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Eric is a bird lover and photographer who is amazed by the natural world almost every day. Create a bird habitat in the backyard with bird feeders, water sources and natural vegetation. Create a bird habitat in your BackyardEstablishing sanctuary for wild birds in your backyard has many benefits. The bird gives us the opportunity to experience nature in a world that has become too crowded and see it up close on our own property. Watching the antics of blue jays, cardinals, Chickadees, Nuthatches, and other songbirds has a calming effect and can help relieve stress. Attracting colorful songbirds in your backyard is not as hard as you think. If you just provide what they need, there is a very good chance that they will quickly find their way to your property. In this article you will learn some simple ideas for turning your yard into a bird and wildlife habitat. Backyard Birds is educational, for children and adults. The whole family can participate, providing an environmental learning opportunity that is difficult to experience when birds are scattered across forests and fields. Birds benefit as well. Because of the fragmentation of their habitats as a result of land development, many species of birds face breeding problems that put them at risk of decline. By providing food, water and shelter, homeowners help in the life cycle of many beneficial species. In addition, birds consume millions of insects and parasites every day, which benefits not only other wild animals, but also farmers and gardeners. In this article you will find some tips on turning your property into a mini bird sanctuary. These are lessons I have learned over the years and I will cover everything from choosing the right seeds to avoiding unwanted visitors to bird feeders. It's even good for the environment when we make our yards in bird-friendly habitats. We tend to appreciate songbirds just for their attractive colors and music, but the fact is, little feathered guys play an important role in nature. Red-breasted Nuthatch on FeederEric1. Put up bird feederPutting up a simple bird feeder is the first step and an easy way to bring more birds to your yard. For many backyard birders, this is the only step they have decided to take, and it is a great way to get started in bird watching. Feeders come in many shapes and sizes, and the type you choose will depend on the type of food you want to serve and the type of bird you want to attract. Many people set up several different types of feeders to ensure that many bird species take care. Here are a few ideas: Bird FeedersHopper feeder types: Probably the most common type of feeder, they are usually made of wooden roofs and platforms and have glass or plastic with holes about half an inch from the base of the feeder. Birdsays is often filled through a removable top. Platform part part The feeder constantly fills up with the seeds as the birds peck away at it, and the clear sides allow you to see when you need to refill. Platform feeder: Like a feeder bunker with no clear sides, the feeder platform allows birds to perch along the edges and access to the seed. These feeders are easily filled and will benefit most species; however, they don't do quite as well of working keeping the seeds dry in bad weather. Tube feeders: These are high cylindrical feeders, usually made of clear plastic, which have several small perches and holes where birds can feed. Like the feeder bunker, they are easily filled from above. This is a huge advantage for small bird species like Titmice, Sparrows, and Goldfinches, which can get bullied from platform-like feeder larger, more aggressive birds. Suet Feeders: Suet is usually made from a mixture of animal fat and bird feed, and it comes in the shape of blocks. It sounds awful, but some birds love it. Suet feeders are small cells that hang on a branch or pole and can contain vanity blocks. Birds such as Nuthatches and woodpeckers will perch on them and peck away at the suet. Seeds of socks: Seeds of socks, sometimes called Nyjer or thistle socks, hold less seeds, and hang with a branch or pole. The birds will perch on or near the sock and peck the seeds from tiny holes in the sock fabric. Thistle seed and Nyjer works with seed socks and will attract goldfinches. Nectar Feeders: There are many specially made feeders on the market specifically designed to attract hummingbirds. They can be filled with pre-made nectar or sugar-water solution that you create yourself. They should be clean and insect-free. Some backyard birds specialize in hummingbirds. Other nectar feeders are made specifically to attract the Orioles. Black Chickadee on Feeder2. Choose Right Birdseed and FoodMixed Birdseed with a good assortment of small seeds, sunflower seeds, corn kernels, nuts and fruits will cover all grounds for most species. Black sunflower seed oil is always a great success, especially in winter. Some birds can be expensive, especially good sunflower seeds or cracked corn, but you can always purchase an expensive bag and mix it with a cheaper brand, so it lasts longer. Birds will even take whole peanuts and pieces of dried fruit if you fancy them. Most birds you come across in your backyard can and will consume different foods, but some of them are experts. Keep in mind that some feeders are built for a certain size or type of seed. For example, large sunflower seeds won't work with some feeder tubes, and it doesn't make sense to fill the feeder with thistle seeds. Choose feeders and seeds based on your budget, and what type