Backyard Wildlife Habitat

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Cute---But I think we can do better!
We have the freedom to take a much more relaxed style in our own backyard.

We can even develop some small “ecosystems.”

Landscaping in a commercial setting can certainly be challenging.
In a residential yard:
It’s possible to create a low maintenance, self sustaining landscape which is also attractive to wildlife.

Naturalistic Landscaping is a great way to create a backyard nature preserve around your own home.
Why develop a backyard wildlife habitat?

More than ever our wildlife needs every parcel they can get for sustainability.

Scientists estimate and believe:

Between 200 and 2,000 extinctions occur every year.

Populations of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish have declined 52% over the past 40 years.

We are in the 6th extinction crisis after the 5 known extinction waves in geological history.
Pollinators are especially in peril:

70% of the world's food production is directly or indirectly related to insect pollinator activity.

Biologists believe that many collective, small habitats can make a difference if people develop them in their residential gardens and landscapes.

Reduce pesticide use whenever possible.

Water conservation in our landscapes will continue to be very important.
Your habitat will be a great place to relax and connect with nature.

I never imagined how much we would enjoy relaxing in:

Our Own backyard!
Shauna says “Nature is Healing.”
Mike says “Nature is Relaxing.”
We both enjoy our private backyard retreat.
Mike enjoys redneck, fire bowl cooking!
Installing an electrical line to the back of our yard added a whole new Dimension to Mike’s Redneck cooking.
Our Backyard Wildlife
We particularly enjoy pollinators and continue developing a habitat to attract them.

Bee photo by: Chris Masada
My wife is a Monarch Maven
Shauna’s monarch nursery assists in releasing an average of 25 butterflies a season.
Why do we raise and release them?
• Predators
• Education and activism
• Follow us on facebook:
• Greenforest Prairie Monarch Waystation
• Enjoyment and tagging last generation
Education is always important

Many resources are available From monarchwatch.org

And your observations and participation are helpful to their science based network to help conserve the monarch population.

You never know when you may become an ambassador for wildlife and pollinators in your own neighborhood.

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I may be only one person, but I can be one person who makes a difference.

Vadra Francene Groce Age 10 Bowling Green, Kentucky
Green Forest Prairie Waystation

Backyard Size: 11,00 sq. ft.
Our backyard “prairie” is only 1200 square feet in size.

Developed by a combination of seeding and container grown plants.
In nature plants wander and don’t always stay within your chosen boundaries.

But sometimes it can be to your advantage to let desirable plants find their own home.
Water features are always beneficial to insects and wildlife.
Before you plant, get to know your site

Correct drainage issues or use plants adapted to soggy soils. Many plants will “drown” in wet soils.

Learn about the quality of your soils and plant species best suited to your site.

Mike’s favorite tip: Plan to create zones with plants of similar moisture and soil requirements.

You can use this idea to create interesting habitats like woodland, prairie, or rain garden. You can still have some turf areas, but exclude turf from your zoned plantings to eliminate trimming.

And if you are creating a woodland habitat, apply organic mulch around the entire planting to reduce maintenance and create a sustainable habitat.

Prairies with wildflowers require full sun. Plant or seed in mass (no mulch) and only Trim or mow around the entire planting.
Learn about the plants you want to use in your landscape

Will it tolerate your site?

Will it tolerate sun or shade in an existing landscape?

Will the mature size fit into your landscape?
   Look up for power lines and roof eves.

Dig safe. Call 811, 48 hours in advance of planting, for a free locate of all utilities. It’s a law!
Plant size is important in landscaping.
Think ahead to maintenance.

Do you really want to spend your time maintaining this type of landscape?
Is your plant invasive?

