

# Plants for Birds



By replacing conventional landscaping with gardens featuring native plants, we can restore vital habitats and create spaces for birds within our backyards. Exotic plants disrupt ecosystems because many native insects can not forage on them. Birds rely on these insects to feed their young. For example, a single pair of chickadees must find 6,000-9,000 caterpillars to raise a nest of young. Without native plants, both insect and bird populations suffer.

There are 5 main native plant food groups for birds: larval hosts, nectar-producing, berry-producing, nut-producing, and seed-producing. To provide food for a variety of species, and to provide natural food sources all year round, include plants from all 5 of these groups.

An important aspect of gardening for birds is developing habitat layers. Birds nest, feed, bathe, etc. at various heights within natural spaces. Many backyards include large trees and small shrubs or flowers (>3 feet), but they are often missing mid-story level plants. Add plants of all heights and sizes to create ideal bird habitat, and also include a mixture of deciduous and evergreen species to provide cover all year round.

## Larval Hosts

<b>Oak species</b> <i>Quercus spp.</i>	<b>Butterfly Weed</b> <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
<b>Button Bush</b> <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	<b>Texas Black Persimmon</b> <i>Diospyros texana</i>
<b>Flameleaf Sumac</b> <i>Rhus lanceolata</i>	<b>Sideoats Grama</b> <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>
<b>Smooth Sumac</b> <i>Rhus glabra</i>	

## Nectar-producing

<b>Red Yucca</b> <i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i>	<b>Coral Honeysuckle</b> <i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>
<b>Red Columbine</b> <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	<b>Crossvine</b> <i>Bignonia capreolata</i>
<b>Sage species</b> <i>Salvia spp.</i>	<b>Flame Acanthus</b> <i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus var. wrightii</i>
<b>Turk's Cap</b> <i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i>	

## Berry-producing

<b>American Beautyberry</b> <i>Callicarpa americana</i>	<b>Passion Flower</b> <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>
<b>Coralberry</b> <i>Symphoricarpos orbiculatus</i>	<b>Virginia Creeper</b> <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>
<b>Holly species</b> <i>Ilex spp.</i>	<b>Roughleaf Dogwood</b> <i>Cornus drummondii</i>
<b>Pigeonberry</b> <i>Rivina humilis</i>	

## Nut-producing

<b>Mexican Redbud</b> <i>Cercis canadensis var. mexicana</i>	<b>Eve's Necklace</b> <i>Styphnolobium affine</i>
<b>Texas Redbud</b> <i>Cercis canadensis var. texensis</i>	<b>Pecan</b> <i>Carya illinoensis</i>
<b>Oak species</b> <i>Quercus spp.</i>	<b>Mountain Laurel</b> <i>Sophora secundiflora</i>

## Seed-producing

<b>Indian Grass</b> <i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	<b>Switch Grass</b> <i>Panicum virgatum</i>
<b>Inland Sea Oats</b> <i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>	<b>Purple Coneflower</b> <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>
<b>Sideoats Grama</b> <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	<b>Mexican Hat</b> <i>Ratibida columnifera</i>

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