



Native Plants for Wildlife



Wild Columbine

Aquilegia canadensis

Ht: 6"-30" Flower: Red or yellow Bloom: May-August
Wildlife value: An excellent food source for hummingbirds and insects.

Little Bluestem

Schizachyrium scoparium

Ht: 12"-30" Flower: White Bloom: August-September
Wildlife Value: Attracts butterflies and a source of ground cover for birds and small mammals.



Butterfly Milkweed

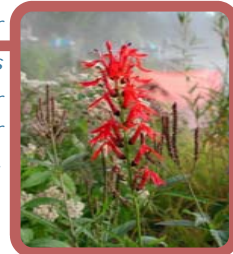
Asclepias tuberosa

Ht: 24"-36" Flower: Orange Bloom: June-September
Wildlife Value: A great food source for butterflies as well as caterpillars.

Cardinal Flower

Lobelia cardinalis

Ht: 36" Flower: Red Bloom: July-October
Wildlife Value: Excellent source of food for hummingbirds and insects.



Rough Blazingstar

Liatris aspera

Ht: 24"-36" Flower: Pink or purple Bloom: July-September
Wildlife Value: Blazingstars are a favorite food source for many butterflies species and other insects.

Indiangrass

Sorghastrum nutans

Ht: 60" Flower: Amber Bloom: July-September
Wildlife Value: Provides year-round cover for birds and small mammals.



Highbush Cranberry

Viburnum trilobum

Ht: 8-12 ft. Flower: White Bloom: Spring
Wildlife Value: Provides a great source of cover as well as food through late-winter.

American Elderberry

Sambucus canadensis

Ht: 6-12 ft. Flower: White Bloom: Summer
Wildlife Value: An excellent source of food and cover for many species of birds.



White Pine

Pinus strobus

Ht: 75-100 ft. Flower: Purple Bloom: Summer
Wildlife Value: Provides year-round cover that is especially important in winter.

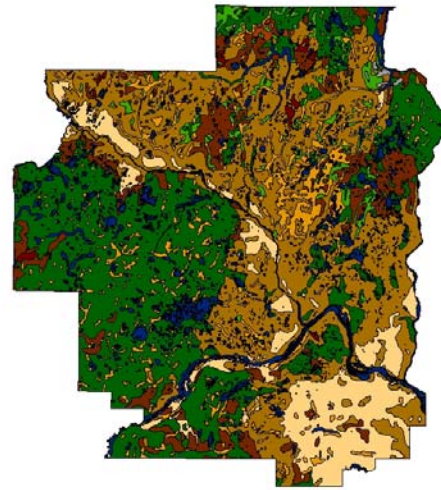
Bur Oak

Quercus macrocarpa

Ht: 60-100 ft. Flower: Yellow Bloom: Spring
Wildlife Value: Provides excellent cover as well as a great source of food (acorns).

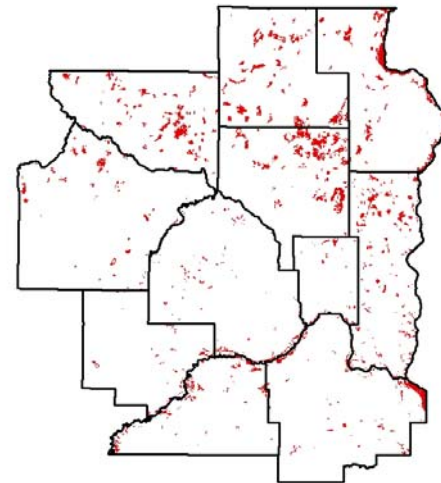


Native Plant Communities



Native plant communities (Early 1800's, pre-settlement)

The landscape around us once hosted a mosaic of plant communities: oak savanna, tallgrass prairie, wetlands, maple-basswood forests, etc. The occurrence of a particular plant community depends on topography, geology and disturbances, such as fire. Extensive land development and introduced invasive species have led to the destruction of a majority of these native plant communities and a fragmentation of the few plant communities that remain.



Native plant communities (present)

Of the 3,221,041 acres that comprise the eleven county metro area, native plant communities occupy approximately 3.8% (123,183 acres) of the total land area. Efforts should focus on restoring areas that re-connect and protect the remaining native plant communities.

Metro Conservation Districts

Anoka Conservation District
763-434-2030

Ramsey Conservation District
651-266-7270

Carver Soil & Water Conservation District
952-466-5230

Scott Soil and Water Conservation District
952-492-5425

Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District
651-674-2333

Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District
763-241-1170 Ext. 3

Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District
651-480-7777

Washington Conservation District
651-275-1136

Hennepin Conservation District
612-348-9938

Wright Soil and Water Conservation District
763-682-1970

Isanti Conservation District
763-689-3224



LANDSCAPING For Wildlife



Metro Conservation Districts

A partnership between the eleven soil and water conservation districts of Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Washington and Wright Counties.

Prepared by the



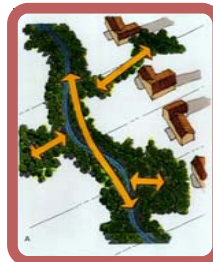


Landscaping for Wildlife

Urbanization has dramatically impacted wildlife by fragmenting and reducing the abundance of natural habitat. Adding native habitat to your yard relieves some of the pressure put on wildlife. Including multiple habitat components in your landscaping will help to attract a variety of animals such as butterflies, deer, birds, and frogs. Creating and improving habitat increases connectivity among other existing habitats and improves the ecological value of your yard.



