

bird-friendly communities

Spring is a great time of year to plant native for birds. There are so many choices of flowers, shrubs and trees that help supply birds with needed food and shelter while at the same time enlivening your landscape with beauty and more feathered visitors.



Audubon is setting out to create the nation's biggest bird sanctuary with our Bird-Friendly Communities initiative. When you take steps to support birds you are creating a bird-friendly yard. When churches, downtown areas and urban parks get in on the act, we are seeing the beginning of a bird-friendly community. And when architects, landscapers, and plant nurseries learn and act on what it takes to help birdlife thrive, we are on our way to creating a sanctuary where birds can find food, shelter and nesting areas everywhere they go.

Here in North Carolina, we are celebrating the third year of our Bird-Friendly Communities program. Each year we have chosen an urban dwelling bird that could use a hand – the Brown-headed Nuthatch, the Wood Thrush and in 2016, the Chimney Swift.

Each year, thousands of North Carolinians have responded by taking the small actions that, together, add up to some real help for these birds.

Each year we add bird-friendly native plants to a growing list that local nurseries across the state are willing to grow, and retailers are willing to sell, making it easier and easier to find the plants you are looking for – the plants that help ensure that migrating birds find fuel on their journey and that baby birds have enough to eat.

And each year, we have built our program by adding new projects that affect the built environment that birds are adapting to. We have several cities working on a Lights Out program for downtown buildings, we are training architects in building with birds in mind and we are engaging families in steps that everyone can take to help birds where they live.

Expanding our focus from large tracts of public land, such as state parks, to cities and towns just makes sense. Birds are everywhere and some of the birds that share our backyards and parks will benefit from your actions. I hope you will check out our website for the many resources we have created for you to use in helping to create the nation's biggest bird sanctuary. Get started today!



Heather Starck Hahn
Executive Director



Our 2016 Bird of the Year, the Chimney Swift, is a bird that has adapted well to living in human communities right along with us. However, new building practices that eliminate traditional chimneys or cap them is affecting the well-being of this incredibly unique bird. Visit our website to learn what you can do to help the Chimney Swift with do-at-home actions.

building the nation's

To help create a better future for migrating birds we are training building architects on design features that help birds avoid striking buildings during flight.





It is great to combine two loves into one pastime – gardeners and birders both can grow bird-friendly native plants for beauty and for birds. Check out the extensive plant list on our website.

biggest bird sanctuary



To help us build the supply and demand chain for bird-friendly native plants, our chapters are out recruiting retailers to supply you with an increasing variety of plants, shrubs and trees that can really help birds with essential food throughout the year. If you know of a nursery that might sign up, let us know!



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Get started creating a bird-friendly community!

There are lots of ways to get involved in the Bird-Friendly Communities effort. From putting up a nest box for the Brown-headed Nuthatch, to planting a spicebush for the Wood Thrush, to uncapping your chimney for the Chimney Swift – every single action adds up to help for our birds.

Sign up for our Bird-Friendly Communities bulletin to get info on what to do and when.

Like our Facebook page to join an active community of like-minded people who share tips, stories and photos.

Talk to your local plant retailer about joining our Bird-Friendly Native Plants of the Year program. We will help them get going and provide marketing materials.

Ask your church, community center, scout troop, social group and family to get involved in a planting day, a nest box building day, or other activities to create bird-friendly areas.

Don't forget, every single action adds up to significant help for birds that share our communities with us. It is so easy to get started and the rewards are great!

