

BUILDING AN ECO-FRIENDLY BACKYARD

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO ECOLOGICALLY AND ETHICALLY ATTRACTING NATIVE BIRDS, BEES, & BUTTERFLIES

THINK GREENER

The easiest way to create a more wildlife and plant-friendly yard is to make simple switches to greener products. Reducing your use of, or using naturally-derived herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers can aid nature, protect water, and support ground protection.

You can also make a home compost pile!

Simply add a 3'x3'x3' or larger bin to your backyard, fill it with two parts brown materials (woods, straw, dead leaves, etc.) and one part greens (grass clippings, veggie, or fruit scraps, etc.). Keep the area moist and turn the pile occasionally to break down materials. When it looks and smells like rich soil, your compost is ready to feed your garden and plants!

ADD YOUR OWN NESTING BOX

Just like the bird boxes in the town forest, adding a bird box to your own backyard can help bring birds and their young into home communities!

Different birds need various shapes, sizes, roof styles, and openings on their houses. Those looking to put up a nest box are encouraged to do a little extra research on houses specific to species or buying a house from a reputable source.

For further information, try the National Wildlife Federation's official nest box page: <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Young/Nesting-Box>

BUILD A BATH

Try adding a birdbath or even a bee bath into your garden or backyard. For birdbaths - try choosing something sturdy, washable, and 1-2" deep. You can even try a heated birdbath for birds that winter in Massachusetts. To DIY a bee-bath, add marble or stones to a 1-2" deep dish until it fills the surface area to the edges, then fill with water. This will give bees a safe place to hydrate in between caring for your garden flowers!

PLANT NATIVE

Planting native flowering plants, shrubs, and trees in home gardens and backyards is beneficial to your garden's aesthetic beauty and the surrounding wildlife and ecosystems! Many New England native shrubs, trees, and flowering plants are incredibly useful and help attract birds, bees, and butterflies into the view of your backyard. For more information, visit

<https://gegearlab.weebly.com/plant-list.html>

Plant these to help support birds & bees:



Wild Bergamot
(*Monarda fistulosa*)



Blue Lobelia
(*Lobelia siphilitica*)

Butterfly milkweed
(*Asclepias tuberosa*)



Common Blue Violet
(*Viola sororia*)

Golden Alexander
(*Zizia aurea*)



Common Blackberry
(*Rubus allegheniensis*)

LEAVE THINGS A LITTLE WILD

Leave a portion of your backyard slightly more "unkempt" than the rest of your lawn and garden. Piles of leaf litter, logs, long grass, and other excess wood or twigs provide a great micro-habitat for worms, snails, small mammals, and amphibians extremely beneficial to your soil and overall yard health.