

Spring Planting Tips for Birds and Butterflies

Certify Your Garden

From the National Wildlife Federation

As the ground starts to thaw, it's time to think about spring planting. The best way to create a wildlife-friendly garden, is by planting native plants. Planting a variety of native plants in your yard will provide wildlife with food, cover and a place to raise young. Just add a water source and practice sustainable gardening and you are ready to certify!

Here are a few of our favorite native wildflowers for wildlife:

- Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnate*)—offers nectar for butterflies and hummingbirds and is a host plant for monarch butterfly caterpillars. (Native to east and central U.S.)
- Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)—the gorgeous scarlet flowers are a tremendous nectar source for hummingbirds and swallowtail butterflies. (Native to east, central, and southwest U.S.)
- Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)—This classic garden wildflower provides nectar for butterflies and seeds to feed the birds. (native to most of U.S)

By providing food, water, cover and places for wildlife to raise their young you are eligible to have your yard recognized as a Certified Wildlife Habitat. When you certify, you'll join over 215,000 gardeners across America who provide safe places for wildlife like birds to thrive. Creating a wildlife habitat garden not only helps wildlife, it gives you a beautiful place to experience nature every day.

Find more helpful info from the National Wildlife Federation:

- A Helping Hand for Early Bees https://www.nwf.org/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2017/Oct-Nov/Gardening/Plants-for-Early-Pollinators/?s_email_id=20180310_WON-196_GFW_March_2018_Newsletter%7C
- Attract Frogs This Spring http://blog.nwf.org/2014/03/5-frogs-coming-to-a-pond-near-you/?s_email_id=20180310_WON-196_GFW_March_2018_Newsletter%7C