



Bird Friendly Habitat Certification Program

The New Hope Audubon Society has developed a certification program to recognize your efforts in providing habitat where birds and wildlife can thrive. To be certified, you will need to: use native plants at all vegetative layers from the tree canopy down to perennials and ground cover; remove invasive plants; and take other steps to improve wildlife habitat. You can be certified at a Silver, Gold, or Platinum level by meeting the standards at that level.



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Wildlife Habitat Options

- Wildlife water feature (ponds, bird baths, etc.)
- Cats indoors at all times or in outdoor enclosure
- Install functional bird or bat nest boxes
- Bird boxes specifically for Brown-headed Nuthatches
- Pollinator and beneficial insect nesting habitat (i.e. rock piles, bundles of stems and branches, mason bee boxes)
- Snag or nurse log
- Reduce bird window collisions
- Leaves remain in landscape/not seasonally removed (many insect larvae such as fire flies rely on leaf litter)
- Reduce lawn area maintained with non-native turfgrass to minimum needed (lawns w/ nonnative grasses require fertilizers and produce few insects for birds)
- Minimal use of nonorganic fertilizers
- No pesticides or rodenticides used
- Replace gas mowers and string trimmers with battery or electrical. Helps with air pollution and climate change.

Why natives? Our local vegetation evolved with insects, birds, and other animals to create complex food webs. Wildlife consumes fruits, nuts, and seeds for sustenance, while helping to propagate the regional vegetation. Native plants, especially some tree species like oaks, are also host to a large variety of insects, which in turn are eaten by birds and other animals. Young nestlings, in particular, must consume large numbers of insects in their first weeks of life.

Non-native vegetation can provide some fruits, nuts, and seeds, but it does not host the insects that are vital to birds and the web of life. As their seeds are spread by wildlife, many non-native plants become "invasive" by outcompeting local vegetation and disrupting the local ecology.

Visit our website for complete information on:

- How to sign up for the Bird Friendly Habitat Certification program
- Why native plants are important
- Recommended native plants for the Piedmont
- Where to buy native plants in the local area
- Identifying invasive plant species
- Removing invasive plant species
- How to reduce bird-window collisions
- Options for improving wildlife habitat

Our certification program website is:

newhopeaudubon.org/birdFriendly.html

There is a one time application fee of \$50 for the certification program. Upon certification, you will receive a "Certified Bird Friendly Habitat" sign to display along with a certificate. For questions, contact us at newhopeaudubon@gmail.com.

PHOTO CREDITS

Gray Catbird and Brown-headed Nuthatch by Will Stuart



Silver Certification

- Landscape at least 20% of available property with native plants.
- Invasive plants cannot cover more than 20% of property.
- Include vegetative layers: canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, and herbaceous layer (perennials, grasses, etc.).
- Minimize use of herbicides, pesticides, and rodenticides
- Improve wildlife habitat by choosing three of the items from the wildlife habitat list on the back of the brochure.

Gold Certification

- Landscape at least 30% of available property with native plants.
- Invasive plants cannot cover more than 15% of property.
- Include vegetative layers: canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, and herbaceous layer (perennials, grasses, etc.).
- Minimize use of herbicides and pesticides and eliminate rodenticides
- Improve wildlife habitat by choosing five of the items from the wildlife habitat list on the back of the brochure.

Platinum Certification

- Landscape at least 50% of available property with native plants.
- Invasive plants cannot cover more than 10% of property.
- Include vegetative layers: canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, and herbaceous layer (perennials, grasses, etc.).
- Eliminate use of herbicides (except for invasive removal), pesticides and rodenticides.
- Improve wildlife habitat by choosing eight of the items from the wildlife habitat list on back of brochure

Invasive plants to be removed for all levels of certification

All invasives ranked as Severe or Significant Threat by the North Carolina Plant Society count toward the percent of invasive plants allowed.

(www.ncwildflower.org/plant_galleries/invasives_list)

Please refer to our website for information on invasive plants: www.newhopeaudubon.org

Typically seen high threat invasives:

- **Trees:** Mimosa, Tree of Heaven, Bradford Pear, Princess Tree
- **Shrubs:** Burning Bush (Winged Euonymous), Chinese Privet, Autumn Olive, Multiflora Rose, Bushclover (Lespedeza), Thorny Olive, Nandina, Mahonia, Japanese Privet, Japanese Barberry, Japanese Spirea, Sweet Breath of Spring (Fragrant Honeysuckle)

- **Herbs & Grasses:** Japanese Stiltgrass, Sericea Lespedeza, Chinese Silver Grass (Miscanthus), Youngia, Exotic Bamboo
- **Vines:** Japanese Honeysuckle, English Ivy, Chinese/Japanese Wisteria, Oriental (Asian) Bittersweet, Winter Creeper, Sweet Autumn (Leatherleaf) Clematis, Vinca (Periwinkle)