Fragmented habitats are too small and have little value to wildlife.



Connecting groups of habitat creates an area much more beneficial to wildlife.



Components of Habitat

There are four basic needs of wildlife that can be considered the key components of landscaping for wildlife. They are:

1) Food

Every species has different food requirements. Animal food preferences often change with age and with the seasons. Including flowers, grasses and trees that provide fruits, seeds, nectar, nuts, and fiber will help to provide a year-round food source for a variety of wildlife.



2) Water

All animals depend on water for survival. That's why lakes, ponds, streams and wetlands are so important to our environment. Water can be the most difficult habitat component to include in your landscape. It can be anything from a simple bird bath, to creating a large pond. Even a small aquatic garden can have an immense value to the frogs and insects that depend heavily on available water sources. The sound of flowing water is particularly effective at attracting wildlife.



3) Shelter

Harsh weather and predators are a constant danger to animals. Shelter is especially important when animals are raising their young and when they sleep. Bird houses are an obvious source of shelter, but there are other ways to include shelter in your landscape. Trees, shrubs, tall grasses, and logs all provide cover during a storm or a place to hide. Structures like rock piles, standing dead trees and hollow logs also provide excellent cover and add another landscaping element to your yard.



4) Space

All animals have different space requirements and territorial needs. Some animals defend a large area when nesting while others don't. Learn about the territorial requirements of the wildlife in your area to determine how much wildlife you can expect in your yard.



Planning

Planning is an important step in any landscaping project. Landscaping for wildlife takes some additional consideration if you want your yard to have beneficial habitat for wildlife. Below are some good steps to take when planning your project.

- ◆ Create a list of project objectives. If there are certain animals you would like to attract, plan your project to incorporate habitat components they need. For example, use water features if you want to attract frogs or dragonflies. Or, include different types of flowers to attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Many small mammals require rock or wood piles for making dens. Learn about the native plant communities in your area and how you can use them in your landscape.
- ◆ Map out your property. Note topography, buildings, existing vegetation, sunny and shady areas, soil types and other important features. Decide which elements you want to keep and what areas you could enhance. Make sure you consider family use in the yard so you still have room for a vegetable garden or for the kids to play. Look at your neighbors yard as well and consider adding to any natural features that border your yard. You can also use landscaping as a natural fence or to screen views.



Rusty Schmidt



◆ Group similar plants together. It is more appealing to the eye and provides larger areas of similar habitat.

◆ Plant deciduous trees on the south side of the house. Along with providing habitat, they will create shade for your house in the summer and allow sun to reach the house in the winter, reducing energy expenses. Evergreens are great year-round windbreaks and should be positioned near the north-west corner of the house.

◆ If you are using a water feature, consider installing a water pump that will move the water. You could create a small waterfall or just have it trickle over some rocks. This keeps the water clean longer, prevents mosquitoes from breeding and is much more attractive to wildlife. "Disappearing" streams are a great way to avoid standing water.



Landscape Features

Butterfly Garden

Butterfly Gardens are made up of flowers that are especially attractive to butterflies and caterpillars. There are over 200 species of butterflies in the Midwest, and a huge selection of beautiful plants they enjoy.



Frog Pond

A great way to add a water source to your landscape is with a frog pond. Small and easy to maintain, frog ponds will attract more than just frogs! Introduce some aquatic plants and a small waterfall or rock fountain and you will have a feature that's appealing to the eye, and to wildlife.

Native Prairie Garden

These gardens are designed to replicate the natural prairies in our area. They are adapted to our climate and require minimal maintenance once they are established. They provide ground nesting cover for birds and small mammals. Strong prairie grass holds up even under heavy snow providing valuable shelter in the winter.



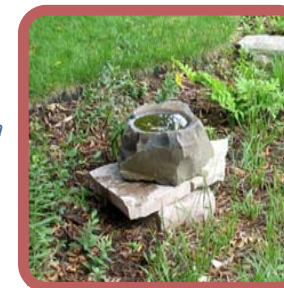
Dave Crawford

Rock or Brush Piles

These landscape features are a great element to incorporate into your gardens or in a corner of your property. While adding another interesting landscape component into your yard, they also provide great escape cover and den sites for rabbits, chipmunks, toads and many other animals.

Birdbaths

Another way to introduce water to your landscape is with a simple bird bath. The key to making them attractive to birds is making sure they stay full and clean. A reliable water source will have birds coming back again and again.



Feeders

Providing food in addition to what is produced by your trees, shrubs, and flowers ensures you will have a variety of wildlife visiting your yard. Seed and suet feeders are great for songbirds and can provide an important food source in the winter. Nectar feeders will attract hummingbirds and orioles. You can also spread seeds or corn on the ground for squirrels. If you choose to use feeders, be consistent and keep them full.

Hummingbird Garden

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are a garden favorite. Hummingbirds prefer red-tubular flowers, and it's a good idea to choose some flowers that bloom in spring and others in the fall. This way you will have hummingbirds visiting your garden all summer.

