Gardening For Wildlife

Basics Of An Effective Backyard Habitat

By Mark Klym

Coordinator – Texas Wildscapes
Why Garden For Wildlife

- Enjoy gardening and want to do something different
- Have seen something unusual in your garden and want to provide for it
- Upset by the loss of habitat you see around you each day
- Just think it would be cool!
When Assisting in Developing a Wildscape

- It is very important to know what the person expects as an outcome.
Texas Wildscapes Was

- Designed to help Texans restore their understanding and love for nature while at the same time restoring some of the habitat lost each day to urbanization.
Start With The Basics
Wildlife Requires The Same Basics We Do

- Food
- Shelter
- Water
- Space
Need To Provide These

- In appropriate combinations – not as individual specimens.
Providing Food
Food is best provided by:

- Native plants
- Insects
- Other wildlife
Native Plants

- Every part of the plant can be used by something
  - Flower
  - Nectar
  - Seed
  - Stem
  - Leaves
  - Roots
Native Plants

- Also attract insects and small animals that will provide food for other species
When Using Native Plants

- Diversify
- Cluster
- Partner
Shelter

Photo by Nancy Klym
Shelter Is Often More Important Than Food

- Can be provided naturally or by artifacts
Natural Shelter Banks

- Trees
- Shrubs
- Thickets
- Native bunch grass
- Snags
Shelter Artifacts

- Nest boxes and shelves
- Brush piles
- Rock piles
- Rock walls
- Burrows
What Is A Thicket?

- Be sure to recreate some structure
  - Overstory
  - Understory
  - Shrubs and herbs
  - Groundcover

- Doesn’t hurt to include some vines!
Water!
Keep It

- Available
- Fresh
- Safe
Remember The Size of The User!
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