Attracting Birds and Wildlife to the Garden

Spring 2015 Garden Smarter Series
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Some possibilities
Other possibilities

- Some unwanted or unpopular guests come along and need to be managed
  - Deer
  - Rabbits
  - Squirrels
  - Moles
  - Voles
  - Chipmunks
  - Groundhogs
  - Snakes
Ecosystem

An area within the natural environment in which physical abiotic factors
- Soil
- Climate
- Light
- Nutrients

Function/interact together with biotic organisms
- Plants
- animals
- Creepy/crawly things
Habitat

A collection of elements in an environment where an organism lives, that are necessary for its survival
Habitat - One Approach

Much wildlife hanging in this yard?
Habitat

More appealing to wildlife & some humans
Habitat
Habitat Essentials

• **Food** — seeds, bugs, nuts, berries

• **Water** — ponds, bird baths, puddles

• **Shelter** — thickets, rockpiles

• **Nesting Sites** — bird houses, trees, shrubs
Supportive Landscape Practices

• Provide a diverse plant community
• Layer plant material
• Providing plants that are a food source – nuts, fruit, berries
• Using Native plants
• Practice Integrated Pest Management
• Leave some leaf litter on the ground – don’t be so tidy
Why use Native Plants

• Local wildlife evolved with plants – the native plant communities are their habitat providing food, shelter and a place to raise their young – support 10 to 50 times as many species as non-natives

• Adapted to local ecosystems

• Preserve balance and beauty of natural ecosystems

• More resistant to insects and diseases – reduce or eliminate need for pesticides (put down the poisons)
Plant Selection

- **Availability** – Maryland Native Plant Nurseries
- **Source Lists**
  - [www.hgic.umd.edu](http://www.hgic.umd.edu) publication HG121
  - [www.mdflora.org](http://www.mdflora.org) plant resources
- **Plant Lists:**
  - [www.hgic.umd.edu](http://www.hgic.umd.edu) Publication HG120
  - [www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake](http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake)
    - [www.fws.gov/chesapeakebay/BayScapes/bsresources/bsnurseries.htm](http://www.fws.gov/chesapeakebay/BayScapes/bsresources/bsnurseries.htm)
- **Local Sources**
  - Md. Native Nursery, and Heartwood
  - Others??
Important Bird Areas

Maryland-DC Important Bird Areas

1. Cranesville Swamp
2. Wolf Swamp
3. Finzel Swamp
4. Chapman State Park
5. Belt Woods
6. Jug Bay
7. Fort Smallwood
8. Hart-Miller Island
9. Eastern Neck NWR
10. Southern Dorchester County
11. Central Chesapeake Islands
12. Somerset-Wicomico Marshes
13. Maryland Coastal Bays
14. Assateague Island
15. Parkers Creek
16. Chino Farms
17. Patuxent Research Refuge
18. Green Ridge
19. Patapsco Valley
20. Great Cypress Swamp
21. Pocomoke-Nassawango
22. Prettyboy
23. South River Greenway
24. Tuckahoe Creek
25. Idlywild
26. Nanticoke
27. Lower C&O Canal

Identified 2009 - 2010
28. Monocacy Grasslands - Feb 2009
29. Indian Springs WMA - May 2009
30. Mattawoman Creek - Oct 2009
32. Zekiah Swamp - Jan 2010
33. St. Mary's River - Jan 2010
Global Warming

• “Global warming is the single biggest threat to wildlife today.” National Wildlife Federation

• “Global warming is the greatest threat to birds and other wildlife in human history.” National Audubon Society
Global Warming Impact on Birds

• Migration patterns and availability of food supplies get out of sync.
• Miss out on peak food supplies critical to raising young
• Wetlands threatened by floods and droughts – also by development (Over 50% of Bay wetlands already lost)
• Food web becomes out of balance – pests not controlled, flowers not pollinated, seeds not dispersed.
Supportive Landscape Practices

Layering – from tall trees to groundcovers

**Canopy** – tall trees such as white oak (Quercus alba) and Pinus virginiana provide high wildlife value
Native Trees with High Wildlife Value

- Acer saccharinum – sugar maple
- American holly
- Betula nigra – river birch
- Cornus florida – dogwood
- Fagus grandifolia – American beech
- Fraxinus americana – white ash
- Malus coronaria – American crabapple
- Pinus strobus – white pine
- Prunus serotina – black chokecherry
- Quercus marilandica – blackjack oak
- Sassafras albidum – sassafras
- Thuja occidentalis – arborvitae
Supportive Landscape Practices

Shrub Layer – Natives such as Viburnum prunifolium and Itea virginica (Va. Sweetspire) provide fruit and cover
Native Shrubs with high wildlife value

- *Alnus serrulata* – hazel alder
- *Cornus racemosa* – gray dogwood
- *Ilex glabra* – inkberry
- *Ilex verticillata* – winterberry
- *Lindera benzoin* – spicebush
- *Mahonia, Leatherleaf*
- *Morella pensylvanica* – northern bayberry
- *Rhus aromatica* – fragrant sumac
- *Rubus allegheniensis* – Allegheny blackberry
- *Sambucus nigra* – common elderberry
- *Vaccinium angustifolium* – lowbush blueberry
- *Vaccinium corymbosum* – highbush blueberry
- *Viburnum acerifolium* – maple leaved arrowwood
Supportive Landscape Practices

Herb layer — herbaceous plants, grasses, herbaceous emergents, ferns, and vines provide food and cover
Native Herbaceous Plants for Wildlife

- Asclepias syriaca & tuberosa – milkweed
- Baptisia australis – wild blue indigo
- Chelone glabra – turtlehead
- Eupatorium dubium – Joe-Pye weed
- Geranium maculatum – wild geranium
- Impatiens capensis – jewelweed
- Liatris spicata – blazingstar
- Lobelia cardinalis – cardinal flower
- Lobelia siphilitica – great blue lobelia
- Monarda didyma – beebalm
- Rudbeckia hirta – black eyed Susan
- Solidago rugosa – wrinkle-leaf goldenrod
- Verbena hastata – blue vervain
Butterflies
Resources

• **Woodland Management**
  https://extension.umd.edu/woodland

• **Home and Garden Information Center**
  http://www.extension.umd.edu/hgic
  – Here you will find factsheets, photos, and videos. You can also subscribe to the free monthly e-newsletter.
  – We answer gardening questions 24/7...just click “Ask Maryland’s Garden Experts”

• **Maryland Master Gardener Program**
  http://www.extension.umd.edu/mg
  – Consider becoming a trained MG volunteer!
This program was created by

Paul Beares

Howard County Master Gardener