Additional Resources: Continue Growing your Habitat Hero Garden!

RESOURCES - *The Habitat Hero program provides resources and workshops to help in planning water-wise gardens that support birds, bees, butterflies and other pollinators.*

Browse through our collection of resources that are a compilation of books, online resources, example gardens, plant sources and plant lists! Continue to find inspirations for your own garden by researching native plants, gardening how-to's and reading about success stories from gardeners trials and tribulations.
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/resources

1.1 Plant Lists

When you grow native plants, you help birds and the environment. Download these plant lists and other resources to help with your design efforts!

- National Audubon Society – Native Plant Database – Audubon's native plant database is a searchable listing by zipcode of nearly 3,000 plants.
  http://www.audubon.org/native-plants
- Native Plant lists for Plains, Pinon-Juniper Woodland, Ponderosa Pine Forest, Montane, Semi-Desert Shrubland and Riparian habits.
- Step-by-Step guide on designing your Habitat Hero Garden
- http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/plant-lists

1.2 Books

These suggested reading materials will quench your thirst on learning more about gardening.
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/books

1.3 Online Resources

Over the years, Audubon Rockies and our partners have researched and gathered our favorite wildscaping links.
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/online-resources

1.4 Plant Sources

From pre-planned gardens to finding a garden center or nursery near you.
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/plant-sources

EVENTS

2.1 Attend a local Audubon Habitat Hero educational program

Find upcoming Habitat Hero events near you! Join us in communities across Colorado and Wyoming for workshops and presentations, youth programs and planting of demonstration gardens. Stay abreast with our current Habitat Hero events here:
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/events

2.2 Host a local Audubon Habitat Hero educational program

If your community, garden center, neighborhood, event etc… is interested in learning about the importance of restoring your community, one garden patch at a time, contact our Habitat Hero Coordinator, Jamie Weiss, at jweiss@audubon.org. *The Habitat Hero: Wildscaping 101* presentation is given from a birds-eye view, learning how to create bird-friendly gardens that help combat the loss of habitat and create green corridors that link your wildscape to larger natural areas by providing habitat for wildlife.

*This presentation can be modified as requested to fit your specific needs and goals.

BLOG

3.1 Read our current news on our bi-weekly blog

Read our blog to learn gardening tips and techniques and hear from a variety of guest bloggers, view recommended plant lists, and find the most up-to-date information on upcoming events and news.
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/habitat-hero-blog

3.2 Write an article for our bi-weekly blog

Our bi-weekly blog needs an outside voice too from homeowners to experienced horticulturists. Over the years we are lucky enough to have a great representation of guest bloggers, from – Colorado State University, Garden Centers and Nurseries, Master Gardeners, University of Wyoming, Colorado State Beekeeper's Association, High Country Gardens, Landscape Designers, and more! Let us know if you are interested in contributing an engaging article to be featured on our blog and e-newsletter.

HABITAT HERO GARDENS

4.1 Read success stories and photographs from previous Habitat Hero awardees

Browse through our collection of 2015 Habitat Hero gardens. These stories and photographs will be sure to continue inspiration in your own garden!
http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/habitat-hero-winners

4.2 View success stories and photographs from previous Habitat Hero awardees

Explore our STORY MAP to view stories and photos of our awarded Habitat Hero residential gardens, community gardens, city open spaces, schoolyards, public demonstration gardens and private sanctuaries.

CONTACT INFORMATION

There are lots of great ways that you can make a difference – through donating supplies, volunteering your time at planting events, or helping with a planting of a Habitat Hero demonstration garden. For more information, contact Habitat Hero Coordinator, Jamie Weiss, at jweiss@audubon.org or (970) 416-6931 if you are interested in volunteering for Audubon Rockies.

The Audubon Rockies, Habitat Hero homepage is located at http://rockies.audubon.org/habitat-heroes

What Category Does Your Habitat Hero Garden Fall Into?

