

Planting Native Plants for Birds – A New Primer

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Note: Friends of the Ottawa NWR / Bench Farms Spring Native Plant Sale is May 1st – may sell out!

Simple actions to take now in your yard and into your watershed:

- Provide a wide variety of native trees, shrubs, grasses, sedges, ferns, perennials
- Provide clean and safe water year-round
- Never use insecticides or rodenticides
- Never permit cats outdoors – and remove strays

Plant natives now. Then plant more native plants.

Construct a five-layer habitat:

- Trees for canopy
- Understory trees (dogwood, pawpaw, sassafras, hawthorn...)
- Shrubs (remove invasives such as privet, barberry, forsythia, burning bush)
- Perennials (mass species in clumps)
- Leaf litter, logs, partially-buried stones, patches of bare earth, small sand piles
- Use straight species or as close to straight species as possible
- Create thickets that can hide nests in the spring and summer

Some Native Shrubs recommended for Northeast Ohio

Bayberry [Myrica pensylvanica](#)

Bladdernut [Staphylea trifolia](#)

Buttonbush [Cephalanthus occidentalis](#)

Chokeberry [Aronia spp.](#)

Dogwood, rough leaf [Cornus drummondii](#)

Dogwood, grey [Cornus racemosa](#)

Dogwood, red osier [Cornus sericea](#)

Dogwood, silky [Cornus amomum](#)

Eastern wahoo [Euonymus atropurpureus](#)

Elderberry [Sambucus spp.](#)

Fragrant sumac [Rhus aromatica](#)

Inkberry [Ilex glabra](#)

Ninebark [Physocarpus opulifolius](#)

Shrubby St. John's wort [Hypericum prolificum](#)

Winterberry [Ilex verticillata](#)

“The aim here...is to provide for birds in all four seasons –

bugs, buds, and shelter in spring,
bugs, nest sites, and nest materials in summer,
bugs, fruit, nutritious berries, and shelter in autumn, and
seeds, berries, and shelter in winter.”

(Modified from Sorenson, [Planting Native to Attract Birds to Your Yard](#))

Buy plants (neonicotinoid-free certification, not a cultivar, as local as possible – ask, ask, ask)

Do not dig up plants in the wild!

Propagate and trade plants – collect seeds and grow them yourself.

Sellers:

Avalon Gardens, Chardon, Ohio

North Branch Nursery, Pemberville, Ohio

Natives in Harmony, Marengo, Ohio

Bench Farms, Curtice, Ohio

Ohio Prairie Nursery (for seeds)

Riverside Native Trees and Shrubs

Scioto Gardens, Powell, Ohio

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (by county, including Ottawa))

Lake Erie Islands Conservancy

Sample gardens: Native Plants for the Small Yard --- free PDF

http://lgnc.org/pdfdocs/brandes_book.pdf

Read:

Bringing Nature Home, **The Nature of Oaks**, and Nature's Best Hope, Doug Tallamy

The Birds at my Table, Darryl Jones

Planting Native to Attract Birds to your Yard, Sharon Sorenson

Noah's Garden, Sara Stein

William Cullina books:

Growing and Propagating Wildflowers

Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines

Native Ferns, Mosses, and Grasses

The Brother Gardeners and other books by Andrea Wulf (History)

Native Plants for New England Gardens, Richardson and Jaffe

WEBSITES (maps will show you if a plant is native to your ecoregion)

Ecological Heights

www.ecologicalheights.com

Missouri Botanical Garden

missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder

National Audubon Society

www.audubon.org/native-plants

Native Plant Finder (Tallamy)

www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder/

Native Plant Trust

nativeplanttrust.org

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

plants.usda.gov

FACEBOOK GROUPS (just a small sample)

Heights Pollinator Pathway

Native Plant Society of Northeast Ohio

Native Plant Gardens in the Upper Midwest

Native Plant Trust

Virginia Native Plant Society

North American Plant Society

Indiana Invasive Plant Advisory Committee

Native Plants of New England

Ohio's Wildflowers and Flora- Native, Alien, and Escaped