



Organic Newsletter

Spring Edition, 2012

Gardening for the Birds!

Many people enjoy the colors and the songs that wild birds bring to their yards, but they are also important to the environment. Birds eat large amounts of insects, help to disperse plant seeds and are also thought to be indicators of the health of the environment.

To make your yard a more bird-friendly setting there are four requirements that birds need to thrive- shelter, nesting sites, water, and food.

Having adequate shelter provides our feathered friends safety from predators and from the elements, especially in the winter. When planning to add plants to your landscape, try to create a layered effect by incorporating tall trees (deciduous and evergreen), shrubs, perennials and ornamental grasses.

Another way to create shelter for birds is by creating a brush pile. By piling different size branches in a sheltered (and unobtrusive) area, it will create places for birds to perch and also provide some shelter during storms.



Nesting sites, the second necessity for attracting birds to your yard, is related to the shelter aspect. Different birds have different nesting requirements and their sites can range from conifers, deciduous trees to moderately branched shrubs.

Having large trees provides nesting sites in the intersections of large branches as well as cavities in the trunk.

Shrubs that are not too dense or thin can provide a three-way fork to support a nest. So again, having a layered landscape will help attract different types of wild birds.



A toddler was found chewing on a slug.
After the initial surge of disgust the parent said,
"Well . . . What does it taste like?"
"Worms," was the reply.

The next requirement, water, satisfies two needs of birds, bathing and drinking. To select or create a water feature for the birds, follow nature's example, the puddle. One option to provide birds



with water is placing a shallow bowl at ground level. If deciding to use a commercially produced birdbath look for one that is only about two inches deep at the center

and slopes gently. Glazed birdbaths may be too slippery and could possibly break over the winter. Adding stones or sticks to the birdbath creates perches for birds to use so they can drink without getting wet.

Placement of your water feature is also important. If possible place in a shady area to keep the water cool, as well as trying to make sure it's a safe distance from nearby brush that could hide a cat ready to pounce.

Birds also enjoy the sight and sound of moving water, so adding a drip mechanism or having a waterfall will also help to attract them.

Fun Fact:

Spice it up!

Saffron, one of the most expensive spices in the world comes from the red thread-like stigmas of *Crocus sativus*, the saffron crocus. It can take up 80,000 crocus plants (or 240,000 stigmas) to make one pound of saffron! In ancient times, the Greeks and Romans used it to perfume their baths as well as its orange-yellow color making it a useful dye.



The final requirement food, can be satisfied by plants as well as a bird feeder. Selecting a range of plants to provide food at different times can keep birds supplied through the winter. Another way to provide food for wild birds is by leaving leaf litter in your garden beds and under shrubs. While adding organic material to the soil, this creates a haven for insects, another large source of food for birds.

Below is a list of perennials and grasses that provide food for wild birds:

Perennials:

- Aster (*Aster spp.*)
- Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*)
- Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia spp.*)
- Garden Mum (*Dendranthema x grandiflora*)



- Columbine (*Aquilegia spp.*)
- Coneflowers (*Echinacea spp.*)
- Coral Bells (*Heuchera spp.*)
- Coreopsis (*Coreopsis spp.*)
- Foxglove (*Digitalis spp.*)
- Hyssop (*Agastache spp.*)
- Sunflowers (*Helianthus spp.*)

Grasses:

- Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)
- Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Prairie Dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*)
- Switch Grass (*Panicum virgatum*)

Here are some trees and shrubs that are great for birds:

Mulberries (*Morus species*)

- Deciduous tree
- Season: Summer fruiting
- Description: Medium-sized trees, 30 to 60 feet high. Fallen fruit messy: avoid planting near sidewalks or car parking areas.
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Robins, waxwings, cardinals, numerous other songbirds.
- Also provides: Nest sites

Serviceberries (*Amelanchier species*)

- Season: Summer fruiting
- Description: Medium-sized trees, 25 to 60 feet high. Produce masses of white or pinkish flowers in spring. Reddish berries in summer.
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Robins, waxwings, cardinals, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, others.
- Also provides: Nest sites.

Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)

- Deciduous tree
- Season: Fall fruiting
- Description: Excellent choice for birds and people. Well-known ornamental tree, to 40 feet high. Attractive white, pink, or red flowers in spring. Scarlet berries in fall.
- Food type: Fruit.
- Attracts: Robins, bluebirds, thrushes, catbirds, cardinals, tanagers, and grosbeaks, many others.
- Also provides: Nest sites

Crabapples (*Malus species*)

- Deciduous tree
- Season: Fall fruiting; winter-persistent fruits
- Description: Medium-sized trees, with attractive blossoms in spring. Choose a variety with small fruits (easier for birds to swallow).
- Food type: Flower buds, flowers, fruit, seeds
- Attracts: Robins, bluebirds, thrushes, catbirds, cardinals, waxwings, Pine Grosbeaks, finches, many others.
- Also provides: Nest sites, cover



White oak (*Quercus alba*)

- Deciduous tree
- Season: Fall fruiting; winter-persistent fruits
- Description: Large tree. Produces acorns every year, unlike other oaks.
- Food type: Acorns
- Attracts: Woodpeckers, jays, Wild Turkeys, grouse, Wood Ducks, others.
- Also provides: Nest sites, cover

Coniferous Trees

Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

- Coniferous tree
- Season: Fall fruiting, winter persistent fruit
- Description: Attractive cone-shaped tree, usually grows 50 to 90 feet tall. Fleshy, pale blue, berry-like cones borne on female trees only.
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Waxwings and others
- Also provides: Excellent nest sites and cover

Spruces (*Picea species*)

- Coniferous tree
- Season: Fall fruiting, winter persistent fruit
- Description: Often large trees, may grow up to 150 feet tall.