	Bronze	*Silver*	*Gold*
Native plants for birds - Food	Habitat includes native plants that provide and **at least 2 of the 5 food categories** (caterpillars, nectar, grain, nuts, fruit)	Habitat includes native plants that provide and **at least 3 of the 5 food categories** (caterpillars, nectar, grain, nuts, fruit)	Habitat includes native plants that provide and **at least 4 of the 5 food categories** (caterpillars, nectar, grain, nuts, fruit)
Habitat structure	Habitat contains **at least 2 of 3 vegetation layers** (understory, midstory, overstory)	Habitat contains **at least 2 of 3 vegetation layers** (understory, midstory, overstory)	Habitat **contains all 3 vegetation layers** (understory, midstory, overstory)
Water	Natural or artificial water source provided	Natural or artificial water source provided	Natural or artificial water source provided
Invasive plants	Habitat includes **no more than 20% invasive plants.**	Habitat includes **no more than 10% invasive plants.**	Habitat includes **no more than 5% invasive plants.**
Reducing or eliminating pesticides	• Whenever possible, use mechanical means to remove invasive plants. • Choose native plants grown without pesticides (i.e. neonicotinoids). • Pledge to reduce the use of pesticides.	• Whenever possible, use mechanical means to remove invasive plants. • Choose native plants grown without pesticides (i.e. neonicotinoids). • Pledge to eliminate the use of pesticides.	• Invasive plants removed by mechanical means. • Choose native plants grown without pesticides (i.e. neonicotinoids). • Maintain an organic, chemical-free yard.
Eliminating hazards	**Choose 1** • Windows treated to reduce reflectivity & transparency. • Cats kept indoors at all times • Outdoor lighting reduced	**Choose 2** • Windows treated to reduce reflectivity & transparency. • Cats kept indoors at all times • Outdoor lighting reduced	**All 3** • Windows treated to reduce reflectivity & transparency. • Cats kept indoors at all times • Outdoor lighting reduced
Stewardship	**Optional:** • Maintain a nest box for birds/bees/bats • Adopt petroleum-free yard maintenance practices • Adopt a fertilizer-free yard maintenance practices. • Create a wildlife brush pile • Leave leaf-litter	**Choose 1:** • Maintain a nest box for birds/bees/bats • Adopt petroleum-free yard maintenance practices • Adopt a fertilizer-free yard maintenance practices. • Create a wildlife brush pile • Leave leaf-litter	**Choose 2:** • Maintain a nest box for birds/bees/bats • Adopt petroleum-free yard maintenance practices • Adopt a fertilizer-free yard maintenance practices. • Create a wildlife brush pile • Leave leaf-litter
Education	**Choose 1:** • Watch video or webinar about healthy yard habitat. • Attend local Audubon habitat education program • Read Audubon Guide to Creating a Bird Garden. • Read *Bringing Nature Home* by Doug Tallamy • Participate in Master Gardener Program • Participate in Master Naturalist Program	**Choose 1:** • Watch video or webinar about healthy yard habitat. • Attend local Audubon habitat education program • Read Audubon Guide to Creating a Bird Garden. • Read *Bringing Nature Home* by Doug Tallamy • Participate in Master Gardener Program • Participate in Master Naturalist Program	**Choose 1:** • Watch video or webinar about healthy yard habitat. • Attend local Audubon habitat education program • Read Audubon Guide to Creating a Bird Garden. • Read *Bringing Nature Home* by Doug Tallamy • Participate in Master Gardener Program • Participate in Master Naturalist Program
Citizen Science	**Optional:** • Maintain a list of birds and butterflies that visit your habitat patch. • Contribute observations in your patch to eBird or Hummingbirds@Home	**Optional:** • Maintain a list of birds and butterflies that visit your habitat patch. • Contribute observations in your patch to eBird or Hummingbirds@Home	**Optional:** • Maintain a list of birds and butterflies that visit your habitat patch. • Contribute observations in your patch to eBird or Hummingbirds@Home
Volunteer	**Optional:** • Recruit 2 neighbors or friends to help in your garden! • Recruit 2 neighbors or friends to sign up! • Allow your property to be showcased in garden tours • Volunteer as an Audubon Habitat Ambassador • Volunteer as an Audubon Habitat Gardener • Give Audubon Habitat presentation to community group or neighborhood/ homeowners association. • Contact plant growers or sellers and encourage them to register as an Audubon Native Plant provider.	**Choose 1:** • Recruit 2 neighbors or friends to help in your garden! • Recruit 2 neighbors or friends to sign up! • Allow your property to be showcased in garden tours • Volunteer as an Audubon Habitat Ambassador • Volunteer as an Audubon Habitat Gardener • Give Audubon Habitat presentation to community group or neighborhood/ homeowners association. • Contact plant growers or sellers and encourage them to register as an Audubon Native Plant provider.	**Choose 2:** • Recruit 2 neighbors or friends to help in your garden! • Recruit 2 neighbors or friends to sign up! • Allow your property to be showcased in garden tours • Volunteer as an Audubon Habitat Ambassador • Volunteer as an Audubon Habitat Gardener • Give Audubon Habitat presentation to community group or neighborhood /homeowners association. • Contact plant growers or sellers and encourage them to register as an Audubon Native Plant provider.

