

Attracting Our Feathered Friends

Less and less wildlife is visible as South Florida's green space is consumed. Wild birds become displaced from habitats they require for food and shelter. Everyone needs to have a bond with nature which gives us joy and a sense of stewardship for the land. You can bird watch all year by implementing plants into your landscape which will attract, feed and shelter birds.



Dahoon Holly

Many birds prefer our backyard shrubs, ground covers and trees, to that of a deep undisturbed forest. We can attract birds by providing a variety of plants in our home landscape for their food and shelter. By knowing the wildlife value of plants, you can make plantings that can increase the numbers and even the kind of birds that will visit your yard. Many native Florida plants can beautify as well as attract birds to your property.

A number of plant species attract birds by providing a source of food for them. Dahoon Holly-Ilex cassine is a native tree with red berries loaded on female plants which attract cardinals, mockingbirds and waxwings. Beautyberry-Callicarpa americana is a native shrub that forms brilliant purple fruit which attracts cardinals, mockingbirds, catbirds and thrashers.



Beautyberry

Provide shelter to entice birds into your yard and to protect them from the elements and predators.



Southern Red Cedar

Southern Red Cedar-
Juniperus

virginiana a native evergreen can shelter tree swallows, waxwings, mockingbirds, flickers and sapsuckers, and provide berries for food. You can also light up the Southern Red Cedar in the landscape for the holidays because of its natural pyramidal shape.

Provide a source of drinking water. Moving water in a gently sloping basin is particularly attractive to birds.

To learn more about attracting wildlife to your backyard ask a Master Gardener volunteer by calling 233-1750 or visit <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> to download University of Florida 'Landscaping Backyards For Wildlife: Top Ten Tips for Success' and if you would like to see all the bird attracting plants and trees in this article stop by Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Service and visit the Mounts Botanical Garden located at 531 North Military Trail West Palm M-Sat 8:30AM-4PM, Sunday Noon-4PM Closed all major holidays.