



Bird-Friendly Spaces Program

Quick Start: Small/Medium Outdoor Space



The Bird-Friendly Spaces program has been designed so everyone can participate, regardless of the size of your space. Whether you have a small front garden or a patch of grass in your backyard, there are many actions you can take to help protect resident and migratory birds in our region. This guide is aimed at helping you figure out how to turn your home with a small to medium amount of outdoor space into a bird-friendly space!



CONNECT WITH OTHERS

There are many bird-friendly actions that start outside your space! Getting connected with others by chatting about birds and bird-friendly actions is an incredible way to encourage others to join you in your efforts.

LIMIT THREATS TO BIRDS

Birds face a number of threats in urban environments, but there are many opportunities for you to help.

Reduce the threats in your space by following the actions listed below.

- ✓ Buy bird-friendly items like shade-grown coffee.
- ✓ Turn off all non-essential outdoor lighting at night, especially during migration seasons.
- ✓ Keep your cats indoors (or supervise their outdoor adventures with leashes or catios).
- ✓ Prevent daytime window collisions by using decals, screens, or other visual cues for birds.
- ✓ Limit your use of single-use plastics.
- ✓ Participate in litter clean-ups.
- ✓ Avoid using pesticides or rodenticides.

- ✓ Join one of Houston Audubon's beginner-friendly urban bird surveys.
- ✓ Take a class about local wildlife, native gardening, or bird-friendly communities.
- ✓ Engage with a bird-related social media group.
- ✓ Show off your bird-friendly space to neighbors, family, and friends.

CREATE INVITING HABITAT

There is plenty you can do to support birds in your small yard or garden! Be sure to review your HOA or community policies on greenspaces before creating a bird-friendly habitat in your outdoor space.

- ✓ Start small! A small corner of your yard or paved area is a great place to start. This can be as simple as replacing sod with native plants or adding a few pots of native plants to your space.
- ✓ Select the best plants for your space - take plant height, water needs, sun preference, and aesthetics into consideration. Here are some of our favorites!
- ✓ Be prepared to regularly water your plants for the first few months, but then enjoy a low maintenance garden once it has matured. Occasional weeding is important as your new plants grow and start to get established.

Other Habitat Features!



Fresh, moving water



Natural or constructed nesting locations



Safe spots to rest or hide

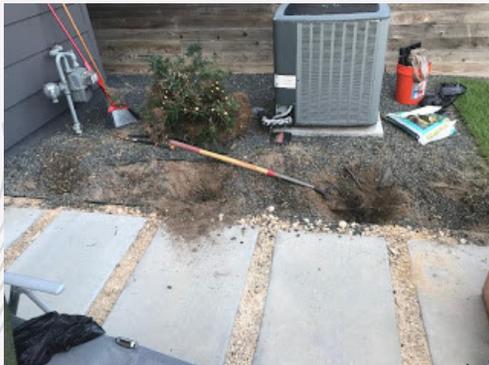


Photo courtesy of Patrick Bolgren/YPAC

Learn more about creating a Bird-Friendly Space



Need native plants? Visit our nursery!



Photo courtesy of Catherine Lee Clarke/YPAC

Natives Plants That Do Great in Small Gardens:

American Beautyberry
a shrub with beautiful, edible berries

Firewheel

a vibrant annual that blooms all summer long

Texas Frogfruit
a native groundcover that supports a variety of insects

Little Bluestem

a beautiful bunchgrass that is a prairie staple

Gulf Muhly
a bunchgrass that puts on a purple display every fall

Aquatic Milkweed

an irrigation-loving milkweed with pink flowers

Texas Coneflower
a super tall yellow bloom with short vibrant foliage

Purple Passionflower

a fast-growing annual vine with amazing blooms