



Six Easy Ways to Make Your Yard Bird-Friendly

As we face the devastating effects of climate change our avian friends are relying on us to provide a safe-haven in our own yards and neighborhoods. Here are six important steps you can take to help birds out, along with some resources to get you started.

1. PLANT NATIVE PLANTS. Birds and the insects they eat have evolved with the plants that support them. With insect and bird populations plummeting, native habitat needs to be restored and you can help. Audubon and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) provide excellent resources.

*Find a list of the best plants for birds in your area from Audubon:

<https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>

<https://www.audubon.org/news/10-plants-bird-friendly-yard>

*Check out the website of our local chapter of CNPS, a rich resource for your garden planning: <https://sanhedrin.cnps.org/>

*Read Nature's Best Hope, A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard by Douglas W. Tallamy. Available at Mendocino Book Company.

2. ATTRACT BIRDS WITH A CLEAN WATER SOURCE AND WELL MANAGED FEEDERS. Bird feeders are a good way to attract birds to your yard, but they also bring birds into close proximity with each other and can result in the spread of contagious diseases. It is important to clean feeders regularly with one part bleach to nine parts water. Empty and refill bird baths daily. Clean and take down feeders for two or three weeks if you see sick or unhealthy birds.

*For suggestions about feeding birds: <https://www.audubon.org/news/11-tips-feeding-backyard-birds>

*A Salmonella Outbreak Alert: <https://birdrescuecenter.org/salmonellosis/>

3. PROVIDE NESTING BOXES. Many birds are cavity nesters and a good cavity is getting harder to find. Nest box watching is a lot of fun and you can become a citizen scientist by collecting data about your feathered friends. Make sure to clean out nest boxes yearly. Here is an excellent article from The Cornell Lab of Ornithology to help you choose and build nesting boxes: <https://nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses/>

4. CORRAL YOUR CATS. According to the American Bird Conservancy, cats kill about 2.4 billion birds a year in the United States. See these three great ideas to help you manage your furry friends:

*Keep your cat inside. This is the birds' preferred choice!

* Make a CATIO, an outdoor screened-in area where your cat can hang out. Here are some fun ideas: <https://www.hauspanther.com/category/catification/catios/>

*Buy or make an attractive "Birds be Safe" collar for your cat that will help birds see your cat before they can become the next hot lunch for this furry predator. You can buy a collar from: <https://www.birdsbesafe.com>



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5. Help birds AVOID WINDOW COLLISIONS. It is estimated that over a billion birds a year are killed by flying into windows. It takes some effort on our part to reduce collisions, but Cornell Labs provides an excellent article about what you can do: <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/why-birds-hit-windows-and-how-you-can-help-prevent-it>

6. Join Peregrine Audubon Society. We depend on donations and memberships from people like you to provide monthly programs and field trips for our community, help support outdoor education opportunities in our schools, and offer scholarships to encourage young people to go into natural science related fields.

NOTE: Climate change is the number one threat to North American Birds. National Audubon warns us that "We are facing a climate crisis of epic proportion---one that threatens life on Earth as we know it." See Audubon's Climate action guide at <https://www.audubon.org/climate-action-guide> to find out what else you can do.