you would like to attract. When you first start you probably want to choose a good quality, basic seed that covers needs needs bird species. However, as you learn more about the needs of different species, you can tailor your food offerings to the types of birds you want to attract.3 Add bird baths for birds SourcesPutting to bird feeders or two is a good start to converting your property into a bird-friendly habitat, but adding a water source will really make your yard attractive to wildlife. As feeders, there are several different options to choose from when deciding what type of water source to provide for birds. Types of water features for BirdsBird baths: either hanging or on a pedestal, this is the most common option. They must be small, and taller or away from any vegetation where the predator can hide. They should also be placed in reasonable proximity to food. Fountains and Misters: Birds seem to be attracted by the sound and movement of running water. Setting up a small, solar-powered fountain or gentleman in your backyard will be just what they need. It can be built as a small pond at ground level, or even included in a bird bath. Solar-powered fountains can be inexpensive to buy and cost nothing to work with. Build your own: It can be difficult to find an option that is good for birds and meets the decorative needs of your yard. You can create your own water source for the birds. You can use household items or start from scratch. Make sure it's no more than a few inches deep, and incorporate running water or fog function into it if you want. Winter Bird Baths: There are heated bird baths available on the market that will allow you to provide water to your backyard visitors even in the winter. Keep in mind that they are not necessary for the health of birds, as they can find the moisture they need from other sources throughout the winter season. Singing birds will appreciate the water source, such as a bird bath. How to care for a bird bath4. Plant vegetation and shelter for BirdsYou can make your yard attractive to birds by simply doing a little minor landscaping. Planting trees and shrubs provides shelter and nesting sites, as well as a hunting ground for feeders such as Robins and Catbirds. Add a birdbox or poultry farm to encourage breeding. Leave dead trees where they stand if you don't mind them and if it's safe to do so. They provide a nesting spot for some birds and a forage area for woodpeckers. When choosing plants for your yard you will want to explore and choose from local species where possible. After all, the point is to bring back the natural habitat for the birds, so attracting foreign species can't help them much. You also want to remove non-local invasive plant species, if you can. A well landscaped courtyard filled with trees, plants and gardens will have a lot to do with making your property bird friendly. And, naturally, a landscaped yard filled with native vegetation Look beautiful. It's probably not a coincidence! With the right vegetation you can attract birds that will never come to your feeder. Bird Sanctuary Problems and IssuesY went through all the challenges of installing some bird feeder, choosing the right seed, placing water features and planting some beautiful vegetation. Your bird sanctuary will wash up! However, even if you have built this habitat for songbirds you may notice a few intruders. Here are some of the questions backyard birders face: Working with squirrels and chipmunksThe little buggers will want to get your bird feed! You can't care, and you can think of them as just another addition to your backyard. Or they could drive you crazy. They will cost you a few bucks in birds every week, that's for sure. There are many feeders on the market that are designed to beat squirrels and some of them even work. You can put out a forage station specifically designed for squirrels in the hope of distracting them from the bird feeding area. Chipmunks are a little more complicated. Squirrels will vary over a wider area, but chipmunks stick to rough territory, usually under the acre, and once they find a feeder they will beat it over and over again as long as there is food. If your feeder is in an area where a few chipmunk territory overlap, you are going to go through a lot of feed. You can limit the amount of chaos caused by proteins and chipmunks by selecting protein-proof feeders. Your bird sanctuary will attract more than birds! Other unwanted invadersBlack bears love black sunflower seed oil and they will swipe as much as they can from your serve. Aside from the fact that they usually completely destroy your bird feeders during their night raids, bears can come to the thought of feeding as a food source, going back again and again. The reasons why we don't want black bears to live around human habitation in search of food are obvious. Unfortunately, this doesn't usually end well for bears that get out of control. Feed the birds in the morning and let the feeder run out at night. Bring the feeders indoors in the evening if you have to. Bears usually hit the feeder at night, so this basically eliminates the problem. Worse than squirrels, chipmunks and black bears combined is the cat issue. Cats kill billions of wild birds every year. Cats are predators, and even well-fed cats will kill the bird if they can. It's not the cat's fault; it's the owner's fault. Keep your cat indoors! Domestic cats are not a natural part of our ecosystem and they can devastate the local bird population. If you know you have a cat issue, please don't put out food and water