



Tips for Attracting Wildlife



Whether you are trying to attract or discourage wildlife in your yard, always remember a creature's three basic needs: food, water, shelter.

Tips for Attracting Wildlife:

Water

To provide water, anything from a small dish on the ground to a birdbath to a lavish water garden will do.

Here are some tips to make your water source more attractive:

- Many animals are attracted to the sound of running water. Anything from a simple drip system to a fountain or pump can help encourage animals to drink.
- Keep the water shallow and place several flat rocks in the water to provide footholds for birds or butterflies that may come to drink.
- To attract birds, try dropping some colored marbles into the water. The bright colors reflect in the sunlight which attracts birds.
- Always remember to keep your birdbath clean. Birds don't like to bathe in dirty water any more than we do! When you clean your birdbath, don't use chemicals which could be harmful to the birds.

Shelter

The type of shelter you provide depends on the species you are trying to attract.

- Nest boxes encourage many bird species to nest in your yard.
- Dead trees provide shelter for hundreds of species. If possible, always leave a dead tree standing!
- Brush piles, shrubs, fallen logs, or even a pile of rocks can provide shelter to everything from insects to birds to reptiles to small mammals like rabbits and chipmunks.
- Attract bats and bees to your yard by setting up houses for them. These can either be purchased at a garden store or you can build them yourself.
- Butterflies and reptiles benefit from basking areas. Anything from a pile of stones to a concrete statue will do.

Food

Again, the type of food you provide depends on the species you want to attract. Here are some tips on providing food to wildlife:

- Plant trees, shrubs, and flowers that provides food for the species you want to attract. Try to plan your plantings so there is a food source available year round.
- Many species of birds can be attracted to your yard with the right bird feeder and food.
- Hummingbirds benefit from nectar feeders.
- Overripe fruit like oranges and bananas attract butterflies.

Remember, to achieve the best results, try to make your yard as diverse as possible. The more choices you provide, the better your chances of attracting wildlife.



McHenry County
CONSERVATION DISTRICT