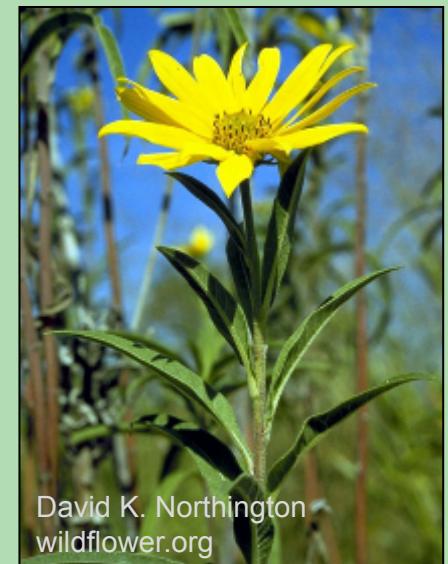
- Provides shelter
- Summer/fall nectar: pollinators
- Winter seeds: numerous birds
- Supports many insects
- Special value to native bees



David K. Northington  
wildflower.org



Wildflower Center Staff



David K. Northington  
wildflower.org

# Turk's Cap

*Malvaviscus arboreus* var. *drummondii*



- Summer/fall nectar source: hummingbirds, insects
- Fall red fruit: birds

# **Grasses and Sedges**

Grasses: plants with jointed stems,  
slender sheathing leaves, and  
flowers in spikelets

Sedges: grasslike plants with triangular stems

# **Grasses and Sedges**

## **Value to Birds**

- Ground level nesting
- Nest building materials
- Ground level shelter for some birds
- Food: grass seeds, sedge achenes, larval hosts

# Blue Grama

*Bouteloua gracilis*



Sally and Andy Wasowski wildflower.org

- Ground level shelter
- Nest building material
- Supports insects
- Winter seeds: seed-eating birds
- Larval host: skippers



Elinor Crank wildflower.org

# Bushy Bluestem

*Andropogon glomeratus*



Staff  
[wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)

- Ground level shelter
- Nest building material
- Supports insects
- Winter seeds: prairie chickens, field sparrows
- Larval host: skippers, satyrs



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[wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)



Joseph A. Marcus  
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Carolyn Fannon  
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# Indiangrass

*Sorghastrum nutans*

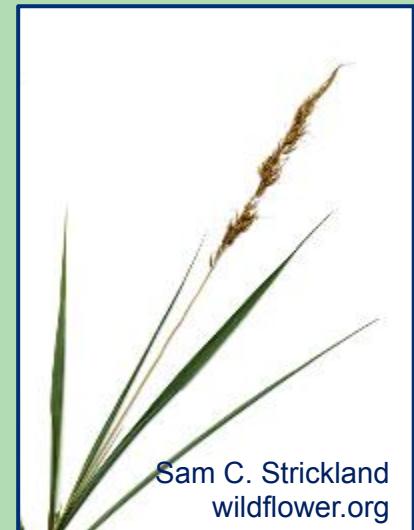


Sally and Andy Wasowski [wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)

- Nesting habitat and shelter: bobwhite, dove, sparrows
- Winter seeds: seed-eating birds
- Larval and nectar host: Pepper-and-Salt Skipper butterfly



Janice Lynn  
[wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)



Sam C. Strickland  
[wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)

# Inland Sea Oats

*Chasmanthium latifolium*



Peggy Romfh wildflower.org

- Nesting material
- Winter seeds: sparrows, juncos, cardinals
- Larval host: Pepper-and-Salt, Bells Roadside, Bronzed Roadside Skippers



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# Little Bluestem

*Schizachyrium scoparium*



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- Nesting material; shelter for birds
- Nesting material/structures for native bees
- Fall/winter fluffy white seeds: sparrows and juncos
- Larval host: several butterflies

# Sideoats Grama

*Bouteloua curtipendula*



Sam C. Strickland [wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)

- Ground level shelter
- Nest building material
- Nesting material/structures for native bees
- Winter seeds: dove, quail, turkey
- Larval host: several butterflies and moths



Joseph A. Marcus [wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org)



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# Switchgrass

*Panicum virgatum*



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- Ground/mid-level shelter
- Nest building material
- Fall/winter seeds: dove, juncos, sparrows, longspurs, game birds
- Small mammals eat seed and are food for predatory birds
- Larval host: several butterflies



