

Bird-Friendly Gardens



By: Janine Schutt

Why are backyard habitats so important?

According to Audubon,
314 of the 800 species
of birds in the U.S. are
at risk of extinction.

Causes include:

- climate change
- habitat loss
- pesticides and other chemicals
- competition with non-native species



Male western bluebird, once a common western Washington species, is now an uncommon visitor from eastern WA.

If all homeowners created bird-friendly backyards, it would have an impact.



What makes a garden bird-friendly?



- Shelter from predators
- Plants that produce food
- Water source
- Suitable nesting areas

Attractive, but not bird-friendly!



www.gardeningblog.net/2009/05/28/pictures-of-my-front-yard/

Attractive and bird-friendly!



<http://blog.gardenmediagroup.com/2012/09/for-love-of-birds-in-your-backyard.html>

Moving water is irresistible to birds

A water feature can be as elaborate as this...



<http://blog.northerngardener.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/wildlife-pond.jpg>

...or as simple as this!



Swainson's thrush on a stopover during its fall migration.

Stand alone bird baths belong in every garden



<http://gardenlandscaping.photos/ideas/preview/36158/birdbathflowergardenpictures.html>



Chestnut-backed Chickadee

Birds need water, especially in summer



Papa and Junior Pileated Woodpeckers



Female Wilson's Warbler

Native plants are essential in the bird garden

“Washington native plants are those species that occur or historically occurred within the state boundaries before European contact based upon the best available scientific and historical documentation.”

-- Washington Native
Plant Society



Ocean Spray

Why are native plants so important?

Native plants provide the following necessities for wildlife:

- Food: insects, caterpillars, seeds, and nectar
- Shelter: protection for nests and roosting birds from predators and inclement weather
- Nesting: materials needed for nest building, safe locations, and appropriate food for nestlings



Black-capped chickadee
with a woolly bear caterpillar



Rufous hummingbird on nest

Problems with exotic plants (not native to North America) in the bird garden

- Exotics are sometimes invasive and degrade the diversity of the natural ecosystem.
- Exotics can introduce diseases to native plant species.
- Exotics do not attract or sustain sufficient numbers of insects and caterpillars, which are the primary food source for most birds.
- Exotics sometimes require wasteful watering and chemicals which can be harmful to birds.



Male bushtit with a worm



Hutton's vireo with a beetle

Woodbrook Native Plant Nursery near Gig Harbor



Native Plant Resources

[Why Plant Native?](#)

[Availability & Pricing](#)

[Our Newest Arrivals](#)

[Plant Descriptions](#)

[Best Growing Conditions](#)

[Native Plant Photos](#)

5919 78th Ave. NW
Gig Harbor, WA
98335

www.woodbrooknativeplantnursery.com

Local birds that eat berries

- Band-tailed Pigeon
- Pileated Woodpecker
- Flycatchers
- Vireos
- Steller's Jay
- Chickadees
- Kinglets
- Thrushes
- Cedar Waxwing
- Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped Warblers
- Western Tanager
- Sparrows
- Grosbeaks
- Blackbirds



Cedar Waxwings

Native deciduous trees that birds love

- Pacific dogwood
- Western mountain ash
- Cascara
- Pacific crabapple
- Garry oak



Cascara

[http://science.halleyhosting.com/nature/basin/5petal/
buckthorn/rhamnus/purshiana/purshiana1b.jpg](http://science.halleyhosting.com/nature/basin/5petal/buckthorn/rhamnus/purshiana/purshiana1b.jpg)



Pacific Crabapple

<http://nativeplantspnw.com/pacific-crabapple-malus-fusca/>

Indian Plum



http://www.nwplants.com/business/catalog/oem_cer.html

Serviceberry



http://www.nwplants.com/business/catalog/ame_aln.html

Snowberry



<http://www.lhseeds.com/symphoricarpos-albus-common-snowberry/>

Native shrubs that attract hummingbirds and produce berries for other birds



Female rufous hummingbird sipping nectar from a red-flowering currant.

