

Backyard Wildlife Habitat Certification

As East Hampton residents move to protect native vegetation around our homes and in our community, you may be interested in enhancing your surroundings and enjoyment by providing a healthy backyard wildlife habitat.

If you choose to fill out the following questionnaire (photo optional), send it to: Gail Faceto, Natural Resources Department, 300 Pantigo Place, East Hampton, New York 11937, the town will be able to certify your land as a wildlife habitat. A certification will be mailed to you announcing the status of your land as wildlife friendly.

A list of native vegetation species can be found on this website under: E.H. Native Vegetation: most local landscapers and nurseries have made these indigenous species available.

Is your Backyard a Wildlife Habitat?

Name _____

Address of Habitat _____

Town _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail Address _____

Mailing address if different _____

1. What is the size of your property?

0-1/8 acre 1/8-1/4 acre
 1/4-1/2 acre 1/2-1 acre
 1-5 acres over 5 acres

2. Check the option that best describes your habitat.

Backyard Bay/Coastal
 Dunes Farmland
 Forest (Photo: Optional)

3. WILDLIFE: Please check the types of wildlife that your habitat supports.

Insects/Invertebrates Fish
 Amphibians Reptiles
 Mammals Birds

4. FOOD: Native plants are the best food source for wildlife. Feeders can be used as a supplemental source of food. Encourage a natural diversity of wildlife in your yard to ensure a healthy ecosystem. How do you provide food for wildlife?

Plant Foods:

Seeds Nuts Sap
 Berries Fruits Nectar
 Foliage/Twigs Pollen

Feeder Types:

Tube Platform Suet
 Hummingbird Squirrel
 Butterfly

5. WATER:

Birdbath Water Garden
 Pond Stream Spring
 Puddling Area Wetland
 Seasonal Pond Coastal

6. COVER: Wildlife need places to find shelter from the weather and from predators. How do you cover for wildlife?

Wooded Area Evergreens
 Bramble Patch Brush Pile
 Ground Cover Log Pile
 Rock Pile/Wall Roosting Box
 Meadow/field Burrows
 Water Garden/Pond
 Dense Shrubs/Thicket

7. PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG: In order to provide complete habitat, you must provide places for wildlife to engage in courtship behavior and to mate, and then to bear and raise their young. How do you provide places to raise young for wildlife?

Mature Trees Nesting Box
 Dead Trees/Snags Meadow
 Dense Shrubs/Thicket Wetland
 Water Garden/Pond Burrows
 Host Plants for Caterpillars to Live on

8. PLANT LIST: Plant communities form the foundation of habitat for all wildlife. Plants that are native are best. Please check the plant types that grow in your habitat and list them in the space provided in the next column.

- Evergreen trees Vines
- Deciduous trees Dec. Shrubs
- Evergreen shrubs Ferns
- Grasses and grass like plants
- Aquatic plants Wildflowers
- Other

a.) Plant Species:

9. SUSTAINABLE GARDENING

PRACTICES: How you manage your garden or landscape can have an effect on the health of the soil, air, water and habitat for native wildlife – as well as the human community. What sustainable gardening techniques do you employ to help conserve resources?

a.) Water Conservation:

- Vegetative Buffer Zone Around Water Feature
- Rain Garden Mulching
- Capture Rain Water from Roof
- Drip or Soaker Hose for Irrigation
- Reducing Lawn Areas
- Reducing Erosion
- Eliminating Chemical Pesticides
- Eliminating Chemical Fertilizers

b.) Soil Conservation:

- Mulching Composting
- Reducing Erosion
- Eliminating Chemical Pesticides
- Eliminating Chemical Fertilizers

c.) Controlling Exotic Species:

- Monitor Nesting Boxes
- Keeping Your Cat Indoors
- Removing Invasive Plants
- Restoring Native Plants
- Reducing Lawn Areas

d.) Organic Practices:

- Eliminating Chemical Pesticides
- Eliminating Chemical Fertilizers
- Encouraging Pest Predators
- Composting
- Not using a “bug zapper”

NOTE: There is a list of native vegetation on this web site. These indigenous species are available in our local nurseries.

HOW TO KEEP INVASIVE PLANTS FROM SPREADING OUT OF YOUR YARD

Just because a plant is at your local nursery doesn't mean it's not an invasive species. It's up to you to find out which plants are safe. Here's how:

- Before buying seeds or plants, make sure they're not considered invasive in East Hampton. The Internet makes it easy. Even plants native to the United States can prove invasive when transplanted to another region of the country. Native plants require less water and provide wildlife with food and shelter. Depending on what you plant, you may soon find a variety of birds or butterflies flocking to your yard.
- If there is a particular nonnative plant you're interested in growing, be wary if it produces very large amounts of wind-borne seeds; provides berries for wildlife, which might spread the plant to other areas; is unusually pest and weather-resistant; tends to shade out neighboring plants or out compete them for food and water; or spreads quickly by runners, underground roots or plant fragments.
- Take particular care when buying or planting packaged mixtures of seeds. Some commercial mixes contain seeds of invasive plants.

- Be particularly careful if nearby wild areas, parks, open spaces, streams or bodies of water could be invaded by things you plant in your garden or fishpond.

- If you already have invasives growing on your property, remove them or try to prevent them from spreading by pinching off dying flowers before they have a chance to go to seed or by containing the roots in a partially buried pot. Never dispose of unwanted plants or clippings in a nearby park or natural area, as new plants can spring from the scraps. Never dump aquarium plants into streams or other waters.

Keeping invasives out of your garden won't force you to make sacrifices. You can choose from an abundance of native plants and, with some careful thought and planning, grow a beautiful garden no matter where you live.

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