

GARDENS for WILDLIFE

Compiled by ME 2.14.23

Resources for Central Texas gardeners compiled by Bastrop County Master Gardener Association.

These are resources for the design and wildflowers, shrubs, and trees that do well in a Texas home garden and landscape and provide habitat, food and shelter so butterflies, other insects, hummingbirds, other birds and small creatures thrive across the region even as the human population grows.

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Hummingbird Plants for Central Texas

https://www.wildflower.org/collections/printable_QR_main.php?collection=centex_hummingbird

Special Value to Native Bees

https://www.wildflower.org/collections/printable_QR_main.php?collection=xerces_native

Native Plants for Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Post Oak Savannah vegetative region

This EPA Level III ecoregion encompasses all or part of 56 Texas counties.

https://www.wildflower.org/collections/printable_QR_main.php?collection=er33

Native Plants for Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Blackland Prairies

This EPA Level III ecoregion encompasses all or part of 42 Texas counties.

https://www.wildflower.org/collections/printable_QR_main.php?collection=er32

Drought Resistant Plants for Texas

[https://www.wildflower.org/plants/combo.php?](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/combo.php?start=0&distribution=TX&fromsearch=true1&pagecount=10&pagecount=100)

[start=0&distribution=TX&fromsearch=true1&pagecount=10&pagecount=100](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/combo.php?start=0&distribution=TX&fromsearch=true1&pagecount=10&pagecount=100)

Garden Style San Antonio

Garden Resources

Getting started- gardening basics, design ideas, plant selections, water and maintenance in a Texas climate.

<https://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com/garden-resources/>

Gardens for Wildlife

<https://www.gardenstylesanantonio.comgarden-tips-blog/category/wildlife/>

“Make a place in your yard for birds, bees, and butterflies by providing food, water, cover and a place to raise their young. “ using design, water features and native plants to create habitat.

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Garden Style San Antonio (CONTINUED)

Gardens for Wildlife

“Choose native or adapted plants shown to benefit wildlife. Homeowners often pick non-native plants because they are widely promoted, but they may offer minimal benefits for wildlife. Native plants evolved here with wildlife, supporting their needs for food and shelter.” For example, plant selections can provide butterflies and hummingbirds with 12 months of nectar:

<https://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com/garden-tips-blog/12-months-of-nectar/>

“Your garden has limited space, so choose plants wisely. Include a diversity of plants that will provide food and shelter at different times of the year and grow to different heights. “

“Plants for a San Antonio Wildscape”- a short list. There are many more that will meet your landscape design goals.

- **Trees**– Hackberry, live oak, mesquite, bur oak, Texas persimmon, Ashe juniper, Texas mountain laurel, Mexican buckeye
- **Shrubs**– Possomhaw holly, loquat, Indian hawthorn, butterfly bush, red yucca, American beautyberry, cenizo
- **Perennials**– Butterfly weed, salvia, indigo spires, Turk’s cap, shrimp plant, firebush, fall aster, columbine
- **Re-seeding Annuals** – Sunflowers, larkspur, coreopsis, cosmos
- **Creeping and Filler Plants**– French thyme, lamb’s ear, wild strawberry, herbs of all kinds
- **Vines**– Coral honeysuckle, crossvine, Virginia creeper, hyacinth bean
- **Ornamental Grasses** – Little bluestem, Muhly grass, side-oats grama

Wildlife Habitat Design

https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/growgreen/wildlife_habitat_s.pdf

City of Austin

Native and Adapted Plant Guide

<https://www.austintexas.gov/faq/where-can-i-get-copy-native-adapted-landscape-plants-guide>

Landscape Design - Resources for design and transition to a “green garden” that uses water and plants to create thoughtful and beautiful Central Texas landscapes that enhance wildlife habitat that humans enjoy too.

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/landscape-design>

<https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/growgreen/factsheets/landscaping.pdf>

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Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Wildscapes

https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/wildscapes/

Design tips and plant guidance by Texas ecoregion.

“Texas Wildscapes is a habitat restoration and conservation plan for rural and urban areas. It enables Texans to contribute to wildlife conservation by developing wildlife habitats where they live, work and play. Through Wildscapes, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department encourages landowners to restore habitat, for birds, insects, reptiles and even small mammals, on their properties. These habitats must still abide by local and county ordinances, but small changes in our landscape can result in significant improvement in wildlife habitat.”

“Texas Wildscapes – Gardening for Wildlife”

https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_br_w7000_0538.pdf

“So you Want a Hummingbird Garden

Quick tips for Attracting and Maintaining a Butterflies in your Texas Garden”

https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_br_w7000_1174.pdf

“So you want a Butterfly Garden

Quick tips for Attracting and Maintaining Hummingbird Habitat in Texas”

https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_br_w7000_1173.pdf

Texas A&M University

Landscape Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

IPM is “a strategy used to manage insect pests in the landscape by using economically and environmentally sustainable practices. Today, the concept of chemical treatment as a singular means to control plant pests is no longer viable or acceptable. The goal of IPM is *not* to [eliminate insect pests](#), but rather to strengthen and stabilize the landscape (ecosystem) so that conditions are more favorable for plants than they are for pests.” <https://landscapeipm.tamu.edu/>

Earth-Kind “10 Ways to Make your Landscape Earth-Kind”

“environmentally friendly management practices to produce landscapes that are beautiful, low-maintenance, and sustainable.