- Red-flowering currant
- Indian plum
- Salmonberry
- Red elderberry
- Oregon grape
- Dogwood
- Evergreen huckleberry
- Red huckleberry
- Serviceberry
- Snowberry

Western Washington's Hummingbirds



Anna's Hummingbird



Rufous Hummingbird



Plant a hummingbird garden!



<http://www.network54.com/Forum/439743/thread/1342287650/1/Hummer+garden+pics>

Favorite Hummingbird Perennials and Shrubs

- Columbine*
- Coral bells
- Crocosmia
- Foxglove*
- Penstemon*
- Red hot poker
- Honeysuckle*
- Monkeyflower*
- Fuchsia
- Cape fuchsia
- Hyssop
- Paintbrush*

* = native species



Female rufous hummingbird
sipping nectar from hyssop



Male Anna's hummingbird
sipping nectar from Indian paintbrush

Western Columbine



Penstemon



More Favorite Hummingbird Perennials and Shrubs

- Cardinal Flower
- Catmint
- Hosta
- Salvia
- Bee balm
- Weigela



www.kiksi.lv/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/WeigelaRed-Prince.jpg



Red prince weigela

Rufous hummingbird
sipping nectar from a
Jacob Cline bee balm

“Fan Scarlet” Cardinal Flower (Lobelia)



<http://www.perennialresource.com/variety.php?ID=LOBFS>

“Walker’s Low” Catmint



<https://www.grimmsgardens.com/shop/walkers-low-catmint/>

The Ultimate Hummingbird Attractor: “Vermillionaire” Cuphea Hybrid (Firecracker Plant)



Female Anna's Hummingbird

Hardy fuchsias are hummingbird favorites



Fuchsia Garden at Point Defiance Park in Tacoma.

Hanging fuchsia baskets are hummingbird magnets



Hummingbirds love these fuchsias!



Caledonia



Speciosa



Gartenmeister



Cardinal



Hermeina



Whiteknight Pearl



Zulu King

Boliviana Alba Fuchsia



Leave the snags!



- Add nutrients to the soil
- Contain millions of insects, providing meals for birds
- Critical habitat for about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the breeding birds in western coniferous forests



Red-breasted Sapsucker

Kitsap's Cavity Nesters...

- Wood duck
- Hooded Merganser
- American Kestrel
- Barn Owl
- Western Screech-Owl
- Northern Pygmy-Owl
- Barred Owl
- Northern Saw-Whet Owl
- Red-breasted Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Pileated Woodpecker



Male Downy Woodpecker

...Kitsap's Cavity Nesters

- Purple Martin
- Tree Swallow
- Violet-green Swallow
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Chestnut-backed Chickadee
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Bewick's Wren
- House Wren
- Pacific Wren
- Western Bluebird



Male Tree Swallow

Add a nest box to the garden



- Provide nest boxes that are species specific and simulate a natural cavity.



Chestnut-backed chickadee nest

- Only install a functional nest box, not one that is decorative.



Avoid using pesticides and other chemicals

- Pesticides kill many birds' primary food source, especially needed for feeding their young.
- Many pesticides can harm or even kill birds.
- Pesticides kill important pollinators, such as bees, beetles, butterflies, and moths.
- Hummingbirds need protein in addition to nectar and will not stay in an area that has no insects on which to feed.



<http://www.prbka.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/pesticide-free-Photo-P-Perry.jpg>

- Use compost and organic fertilizer in the garden instead of chemical fertilizers that can damage the environment by killing microorganisms in the soil and polluting natural water sources.

Keep cats indoors!!!



AP Photo via The Herald and News / Ron Winn

According to the U.S. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, cats kill an estimated 1.4 to 3.7 billion birds and 7 to 20 billion small mammals annually in the U.S.



The view is
better from
inside!



The End!



Immature Male Red-breasted Nuthatch