



We are delighted you have an interest in making your backyard more bird friendly. Backyards make up the largest green space in San Francisco... larger than all our parks put together! One of the great secrets of our City is that in the center of nearly every block, behind an unbroken perimeter of houses, lie fifty or sixty backyards, providing food and shelter to local birds, like doves, hummingbirds, finches, jays and even parrots. Migratory birds like the Golden-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and Yellow-rumped Warbler and butterflies, damselflies, bees and spiders also depend on these backyards. By making your backyard a more natural area, you will create a beautiful and interesting garden and make a tangible contribution to the survival of wildlife in our changing world. How to begin? Please read on!



Elements of Good Backyard Habitat

1. **GETTING STARTED** - Spend time in your yard! Notice the wild creatures that already use it. See which shrubs and trees they favor. Determine the soil type, the prevailing winds and the direction of their force. Take note of the trees and shrubs in your neighbor's yards and those growing on the streets and parks of your area. Observe if and how they attract wildlife. These observations will help you design a better habitat as well as connect you more deeply to the wildlife we share with our City.
2. **WATER** - Birds and other wild creatures need water for drinking and bathing. Provide a constant, reliable source of shallow water such as a birdbath, pond or even a dish. Circulating water is best, so using a drip irrigation emitter as a water supply works well. Vessels of water should be placed as high as is practical and out in the open away from hiding predators. The thin overhanging branches of a nearby tree can act as a secure "ladder" for drinking and bathing birds.
3. **FOOD** - Use an array of native and non-invasive plants that produce nectar, berries, fruit and seeds throughout the year. Many plants will attract beautiful and fascinating butterflies, bees and other insects, which in turn provide food for birds and seldom pose a threat to vegetation.
4. **COVER** - Create cover for birds and wildlife with plant diversity. Consider varying heights and densities with open areas of native grasses. Keeping a "wild corner" where perennial plants are left alone to grow with little intervention gives birds shelter and nesting materials. This corner could also contain a brush pile, a rock, brick pile, dead tree or hollow log for the same purpose. Though we are tempted to "clean up" our yards, remember that wild lands are not neat and tidy but often tangled with vegetation. Consider allowing a bit of wildness in your yard.
5. **SAFE COURTSHIP & PARENTING PLACES** - Besides the natural shelters mentioned, birdhouses for cavity nesting birds, like wrens, chickadees, and swallows can provide sanctuaries from predators. Birdhouses should be placed away from windows to keep birds from colliding with windows. Also, it is essential to keep cats indoors. It is safer for the cats as well as for the birds. Indoor cats have more than three times the life expectancy of outdoor cats who risk threats from cars, dogs, and diseases.
6. **SUSTAINABLE GARDEN PRACTICES** - The way you garden or maintain your landscape impacts the wildlife in your yard. Native trees and plants typically require less water, fewer pesticides, and less fertilizer. Remove invasive plants. Use organic fertilizers and natural pesticides instead of chemical ones; produce rich soil by composting, and mulching. Remember, chemicals in your yard end up in the Bay and throughout the food chain! Consult the resources listed in this brochure to learn how to make your backyard more sustainable for wildlife.



Basic Wildlife-Friendly Plants

Trees

<i>Acer sp.</i>	Maple
<i>Aesculus californica</i>	Buckeye
<i>Betula sp.</i>	Birch
<i>Pinus sp.</i>	Pine
<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i>	Islais Cherry
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast Live Oak

Tall Shrubs

<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Butterfly Bush
<i>Garrya elliptica</i>	Coast Silk Tassel
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon
<i>Myrica californica</i>	Pacific Wax Myrtle

Medium Shrubs

<i>Arctostaphylos sp.</i>	Manzanita
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	Coyote Bush
<i>Ceanothus sp.</i>	Wild Lilac
<i>Mahonia sp.</i>	Mahonia
<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	Coffeeberry
<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	Red Flowering Currant

Perennials & Annuals

<i>Achillea sp.</i>	Yarrow
<i>Aster sp.</i>	Aster
<i>Cirsium sp.</i>	Thistle
<i>Eriogonum sp.</i>	Wild Buckwheat
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California Poppy
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i>	Cow Parsnip
<i>Lantana sp.</i>	Lantana
<i>Lupinus sp.</i>	Lupine
<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>	Sticky Monkeyflower
<i>Oenothera sp.</i>	Evening Primrose
<i>Penstemon sp.</i>	Beard Tongue
<i>Salvia sp.</i>	Sage
<i>Zauschneria californica</i>	California Fuchsia

