

# Garden Talk

## Gardening 4 Birds

Gardening for birds is easy, fun and rewarding. Bird life varies widely through the seasons, and Arizona is one of the major migratory routes from North to South. Birds will want to rest, nest and feed from your home when provided with three basic essentials. **Cover, Water & Food**

**Cover** - Many new birders start with the feeder and wonder why so few birds visit their home. Birds want to feel safe and the height of trees, cover of shrubs or the fruit and colors of flowers provide safety. Plants that provide berries, fragrant flowers and dense cover will promote more bird activity. The attached list of plants is designed to attract a larger flock and variety of birds.

**Water** - Birds like to bath, drink and play in water that is no deeper

than 3 inches. A simple bird bath will suffice, but you can get much more



elaborate with ponds, waterfalls and fountains. Just make sure there is a spot for birds to frolic in the water features. Birds are like people in they prefer a bathing area similar to a beach sloping into the water. As things begin to freeze in winter, water becomes more important. Water can be kept open by pouring hot water in a birdbath each morning, or try using a bird bath heater.

**Food** - Feeders for seed, thistle socks, suet holders and Hummingbird and Oriole feeders are excellent additions to a backyard habitat planted with seed and fruit producing trees, shrubs and flowers. Titmice, Chickadees, Jays and many others are attracted to sunflower seed, and Goldfinch especially love thistle seed. Suet is enjoyed, even needed in winter by all insect eating birds.

### The Beginnings

**We Plan, You Plant** design service. Take advantage of this valuable designing service offered exclusively by Watters.

First take stock of your existing landscape. Most of the native plants are utilized by different species of birds. Many shrubs don't look showy to us, but are a virtual gourmet grocery store to birds.

Make a simple sketch of your home, outdoor living areas, utility areas and



existing trees and shrubs so we can better plan a suitable bird friendly yard that welcomes new visitors.

**Next** - Decide on the types of plants you like from the attached list. It is entirely possible to have a lovely yard that is also bird friendly. An arrangement of tall, medium and short plants is best for attracting birds. Cover and food type plants come in all sizes. Different types of birds feed and live at all levels of the yard. From the ground loving Quail and Flycatchers, to the high flying Oriole and Cardinals there are habitats for each. If you are interested in attracting a particular type of bird, then add more of their favorite plants.

# Finally

The addition of shorter grasses and even weeds will attract more birds. The seed formed from grasses and weeds are a staple diet for many birds. If you have the space add mounds of rocks, brush piles and even leaving dead trees upright or fallen will attract a broader variety of birds.

Try to avoid spraying insecticides in the birds habitat. A large number of insect eating birds will be attracted to the new habitat you've created. The more birds, the more insect eating creatures you have in the yard. They will keep bugs under control. If you do need to spray, remove feeders and bird baths from the area. Avoid spraying during the peak feeding times before 9 AM and after 4 PM.

Now you can put the bird feeders and houses up to supplement your birds natural wildlife habitat.

## Tall Canopy Plants

Aspen  
Cherry  
Chokecherry  
Cottonwood  
Fir  
Golden Chain Tree  
Golden Rain  
Hackberry  
Hawthorn



Currant  
Desert Willow  
Elderberry  
Euonymus  
Fruit Trees  
Gooseberry  
Honeysuckle  
Juniper  
Lavender  
Lilac  
Manzanita  
Mimosa, Albezia  
Mock Orange  
Mountain Mahogany  
Nanking Cherry  
Oregon Grape, Mahonia  
Plum  
Potentilla  
Privet  
Pyracantha  
Quince  
Red Tipped Photinia  
Redbud  
Rhododendron

Roses

Sand Cherry  
Service Berry  
Snowberry  
Spirea  
Squawbush, Rhus  
Sumac  
Weigela

## Low Growing Plants

Autumn Sage, Salvia  
Aster  
Astilbe  
Akebia  
Beans  
Bee Balm  
Blackberry  
Blanket Flower, Gaillardia  
Borage  
Butterfly Weed, Asclepias  
Candytuft  
Clematis  
Columbine  
Cornflower, Echinacea  
Coral Bell  
Coreopsis  
Cosmos  
Cupids Dart, Catananche  
Delphinium  
Dianthus  
Fleabane, Erigeron  
Forget-Me-Not  
Foxglove  
Fuchsia  
Gayfeather, Liatris  
Geranium  
Gladiolus  
Goldenrod, Solidago

Grapes  
Hollyhock  
Honeysuckle  
Iris  
Ivy  
Junipers Beard, Centranthus  
Lobelia  
Lupine  
Marigolds  
Monkey Flower, Mimulus  
Oregon Grape, Mahonia  
Oregano  
Penstemon  
Phlox  
Pincushion Flower, Scabiosa  
Potentia  
Ranunculus  
Red Hot Poker  
Rubeckia  
Sage  
Salvia  
Sea Pink Thrift, Armeria  
Sedum  
Shasta Daisy  
Silver lace Vine  
Snap Dragon  
Speedwell, Veronica  
Spider Flower, Cleome  
Spirea  
Strawberries  
Sweet Peas  
Trumpet Vine  
Virginia Creeper Winter creeper  
Yarrow  
Zinnia



[wattersonline.com](http://wattersonline.com)

1815 W. Iron Springs Road, Prescott, AZ 86305

"Where People who Love to Garden, Love to Shop"™