

CREATE A WILDLIFE FRIENDLY BACKYARD: A FAMILY GUIDE

Are you seeking an educational and fun-filled activity that involves everyone in the family? Here's your chance to transform your backyard into a nurturing abode for local wildlife by meeting these five essential requirements: food, water, shelter, places to raise young, and sustainable practices. Use these steps and links to create your own backyard Certified Wildlife

1. Food - Nature's Buffet

Create a buffet for local wildlife by planting a diverse range of [native flora](#) that bear seeds, nuts, fruits, or nectar. Incorporate feeding stations like [bird feeders](#) or a hummingbird haven for an extra touch. Children can take responsibility for refilling feeders and enjoy watching the visitors they attract.

1. Water - Fresh Source for Survival Water is essential, both for hydration and keeping birds' feathers clean. Provide this vital resource in the form of [birdbaths](#), ponds, or dew puddles. Teaching children about the water-habitat requirements of different species can be an enlightening exercise.

2. Shelter - The Cozy Hideaways Your wildlife friends need places to hide from predators and shelter themselves from bad weather. Introduce dense shrubs, [rock piles](#), or brush piles to your backyard to provide much-needed shelter. Create mini-habitats together with your kids, such as a toad house or a hedgehog den.

3. Places to Raise Young - Create Love Nests Help your wildlife visitors nurture their next generation by offering a diversity of nesting sites and materials. From [birdhouses](#) to caterpillar-friendly plants and [bat houses](#), assist your children in figuring out the best locations for these additions.

4. Sustainable Practices - Embrace Green Living Support the long-term sustainability of your backyard habitat through [eco-friendly gardening practices](#). This could involve [composting](#), replacing lawn areas with native plantings, and avoiding chemical pesticides. Encourage children to participate in an ongoing manner, with roles suitable for their ages.

Enjoy the process of creating a wildlife-friendly backyard with your children. It's not only a fantastic way to bond as a family but also a valuable exercise in nurturing future stewards of the planet.

SOURCES:

- [LADY BIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER](#)
- [NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY](#)
- [UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE](#)
- [CREATING BACKYARD HABITAT](#)
- [AUDUBON: NATIVE PLANTS FOR BIRDS](#)
- [NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S CERTIFIED WILDLIFE HABITAT PROGRAM](#)
- [BAT CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL](#)

- [OHIO INVASIVE PLANTS COUNCIL](#)
- [NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS: BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY](#)



PLAYFUL ACRE
Preserving the Magic of Childhood
through nature play