Key Elements when
LANDSCAPING FOR WILDLIFE

Wildlife Needs

Food sources - native plants with seeds, fruits, nuts, berries, nectar

Water sources - birdbath, pond, stream, water garden

Places for cover - thickets, hedge rows, rock piles

Places to raise young - dense shrubs, different layers of vegetation, nesting box, pond

Sustainable Gardening - using mulch, compost, rain garden, chemical-free fertilizer

Native vegetation meets basic wildlife needs for native Northwest wildlife. Be sure you get the correct native plant by knowing its Latin or botanical name. All of our plant lists include the Latin name.

Keep any native trees and shrubs you already have. The denser the plants, the better for wildlife. Preserve interior conditions of large wooded tracts by leaving them undivided by clearing, roads or trails.

Use a variety of species of native plants appropriate for your soil, elevation and exposure. Include a stand of conifers for cover and wind protection. Begin with trees and shrubs, and add native herbaceous plants. Woody plants are easier to cultivate.

Connect areas of similar habitat and encourage your neighbors to add native plantings, too.

Use all levels of vegetation, from tall trees to groundcovers. Shrubs, both tall and short, are important sources of nest sites, roosting places and food.

Shrink your lawn area, and substitute low groundcovers and shrubs, creating pockets of leaf litter to harbor earthworms and insects for ground-feeding birds, toads, and snakes.

Diversify topography, adding slopes and rocky places to provide many microhabitats.

Keep or create dead standing and downed trees (snags and brush piles). Snags do not have to be tall - 6-10 feet is fine for woodpeckers. Branches on the ground shelter birds from cats and hawks, and decaying logs offer homes for salamanders.

Plant food-producing trees and shrubs and resurrect old apple trees, especially relished by deer. Leave some grasses not mowed for winter seeds, and plant flowers for hummingbirds and butterflies.

Add water to the landscape, especially in dry weather. Birdbaths 2-3" deep with a gentle slope are good, and dripping water attracts many birds to drink and bathe. Garden pools should have a water depth from one-half inch to 4 inches deep (add rock islands).

Nest boxes and bird feeders. It is important to select a bird feeder that reduce the spread of seed and doesn't feed the non-native grey and black squirrels. Nesting boxes are for cavity nesting birds. Many bird houses can kill young birds. See the handout "Attracting Birds to your Yard" for more detail on how to attract and not kill native birds.

More Information at:

Ask for the **Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Program** packet from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/backyard/

Also, find great information from the National Wildlife Federation's **Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program**, from: National Wildlife Federation, 1400 Sixteenth St, NW, Washington, DC 20036-2266   http://www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife/Create-a-Habitat.aspx

To help restore habitat in Bellingham Parks and Greenways, Call the **Parks Volunteer Coordinator**,

(360) 778-7105 http://www.cob.org/government/public/volunteer/parks/index.aspx

Bellingham Parks & Recreation Department,1400 Woburn St., Bellingham, WA 98229

Backyard Habitat Design

Taking the first steps:

- Place native plants to meet your needs as well as those of wildlife.
- Planting denser patches of trees and shrubs creates more habitat value than isolating plants in a sea of lawn. See the three examples below.

Using Trees & Shrubs to Create Habitat

Widen the habitat on your side of the property that borders a trail or greenway to give you more privacy and create more wildlife habitat. You can also enlarge existing habitat patches with more plants such as native perennials and ground covers.

Round your lawn by filling in the corners with native trees and shrubs, which also makes mowing easier. You can also make "islands" around existing trees with a shrub layer.

Create a fence row or screen your view of the neighbors' yard with native trees and shrubs.
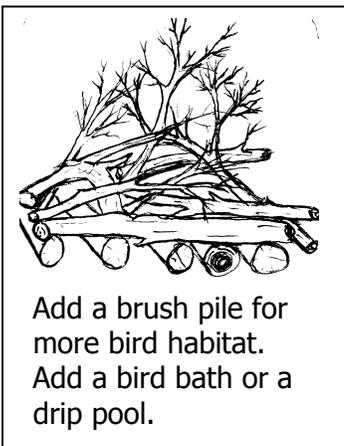
What's in a Name!

Western Hemlock   *Tsuga heterophylla*

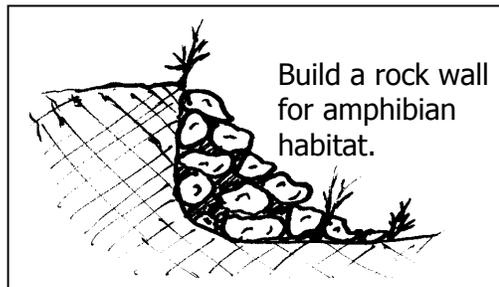↑ common name   ↑ *botanical name*

A common name such as cedar can be used for many different kinds of trees. The *botanical name or Latin name* is specific to a plant species.
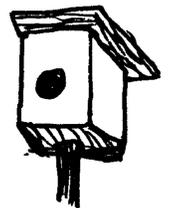
Finishing touches for wildlife

Add a brush pile for more bird habitat. Add a bird bath or a drip pool.

Build a rock wall for amphibian habitat.

Find appropriate designs for bird houses to fit a native bird's needs in Russell Link's book *Landscaping for Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest.*

Bring in a dead log to lie on the ground as a "nursery" log or plant it vertically as a snag for bird habitat.

Plant a few native shrubs near your birdfeeder creating a "staging" area where birds can wait their turn.

And most of all, enjoy the birds and other wildlife that come to your yard! We appreciate your efforts to be wildlife friendly!