APPENDIX

Move up through these garden categories and with these supplemental resources your garden (and mind!) will constantly be transforming!

1.1 Food

Support wildlife by planting bird and butterfly-friendly plant species for year-round food, cover and shelter. Regionally adapted or native plants have evolved with our harsh growing conditions and support local food webs. See 'Plant Lists' in section 1.1 of RESOURCES to help with identifying plants that will work well in your landscape and offer a variety of food sources.

> *TIP:* Providing food when provisions are scarce help birds and other wildlife, so aim to have plants that bloom during the shoulder seasons – early spring and late fall.

1.2 Habitat Structure

Scientists call it structural diversity. Birds call it home.

> *TIP:* Think of it in terms of different layers or stories: trees provide the canopy layer or over-story. The mid-story layers are created by small trees and shrubs. And the understory is provided by the ground cover of grasses and broad-leaved herbaceous plants. The more habitat layers you have, the more birds your space can support -- even if it's a tiny urban yard.

1.3 Water

In addition to the food and habitat provided by native plants, the most important thing to provide for birds in your garden is water. Clear, fresh water for drinking and bathing.

> *TIP:* Hollow out a tree stump, decorate a trash can lid, be creative! Fill with a few inches of water, and add some sand or rocks to provide perching places for both birds and butterflies. Offer fresh water and keep the bird bath clean – birds and butterflies like fresh water – mosquitoes do not!

1.4 Invasive Plants

Control invasive plants that degrade habitat in and beyond our yards that have the potential to outcompete our native plants.

> *TIP:* Learn how to identify invasive and non-native species per the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Noxious Weed Species ID list.

1.5 Pesticides

The use of pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc.) can be very harmful to wildlife, pets and people. Planting well-chosen native plants can create wildlife habitat, conserve water and reduce the need for pesticides and fertilizers. For more information on learning how to decrease chemical usage and Integrated Pest Management.

Colorado State Beekeepers Association: http://coloradobeekeepers.org/decrease-your-chemical-usage/

Midwest Pesticide Action Center: http://midwestpesticideaction.org

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides: http://www.pesticide.org

Natural turf management: http://www.osborneorganics.com/about-chip-osborne-jr/

Mosquito management: http://www.xerces.org/how-to-help-your-community-create-an-effective-mosquito-management-plan-a-xerces-society-guide/

Insecticides & Herbicides toxicity levels: http://www.growsmartgrowsafe.org/Products.aspx?Category=57695&SearchStr=

Human health studies: http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/files/pesticide-report_annotated-bibliography_final-updated-81315_00651.pdf

Neonicotinoid info: http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/search/neonicotinoid

> *TIP:* Almost all songbirds feed their young insects; provide nesting materials for birds and you'll be providing a natural pest control for your garden. Just how much insects does it take to rear a clutch? In 16 days, Chickadee parents will feed their young up to 9,000 insects – chemicals are no match for Mother Nature!

