

Help nature, plant natives!

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## GREAT NATIVE TREES, SHRUBS, AND PLANTS FOR BIRDS

Turn your yard into a year-round feeding station for Wisconsin birds by planting native trees, shrubs and plants. By adding one or more of these bird-friendly natives you'll attract more birds and give them the food and shelter they need to raise a family, survive a Wisconsin winter or make the long migration south. A win-win for you and the birds!



### Oak

- Oak trees (*Quercus* species) support over 530 species of butterflies and moth caterpillars, more than any other woody plant.
- Many migrating and nesting birds rely on these caterpillars for food, including such favorites as warblers, tanagers, and orioles.
- Acorns are eaten by blue jays, red-headed woodpeckers, and other wildlife.



- **white oak** (*Q. alba*)
- **red oak** (*Q. rubra*)
- **bur oak** (*Q. macrocarpa*)



### Examples of native species for birds.



### Cherry

- Ranging in size from small shrubs to large trees, cherries (*Prunus* species) host over 450 species of caterpillars that provide food for birds.
- Fruits attract birds from mid-summer to fall, including red-headed woodpecker, rose-breasted grosbeak, bluebirds, and dozens more.



- **chokecherry** (*P. virginia*)
- **black cherry** (*P. serotina*)
- **pin cherry** (*P. pensylvanica*)



### Viburnum

- Viburnums (*Viburnum* species) are fruit-bearing shrubs whose dense structure provides excellent cover during migration and nesting.
- Fruits in fall, winter, and early spring attract robins, waxwings, bluebirds, thrushes, catbirds, and more.



- **highbush cranberry** (*V. trilobum*)
- **nannyberry** (*V. lentago*)
- **downy arrowwood** (*V. rafinesquianum*)

### Willow

- Willows (*Salix* species) host 456 species of caterpillars, second only to oaks.
- Spring flowers attract small insects that provide a critical food source for early spring migrants like kinglets and warblers.
- Dense growth structure of some species forms thickets of cover and offers great nesting sites.



- **pussy willow** (*S. discolor*)
  - **black willow** (*S. nigra*)
- [Note: avoid non-natives like weeping willow (*S. babylonica*)]



### Dogwood

- Dogwoods (*Cornus* species) provide good cover and ample clusters of fruit during fall that attract vireos, thrushes, waxwings, sparrows, and others.



- **pagoda dogwood** (*C. alternifolia*)
- **gray dogwood** (*C. racemosa*)
- **red-osier dogwood** (*C. sericea*)
- **silky dogwood** (*C. amomum*)



### Serviceberry

- Serviceberries (*Amelanchier* species) are among the first flowering woody plants in spring and provide fruit by early to mid-summer when few other fruit sources are available.
- In spring and summer, these shrubs and small trees attract bird species such as waxwings, flickers, thrushes, vireos, tanagers, and warblers.



- **alleghany serviceberry** (*A. laevis*)
- **downy serviceberry** (*A. arborea*)
- **inland serviceberry** (*A. interior*)

### Birch

- Birches (*Betula* species) host over 400 species of butterfly and moth caterpillars, making them fantastic trees for migrating and resident birds.
- Their seeds are beloved by sparrows and finches, including redpolls and siskins in fall and winter.
- Loose bark hosts insects for woodpeckers, creepers, nuthatches, and chickadees, especially in winter.



- **paper birch** (*B. papyrifera*)
- **yellow birch** (*B. alleghaniensis*) in the north
- **river birch** (*B. nigra*) in the south



### Flowers for hummingbirds

- Many colorful, native wildflowers attract hummingbirds and other pollinators like bees and butterflies.



- **columbine** (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- **butterfly milkweed** (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- **cardinal flower** (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- **wild bergamot** (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- **spotted jewelweed** (*Impatiens capensis*)



### Conifers

- Conifers, or evergreen trees, provide year-round shelter for roosting and escape from weather.
- Pine and spruce each host over 150 species of caterpillars, while junipers produce attractive fruits for fall and winter birds.
- Cones supply seeds for nuthatches, jays, and various finches, such as crossbills.



- **red pine** (*Pinus resinosa*)
- **white pine** (*Pinus strobus*)
- **N. white cedar** (*Thuja occidentalis*) in the north
- **Eastern red cedar** (*Juniperus virginia*) in the south



### Native grasses

- Seeds of native grasses provide food for birds in fall and winter like juncos, sparrows, finches, and turkeys.
- Their structure provides cover and potential nesting sites for ground-dwelling birds, including upland game species, meadowlarks, sparrows, and others.



- **big bluestem** (*Andropogon gerardii*)
- **little bluestem** (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- **indiangrass** (*Sorghastrum nutans*)

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More  
Information

Learn more ways to get involved in conserving Wisconsin's natural heritage. Go to **dnr.wi.gov** and search "NHC."



Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation  
101 S. Webster St.  
Madison, WI 53707  
608-261-6449

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