



## 6 Easy Steps to Creating Your Wildlife Habitat

1. Identify any existing plants, noting their location and condition, how much shade they provide, whether they're evergreen or deciduous.
2. Make a sketch of your yard noting the existing plants, along with existing structures, utilities, and pathways. You may consider removing some of the existing plants that are not healthy, or that are not located in the best spot in the yard. Do some research regarding which new plants you may want to incorporate into your yard, taking into consideration how they may benefit wildlife?
3. At this point, you can either plan out your yard, or you can let Warner's do that part of the project for you. With our **We Plan, You Plant Service**, we will take your plan and help you select the best plants for your site based on your needs and preferences. (There is a fee for this service, and an appointment is required. Give us a call for more information or to schedule your appointment).
4. Start with larger trees, and plan for a variety: evergreen for year-round shelter, fruit or nut-bearing for food, natives to attract a variety of wildlife. Additional considerations for choosing and placement (of all the plants you'll be choosing) include:
  - a. Eventual size – don't forget to look up!
  - b. Flowering and fruiting habit
  - c. Water, light, soil requirements of the plants.
5. Fill in your landscape with smaller, shade-tolerant trees and shrubs. Adding these to an existing landscape will enhance the vertical structure that is common in natural landscapes. Many smaller trees and shrubs are colorful in the spring when flowering, then provide berries for fall and winter feeding.
6. Flowering annuals and perennials add color and can be added at any stage to attract birds and butterflies. If you have a large yard, consider using part of it for tall native grasses for beauty, food and shelter. A native wildflower garden provides the same function. Even on a small lot, native wildflowers, as well as some common garden species, can provide attractive habitat for a variety of birds and butterflies. Avoid straight lines and perfect symmetry. Natural habitat has curves and clumps of vegetation. Wildlife is not particularly attracted to a well-manicured lawn. Wildlife is more likely to come out into the open for viewing when the boundary of the yard is designed and maintained as a retreat for animals.