1.6 Hazards

How can I help prevent window collisions? Window collisions can kill an estimated 1 billion birds per year - by adding netting in front of windows or applying tape every 2-4 inches to make the window visible to birds. And if you maintain bird feeders, bring them in closer to your windows, within 2-3 feet. The birds may still fly into the windows, but not with enough force to be injured.

Why should you keep your cats indoors? According to the most current research free-roaming outdoor cats are estimated to kill between 1.3 Billion and 3.9 Billion birds each year. But it is important to remember, that all of these threats are also opportunities--By simply keeping your cats indoors, you prevent these deaths and keep your cat healthier as well.

How do I reduce my outdoor lighting? By turning off excess lighting during the months migrating birds are flying overhead, we help to provide them safe passage between their nesting and wintering grounds. For a list of existing 'Lights Out' programs around the country, visit http://www.audubon.org/conservation/existing-lights-out-programs

1.7 Stewardship

Create a brush pile: When you do your pruning, make a brush pile with these components. 1) Allow enough space for perching birds to fly in and out of (don't close it off completely); 2) Incorporate some perches on the inside; 3) Larger branches should be placed on outside for stability. To find out more about how to create a brush pile visit https://www.audubon.org/news/build-brush-pile-birds

Maintain a nest box:

- Birds – A birdhouse is a great way to help birds - especially where lots of people live, it's becoming harder for cavity-nesting birds to find dead trees in which to build their nests. For great tips on making your own or purchasing bird house kits, visit
  http://www.audubon.org/news/build-nest-box-welcome-spring-birds
  http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/attracting/nest_box/

- Bees – They are a vital part of a healthy environment. Nest sites are simple to make, and can be added to any garden. The Xerces Society is a great place to start for gathering information on protecting and providing habitat for our invertebrate pollinators.
  http://www.xerces.org/

- Bats – Hate mosquito bites? Encourage bats to nest nearby and with their hardy appetite of eating 1,000 insects a night, that's surely a reason to celebrate!
  http://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Cover/Build-a-Bat-House.aspx

Leave leaf litter: Caterpillars overwinter in leaf litter, and many other insects live there too, hence why you see lots of birds spend their time foraging in leaf litter. This is a great reason to cut down on the amount of raking you have to do every fall!

1.8 Education

Expand upon your ever-growing desires to learn more about habitat gardening! For a great place to start, visit http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/resources where we have compiled together a great list of books, online resources, example gardens, plant sources and more!

1.9 Citizen Science

Turn your passion for the natural world into a critical research tool! Citizen Science is a great way for you to connect with the natural world through fun activities that generate vital information for conservation.

TIP: Check out these great Citizen Science platforms!

- BioBlitz: http://rockies.audubon.org/engagement/bioblitz
- Christmas Bird Counts: http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count
- E-Bird: http://ebird.org/content/ebird/
- Great Backyard Bird Count: http://gbbc.birdcount.org/
- Hummingbirds at Home: http://www.hummingbirdsathome.org/
- International Migratory Bird Day: http://www.birdday.org/
- MAPS Bird Banding: http://rockies.audubon.org/get-involved/maps-bird-banding
- Project Feeder Watch: http://feederwatch.org/
- WyoBio: www.wyobio.org

1.10 Volunteer

Become invested in the community by learning and sharing your knowledge with others!

- Give presentations to local community groups
- Talk to nurseries and garden centers about carrying Audubon-recommended native plants
- Distribute brochures to friends, neighbors, garden centers etc…
- Talk to friends & neighbors about the Habitat Hero program
- Advise property owners about bird-friendly gardening
- Help create or plant a demonstration garden in your community
- Showcase your property on a garden tour