Native

Introduced

Naturalized

Escaped invasive

Red cedar, multiflora rose, crown vetch, etc.
Mike’s Favorite Trees

Deciduous
Bur Oak, Quercus macrocarpa
Swamp White Oak, Quercus bicolor
Northern Red Oak, Quercus rubra
American Linden, Tilia Americana
Hackberry, Celtis occidentalis
Kentucky Coffeetree, Gymnocladus dioicus
Norway Maple, Acer platanoides
River Birch, Betula nigra

Coniferous
Eastern White Pine, Pinus strobus
Austrian Pine, Pinus nigra
Ponderosa Pine, Pinus ponderosa
Colorado Blue Spruce, Picea pungens
Norway Spruce, Picea abies
Black Hills Spruce (white spruce), P. glauca
Mike’s Favorite Shrubs

Ginnala Maple, Acer ginnala
Juneberry, Amelanchier Canadensis
Black Chokeberry, Aronia melancarpa
Silky Dogwood, Cornus amomum
Kousa Dogwood, Cornus kousa
American Hazelnut, Corylus Americana
Common Ninebark, Physocarpus opulifolius
Dwarf Blue Arctic Willow, Salix purpurea ‘nana’
Frobel Spirea, Spirea x bumalda ‘froebeli’
Chenault Coralberry, Symphoricarpos x chenaulti
Arrowwood, Viburnum dentatum
Mohican Wayfaring Tree, Viburnum lantana ‘Mohican’
Nannyberry, Virburnum lentago
Wildflowers—Mike’s favorites--pollinators

Upright Coneflower, Ratibida columnifera
Gray Head Coneflower, Ratibida pinnata
Purple Prairie Clover, Dalea purpurea
Pale Purple Coneflower, Echinacea purpurea
Black Eyed Susan, Rudbeckia hirta
Blanket Flower, Gailardia aristata
Lance-Leaf Coreopsis, Coreopsis lanceolata
Gayfeather, Liatris pycnostachya
Butterfly Milkweed, Asclepias tuberosa
Common Milkweed, Asclepias syriaca
New England Aster, Aster novae angliae
Shasta Daisy, Chrysanthemum maximum

For pollinators and hummingbirds:
Monarda didyma. ‘Raspberry Wine’
‘Prairie Gypsy’
Cardinal Flower, Lobelia cardinalis

Civilized Landscape Prairie

Little Bluestem, Schizachyrium scoparium
Blue Grama, Bouteloua gracilis
Side Oats, Grama, Bouteloua curtipendula

For butterflies, moths and hummers.

We plant these annuals in containers:

Lantana camara ‘Irene’
Petunias
Salvia, ‘Black and Blue’, ‘Wendy’s Wish’ (pink/salmon)
Wildflower and Prairie Habitat---seeding vs plants

If planting a small area using seedling, container plants is more practical
The plants are easier to identify and keep track of.
Mulch around the seedlings if you like to reduce maintenance.
Not all wildflowers are available as container grown seedlings.

If planting a larger area, seeding is more economical
It’s a challenge to identify and track the seedlings as they grow.
During the first year, mow over the planting about once a month
to keep the weeds at bay. Developing plants will be easier to identify
during the second year after seeding.

Both types of projects will require some preparation for a successful project
Mike’s Philosophical Recommendations:

Think globally act locally

Don’t be intimidated by your neighbors manicured lawn
But keep your landscape reasonably neat.
Visit with your neighbors about your plan

Our wildlife needs your help.
We are losing many species at an alarming rate.
Vertebrates
Pollinators

Plant native plants as much as possible.
A New Garden Ethic, by Benjamin Vogt

Ben takes an intense look at our urban landscapes.

Ben explains why our gardens need to include native plants and ecosystems and he is very passionate about his philosophy.

Available from:
https://www.monarchgard.com/books.html (or just monarchgard.com)
https://www.newsociety.com/Contributors/V/Vogt-Benjamin (or just newsociety.com)
By all means, have some fun!

“There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments.”
- Janet Kilburn Phillips

EVERT MAKE MISTAKES IN LIFE?

LET’S MAKE THEM BIRDS. YEAH, THEY’RE BIRDS NOW.
Tagged Monarch Release

Video File available at:

https://youtu.be/E7B3IlIFnLo
Questions?

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