



## Building Wildlife Habitat in Your Backyard

The flash of color in a butterfly's wing. The notes of a songbird in the morning. The chirp of a tree frog in the night. Nature is all around us, but our connection to it can be easily lost in the noise of everyday life. Luckily, you can create your own backyard habitat for wildlife year-round, and you don't need a large space to do it!

### The Importance of Under Canopy

The four main elements of healthy wildlife habitat are food, water, cover, and nesting sites. There's a fifth element that is crucial in tying it all together: vertical space. Think about it— owls, frogs, and hummingbirds can all be found in the same space, but they won't use

it the same way. Instead, there's a very particular section of vertical space that each kind of animal will inhabit. In order to attract wildlife to your property, a good rule of thumb is to plant a mix of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers.

**TURN OVER FOR MORE INFORMATION** 





### Keep it Simple and Natural

According to Smithsonian Magazine, at least 70% of native vegetation around your home can sustain wildlife enough to successfully rear their young. Overall, having a diversity of native plants will increase the variety of wildlife on your property. Even small acts of keeping snags and downed stumps, leaving the leaves, and installing rockeries and other types of structures can all provide critical cover and food resources for wildlife. Keep in mind that any pesticides used on your property can negatively impact the health of local wildlife—especially amphibians and pollinators.

### Don't Underestimate the Power of...

- Leaving downed wood for wildlife, particularly salamanders
- Wood chips for beneficial insects (and the birds who eat those insects), building healthy soil, and plants
- Rockeries that provide small crevices for amphibians and reptiles
- Resources for the different life cycles of wildlife (such as host plants that give butterfly caterpillars food to eat and a place to grow)

### Our Top Planting Picks

#### Trees:

- Cascara (*Frangula purshiana*)
- Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*)
- Pacific crabapple (*Malus fusca*)
- Big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)

#### Shrubs:

- Red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)
- Tall Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*)
- Evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*)
- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)

#### Groundcovers:

- Kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)
- Tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*)
- Western Canada goldenrod (*Solidago lepida*)
- Douglas aster (*Aster subspicatus*)



Cascara



Pacific crabapple



Garry oak



Big-leaf maple



Serviceberry



Tall Oregon grape



Evergreen huckleberry



Red-flowering currant



Canada goldenrod



Kinnikinnick



Douglas aster



Tufted hair grass

### MEET YOUR CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conservation districts partner with residents to steward land, water, forests, wildlife and related natural resources. To learn more about how your local conservation district can work with you, visit our website at [snohomishcd.org](http://snohomishcd.org).