- Food type: Seed-bearing cones. Its evergreen needles are a good source of insects in early spring.
- Attracts: Crossbills and other seed-eaters in fall and winter. Migrating warblers search for insects in spring.
- Also provides: Nest sites, cover

Shrubs

Northern bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*)

- Shrub
- Season: Fall fruiting, winter persistent fruits
- Description: Semi-evergreen shrub produces fragrant, waxy, silver-gray berries, which stay on the plant year-round.
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Tree Swallows (especially wintering), catbirds, bluebirds, many others.
- Also provides: Nest sites, cover

Nannyberry, arrowwood (*Viburnum* species)

- Deciduous shrub
- Season: Fall fruiting, some fruits are winter persistent.
- Description: Large genus of easy-to-grow shrubs. White flowers in spring. Produce red, yellow, blue or black berries.
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Robins, bluebirds, thrushes, catbirds, cardinals, finches, waxwings, others.
- Also provides: Nest sites, cover



Winterberry (holly) (*Ilex verticillata*)

- Deciduous shrub
- Season: Fall fruiting, winter persistent fruits
- Description: Hardy shrub, tolerant of wet conditions. Scarlet berries are important food for winter resident birds. Berries borne on female plants only—for best results plant group several female plants with at least one male plant (your nursery will label it as such).
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Robins, bluebirds, waxwings, others.
- Also provides: Cover

Red-osier dogwood, gray dogwood, and others (*Cornus* species)

- Deciduous shrub
- Season: Fall fruiting
- Description: Hardy shrub. Fruit with high fat content provides important food for migrating songbirds in fall.
- Food type: Fruit
- Attracts: Robins, bluebirds, thrushes, catbirds, vireos, kingbirds, juncos, cardinals, warblers, Wild Turkey, grouse, others.
- Also provides: Nest sites, cover

Staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*)

- Deciduous shrub/small tree
- Season: Fall fruiting, winter persistent fruits
- Description: Brilliant red foliage in fall. Spikey clusters of hairy red fruits
- Food type: Fruit, seeds
- Attracts: Robins, bluebirds, thrushes, catbirds, cardinals, chickadees, starlings, Wild Turkey, Pileated Woodpecker, many others.
- Tends to be too open for nest sites or cover

Source for plants: Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Organically Grown



Scrambled Eggs with Leeks, Fava Beans, Crispy Breadcrumbs, and Parmesan

INGREDIENTS

Crispy breadcrumbs:

- 1 1/2 cups coarsely torn French bread
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Fine sea salt

Eggs:

- 1 cup peeled fresh fava beans or frozen (double-peeled)
- 12 large eggs (preferably organic)
- 1/2 cup crème fraîche or sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter
- 2 cups chopped leeks (white and pale green parts only; from 2 large)
- Wedge of Parmesan cheese

PREPARATION

For crispy breadcrumbs:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place bread in medium bowl. Drizzle oil over, tossing to coat. Scatter bread pieces on small rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle lightly with sea salt. Bake until bread is golden brown, stirring often, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool on sheet. **DO AHEAD:** *Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Rewarm 3 minutes in 350°F oven before using.*

For eggs:

Cook fava beans in medium saucepan of boiling salted water until tender, about 14 minutes. Drain. Whisk eggs, crème fraîche, and 1/2 teaspoon sea salt in large bowl to blend.

Melt butter in heavy large skillet over low heat. Add leeks. Sauté until tender but not brown, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle lightly with sea salt. Mix in fava beans. Increase heat to medium-high. Add egg mixture. Stir with heatproof spatula until eggs are almost set but still creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. Season with pepper.

Transfer egg mixture to platter. Sprinkle with crispy breadcrumbs. Grate Parmesan cheese over and serve.

Note: We recommend using certified organic ingredients, when available, in all recipes to maximize flavors and nutrition while minimizing your risk of exposure to pesticides, chemicals and preservatives.

~*~

*Wishing that every single day
blooms with happiness for you!*

~The Organically Green Team

~*~

*"I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils."*

- William Wordsworth

Services for 2012:

We offer the following services to help increase the enjoyment and beauty of your property:

Tree / Shrub:

- ❖ Shrub & Tree Spraying / Fertilization Programs
- ❖ Integrated Pest Management
- ❖ Soil Restoration
- ❖ Plant and Soil Stimulation Program
- ❖ Deep Root Feeding
- ❖ Root Growth Enhancement
- ❖ Mature Tree Restoration
- ❖ Air Spading
- ❖ Radial Trenching
- ❖ Vertical Mulching
- ❖ Anti-Desiccant Spraying
- ❖ General Tree and Shrub Maintenance Removal

Turf:

- ❖ Lawn Renovation
- ❖ Fertilization
- ❖ Overseeding
- ❖ Core Aeration
- ❖ Estate / Property Purification

Organic Pest Control:

- ❖ Flying Insect
- ❖ Deer / Geese
- ❖ Rodent Repellent
- ❖ Organic Tick & Flea Control

We also offer Outdoor Holiday Décor.

Call (631) 467-7999 for a free estimate!