Carolyn Fannon wildflower.org



John Hilty  
illinoiswildflowers.info



Sam Strickland  
wildflower.org

# **Groundcovers**

Low-growing or trailing  
perennials, vines, or shrubs

# **Groundcovers – Value to Birds**

- Ground level nesting and nest building materials
- Ground level shelter for some birds and invertebrates
- Nectar
- Food: seeds, fruits, larval hosts
- May be larval host plants

# Frogfruit

*Phyla nodiflora*



- Spring/summer nectar: pollinators
- Larval host: Phaon Crescent, Buckeye, White Peacock



# Pigeon Berry

*Rivina humilis*



- Ground level shelter
- Small mammals
- Nectar source on and off during year
- Bright red berries on and off during year: mockingbirds, thrashers, cardinals, thrushes



# **Vines**

Plants with a growth habit of trailing or climbing stems or runners

## **Vines – Value to Birds**

- Nesting and nest building materials
- Shelter for birds and invertebrates
- Nectar
- Food: fruit/berries, larval host

# Coral Honeysuckle

*Lonicera sempervirens*

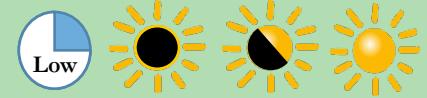


- Evergreen shelter
- Fall fruit red berry: finches, thrushes, robin
- Spring/summer nectar: hummingbirds, house finches, insects
- Larval host: Spring Azure, Snowberry Clearwing Moth

# Crossvine

*Bignonia capreolata*

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- Semi-evergreen shelter
- Spring nectar: hummingbirds, bees, butterflies

# Passion Flower

*Passiflora incarnata*

Passion Vine



- Large yellow fall fruit: birds
- Spring through early fall nectar: birds, butterflies
- Larval host: Gulf Fritillary, and many others



# Trumpet Creeper

*Campsis radicans*



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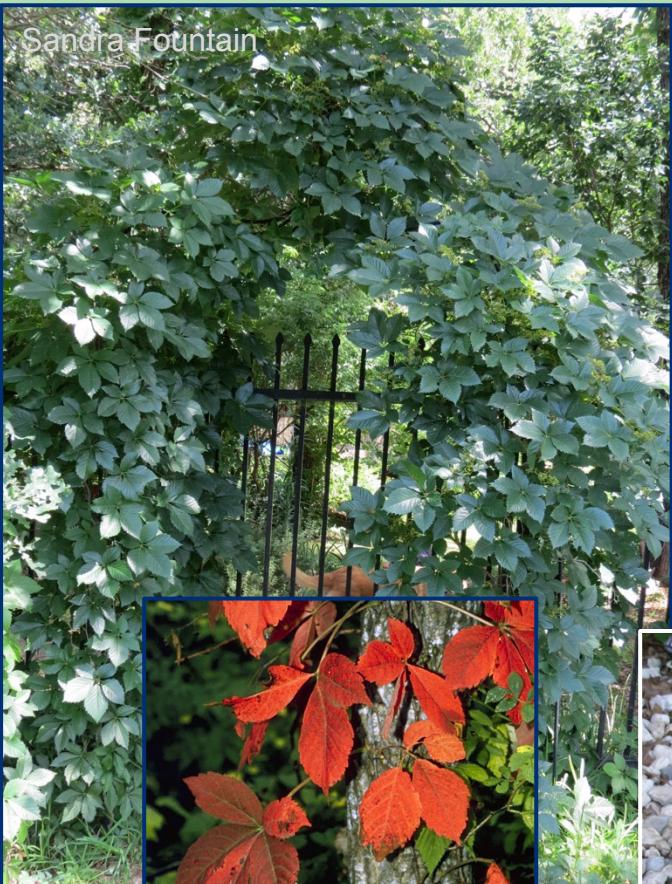
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# Virginia Creeper

*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*



- Shelter and nesting for birds
- Fall/winter black, blue berry: chickadees, nuthatches, swallows, catbirds, finches
- Foliage color change: attracts fruit eaters
- Attracts leaf-cutting bees
- Larval host: Virginia Creeper Sphinx Moths

# Invasive Plants

- Change soil chemistry
  - Example: Chinese Tallow can affect amphibian tadpole survival
  - <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/ece3.857>
- Reduce plant diversity
  - Example: Chinese Tallow shows reduced herbivore loads vs native trees so can outcompete  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11829-010-9105-4>
- May compete with natives for water and nutrient resources
- Can be toxic to birds
  - Example: Nandina berries
  - <http://ar.audubon.org/news/nandina-berries-kill-birds>

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