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/files/2015/02/eht_10ways2earthkind.pdf

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Sources for Texas Native Plants

- o Bastrop County Master Gardener Association
Check <https://txmg.org/bastropcounty/news-and-articles/> for the dates of the
 - BCMGA Spring Plant Sale, Mayfest Park, Bastrop, TX (one March Saturday)
 - BCMGA Fall Plant Sale, Mayfest Park, Bastrop, TX (one October Saturday)
- o Native Plant Society of Texas,
Check npsot.org site in February and September for a list of the NPSOT Chapter plant sales which specialize in Texas native plants for Texas landscapes.
These are in various locations over the spring and fall. Great excuse to visit some small and big Texas towns. (Spring 2022 example <https://npsot.org/wp/story/2022/14280/>)
- o Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin wildflower.org Multiple fall and spring weekends.
- o Bastrop Botanical Gardens, Cedar Creek, TX <https://bastropbotanicalgardens.com/>
- o Bloomers, Elgin, TX <https://www.facebook.com/BloomersElgin/>
- o Graystone Gardens, Bastrop, TX <https://www.facebook.com/graystonegardens>
- o Grandma's House Garden Nursery <https://www.facebook.com/GrandmasHouseSmithville>

Ask if seeds or plants have been treated with pesticides that can damage native bees, butterflies and other insects. <https://thegardendiaries.blog/2019/12/19/updated-neonic-and-pesticide-free-nurseries/>

Consider seeding Cowpen Daisy in the fall

"There are a few native wildflower species that you can count on every year. One you can't miss is **Cowpen Daisy, *Verbesina encelioides*. (Golden Crownbeard)**, an annual forb of about 1-4 ft tall that likes to grow in disturbed sites. Like other wildflower seeds, plant in a sunny area --- clear debris, rake to loosen soil, sprinkle seeds, tamp in lightly. They'll germinate with winter rain and cool temps.

It's **drought tolerant** and a **prolific bloomer** from late March through November with yellow flowers up to 2 inches across welcoming spring and fall migrating Monarchs. This overachieving member of the aster family plays **host plant** to the *Bordered Patch Butterfly*, *Chlosyne lacinia*, Silvery Checkerspot butterfly, and the gold moth, *Basilodes pepita*,

Where there is one plant you will find more as they like to grow in groups, and are even referred to as weedy by those that are less appreciative. This makes for beautiful sweeping lines of **yellow in the hottest driest times** in Texas. Some people will smile, pause for a moment, and wonder at the grit this yellow flower must have to thrive in a Texas August.

Our native bees also love the blooming colonies of Cowpen Daisy that provide an exceptional nectar source at a time of the year when the nectar supply can be kind of scarce. The flower heads give way to seed heads for dove, turkey and other birds."

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Travis County Audubon

Bird Habitat Plants for Travis County

Beyond the garden, what plants serve the needs of birds in Travis County for food, shelter and raising their young.

<https://travisaudubon.org/home/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Bird-PlantsTravis-September2010-2.pdf>

Gardening Resources

Includes list of websites, organizations, local nurseries and books for Texas bird lovers and gardeners.

<https://travisaudubon.org/gardening-resources>

Bird Friendly Communities

“Birds face so many challenges on a daily basis: habitat loss, climate change, predation, building collisions, pesticides, and more. You can help birds by creating a bird-friendly community with these simple guidelines!

- Provide food, water, and shelter
- Landscape with native plants
- Keep your cat indoors
- Reduce the use of pesticides
- Prevent window collisions
- Turn lights off at night “

“Reintroducing native plants can help restore native habitat that our local birds need to thrive. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Understory Plants:** American Beautyberry, Evergreen Sumac, White Mistflower, Carolina Buckthorn, Lindheimer’s Silktassel, Agarita, Texas Persimmon, Wafer Ash, Rough-leaf Dogwood
- **Escape Cover and Places to Raise Young:** dense evergreen shrubs such as Mountain Laurel, Yaupon, Possumhaw, Cherry Laurel, Texas Sage (Cenizo), Wax Myrtle, trees, native bunch grasses
- **Native Grasses:** Leave the seed heads on through the winter
- **Native Berries:** American Beautyberry, Evergreen Sumac, Fragrant Sumac, Flame-leaf Sumac, Pigeonberry, Coralberry, Native Lantana, Chile Petin
- **Nectar-producing Plants:** Red Buckeye, Mexican Buckeye, Turk’s Cap, Fall Obedient Plant, Salvias, Flame Acanthus “

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Travis County Audubon (continued)

Hummingbirds Garden

Travis County Audubon suggests the following native plants for Hummingbirds

<https://travisaudubon.org/home/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/TAS-Hummerhelper-v2.pdf>

Attracting Caterpillars

Caterpillars are a primary source of food for most young birds. Travis County Audubon suggests the following plants as larval plants for butterflies in the garden:

<http://texasento.net/CenTexPlnts.pdf>

Visit a Bastrop County Native Plant Garden

Cedar Creek Butterfly Garden, Cedar Creek Park, 5540 FM 535, Cedar Creek, TX
Maintained by Bastrop County Master Gardener Association.

Bastrop Public Library Monarch Butterfly Garden, West side of Bastrop Public Library.
Maintained by Lost Pines Master Naturalists. Est fall 2021.

Learn more, be inspired at the need and successes of gardens for Wildlife

The Top 10 Things New Native Plant Gardeners Need to Know

By Illinois horticulturalist, gardener, and educator Ken Williams

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4caQ9o4Naw>

Nothing but Native with Doug Tallamy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4qkJ3ys5dM>

Webinar by author, entomologist, ecologist, conservationist, and professor at the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware Dr Doug Tallamy.

Oudolf Garden District. <https://oudolfgardendetroit.org/>

Designed by Piet Oudolf.