

# Birdscaping



## Prince Edward County

## Advice Sheet

### Attracting Birds to your Garden

Birds are lured by an abundance of food, nesting material and nesting places, shelter from cold winds and predators, and

fresh water. You can create a bird-scape slowly by concentrating on one area each year, adding a specimen tree one year, shrubbery the

next, etc. There are literally hundreds of trees, shrubs, vines and flowers that attract birds.

### Trees & Plants that attract birds

Trees include Eastern Hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*, providing nesting sites to at least 15 different species including robins, thrushes and warblers, goldfinch and the Ruffed Grouse. Eastern White Pine, *Pinus strobus*, hosts dozens of varieties of birds including Cooper's Hawks, Pileated Woodpeckers, and Grosbeaks. Other desirable conifers are Colorado Spruce, *Picea pungens*, Eastern Red Cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*, and Balsam Fir, *Abies balsamea*.

Paper Birch, *Betula papyrifera*, attracts Downy Woodpeckers, Great Blue Heron, Blackcapped Chickadees and the American Goldfinch. Red Mulberry, *Morus rubra*, brings in Indigo

Buntings and the Scarlet Tanagers. The Pin Cherry, *Prunus pensylvanica*, attracts the Eastern Bluebird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Cedar Waxwing, and Scarlet Tanager. Other deciduous specimen trees include various maples, oaks, beeches, and the American Mountain Ash, *Sorbus americana* with its clusters of orange red berries favoured by the Eastern Bluebird.

A shrub that holds its fruit long into the winter is the Japanese Barberry, *Berberis thunbergii*. The Bartram Serviceberry, *Amelanchier bartramiana*, lures thrushes, flickers, waxwings and redstarts. For a thicket or a hedge, consider the moisture loving American Elder, *Sambucus Canadensis*.

Bright red berries are produced

by the Common Winterberry, *Ilex verticillata*. Both a male and a female plant must be located within 12 metres of each other in order to produce fruit. The berries on this shrub last long into the winter.

Plant vines such as Virginia Creeper, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*, for fiery red autumn colour and American Bittersweet *Celastrus scandens*, for bright orange berries. Grapes of all varieties are a terrific source of food for birds.

Flowers that attract birds include Sunflower, *Helianthus annuus*, Tickseed, *Coreopsis* sp., Purple Coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*, Spider Flower, *Cleome spinosa*, Bachelor's Button, *Centaurea cyanus*, Delphinium, *Delphinium elatum*, or Cosmos, *cosmos* sp., just

over→

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to name a few. Beginning in late summer leave the seed heads on these plants to continue to provide food for birds long into winter.

Leave a portion of your property as wild as possible to provide shelter and food. Insecticides are harmful to birds. Do not use

insecticides if you want to host birdlife.

Birds avoid water that is more than 3 inches deep. Provide ledges in ponds where birds can wade in, bathe and drink. Water features should provide firm footing and be in an open area so birds can fly for cover if

necessary. Don't position a bird-bath near shrubbery where a cat can hide. If you have cats in your area, don't try to attract birds.

Submitted by Kathy MacPherson