for the birds until it is resolved. You're only going to call the dinner call for Stray and wandering domestic cats kill billions of songbirds every year. A few simple farm tipsany birds are going to gather exists to transmit the disease. Preventing the spread of disease and disease by washing feeders and other surfaces weekly in a water/bleach solution. Clean the mess under the bird feeder by raking the trash away. This also makes it less likely that rats and field mice will come to your feeder at night, and that means it's less likely they'll find their way into your home. Make sure the food is stored safely to avoid mold and contamination. Choose airtight containers that rodents can't easily chew their way into. This reduces the likelihood of any disease spreading to your visiting birds. Bring more birds to your yard! Creating a backyard bird habitat will bring new visitors to your backyard, and can kick you off a lifelong journey of discovering the natural world. Inviting birds to your property is helpful, and good for birds if you do it right. Soon you will find yourself with a bird guide in your hand, trying to determine that colorful thing flogs around your bird. Good luck and have fun while creating your bird habitat yard, and congratulations on the decision in your piece for saving the songbird population.CommentsCyrille Turatsinze on August 10, 2020: A very inspiring article. Its going to help me improve and attract more birds to my property.Eric Dockett (author) from USA June 27, 2020:Hi Sarian - Rat tough, but there are a few things you can try.1. Use a type of feeder that prevents birds from spilling so many seeds on the ground. Sweep under the feeders every night and try to get rid of any seeds that have fallen to the ground. Bring the feeders at night. Store additional seeds as well as feeders in containers made for animal feed. Here's another article that talks about unwanted visitors feeding for birds. Good luck! June 26, 2020: We have bird feeders on our deck. We do not object to squirrels or chipmunks, but the farmer on the way cleared his yard and the rats have now migrated to our yard. I don't like killing anything, but it's hard for me to get rats to leave. Now I'm trying to come up with a way to get the feeders unavailable to the rats and maybe that will cause them to leave. Does anyone have any suggestions for easy feeders and a way to catch the seeds from planting on the ground as well as any ways to let the rats leave other than killing them, although I'm afraid it will have to come to that. I've tried wood ash, ammonia on rags. At the end of my mind. -/Eric Dockett (author) of the US February 04, 2020:@Flora - You're asking about two of the toughest questions faced by backyard birders! :) First squirrels: I that, given the choice, squirrels will take advantage of light food rather than try to fight off bird feeders. Birds. can try placing easy food access from the bird feeder and seeing if squirrels prefer it. Unfortunately, squirrels and birds eat a lot of the same thing, so there will always be a certain attraction for your feeders. Cat stuff is tough. The solution is that your neighbors stop letting their cats wander, but probably there's nothing you can do about it. You can remove vegetation that gives them easy ambush positions for your birds and try to clear the seeds so the birds don't land so much. Ultimately, you may need to stop feeding if the cat is not likely to stop hanging around. Yes, I know it's a very disappointing situation. Again, cat owners prefer to be good neighbors and don't let your pets wander is the answer. Good luck. Here is another article that deals with these situations in more detail: February 04, 2020:1 there are two questions I hope someone can answer for me: (1) How should I set up a feed station so I can feed both squirrels and birds, and (2) How can I protect my yard from my backyard neighbor's cats? They have two cats they allow outdoors every morning and only return home at night. (I don't understand how really destructive cats can be in the bird environment until I read your posts.) EMardy on January 14, 2020: Wow. Thanks for the info. I'm glad that someone recognizes the difficulties that wild birds face every day. I will definitely use this information to create my own backyard bird sanctuary and share these ideas for my friends and family. Eric Dokett (author) from the U.S. January 22, 2018:@Sherri - I would like to have a good answer to this question. I have the same problem sometimes, and the best thing I can do is try to scare the cats away when I see them so they don't feel like my yard is a safe place. It works somewhat, but when they don't stop sticking around I have to take the feeders down. The solution, ultimately, is that people choose to be good neighbors and responsible pet owners and stop letting their cats wander. Aside from harming birds, wandering domestic cats cause a bunch of extra problems. Sherry on January 21, 2018: So how do you keep neighborly cats out of your yard when neighbors refuse to keep their cats indoors? Cynthia Hatom of Diamondhead July 28, 2015: I have a bird sanctuary in my backyard. I live in the deep south we have a bird all year long. Jonas Rodrigo on July 24, 2015: Great idea and great tutorial! Now I wish I had a backyard so I could do this. Good hub! Jonas Hub! Jonas download ppt on national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in india. national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in india pdf download

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