Bunch Grasses

<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue
<i>Nassella pulchra</i>	Purple Needlegrass

Garden Plants & Supplies

These nurseries specialize in Bay Area native plants

Bay Natives

10 Cargo Way, San Francisco
(415) 287-6755

www.baynatives.com

Offers distinctive and little known native selections for the urban landscape.

Candlestick Pt. Native Plant Nursery

1150 Carroll Avenue, San Francisco
(415) 282-6840

www.lejyouth.org/native-plant-nursery

Run by Literacy for Environmental Justice, the nursery is open on first Saturdays

Larner Seeds

235 Grove Rd., Bolinas, CA 94924
(415) 868-9407

www.larnerseeds.com

Provides mail order native seeds, native plants, workshops & demonstration gardens.

Mission Blue Nursery

near 3401 Bayshore Blvd., Brisbane, CA 94005
(415) 467-6631

www.mountainwatch.org/mission-blue-nursery

Has a Benefits San Bruno Mountain Watch. Open by appointment and seasonal sales.

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

Golden Gate Park – 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way
San Francisco, CA 94122
(415) 661-1316

www.sfbotanicalgarden.org

Offers exclusive plants from the Garden's Nursery called The Arbor. Monthly Plant Sales (see website for schedule)

Sutro Stewards Native Plant Nursery

476 Johnstone Drive, San Francisco, CA 94131
(415) 665-1077

www.sutrostewards.org/page/nursery

Drought-tolerant, locally sourced native plants. Open by appointment or during program hours (see web site).

Yerba Buena Nursery

12511 San Mateo Rd., Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
(650) 851-1668

www.yerbabuenanursery.com

Has a large variety of nursery plants that thrive in Bay Area micro climates.

Writings on Wildlife Gardening

Bauer, Nancy, (2008) *The Habitat Garden Book: Wildlife Landscaping for San Francisco Bay Region*; Coyote Ridge Press, 2nd edition, Sebastopol, CA. Clear & compact beginner's guide.

Grissell, Eric, (2001) *Insects and Gardens: In Pursuit of a Garden Ecology*. Timber Press, Portland, OR. Book on the importance of insects.

Lowry, Judith Larner, (2007) *Gardening with a Wild Heart: Restoring California's Native Landscapes at Home*. U.C. Press, Berkeley, CA. Wild land ecology.

Popper, Helen, (2012) *California Native Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide*. U.C. Press, Berkeley, CA. A month by month guide to gardening with native plants in a state that follows a unique, nontraditional seasonal rhythm.

Sonoma County Master Gardeners, (1999) *Flora for Fauna: Habitats for Birds, Butterflies, and Beneficial Insects*. Wayward Gardens, Sebastopol, CA. Booklet of fauna attractors.

Stein, Sara, (1993) *Noah's Garden: Restoring the Ecology of Our Own Backyards*. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA. Transformation of garden to native ecosystem.

Sunset Books & Magazines (2000) *Attracting Birds: Bird Identification, Feeders, Houses & Baths*. Sunset Books Inc., 2nd edition, Menlo Park, CA. Illustrated Bird habitat guide.

Tallamy, Douglas W. (2009) *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*; Timber Press, Portland, OR.



Resources for Wildlife Gardening

These organizations have web sites that are of interest to the wildlife gardener:

American Bird Conservatory

www.abcbirds.org

Calflora

www.calflora.org

California Native Plant Society San Francisco Chapter

www.cnps-yerbabuena.org

Golden Gate Audubon Society

www.goldengateaudubon.org

Native Habitats

www.nativehabitats.org

National Audubon Society

www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds

National Wildlife Federation

www.nwf.org/Garden-for-wildlife.aspx

Protect Our Pollinators

www.sfenvironment.org/pollinators

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

www.sfbotanicalgarden.org

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Golden Gate Audubon Society

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INVITING WILDLIFE

into your backyard

San Francisco Edition

