

# Care for Your Bird-Friendly Garden

in Spring ...

## 1. When in doubt, wait to pull it out.

*new growth could be a native plant*

## 2. Cut old dried stems.

*use dried stems, twigs, and leaves as mulch*

## 3. Check container's soil moisture.

*if the soil feels dry, then it's time to water*



### CONTAINER GARDEN

- Use fresh potting soil and a clean container for new plants.
- Use a pot that is deeper than the plant's rooting depth.
- Leave a small space between the top of the soil and the rim of the pot, up to 2" for large containers.
- Use a pot with a drainage hole and saucer to catch excess.
- On the roof, consider setting up a wind-break, such as a lattice, that won't cast shade.

### IN-GROUND

- Prune summer and fall-blooming plants as needed.
- When the ground has thawed, plant trees, shrubs, and perennials.
- Re-plant plants that have "heaved" out of the ground.
- Mulch with leaf litter, twigs, and dead perennial stems.
- Apply compost, compost tea, or other slow-release organic fertilizers as needed.



... and Summer

## 1. Get to know plant names.

*keep a running list of plants in your garden*

## 2. Prevent weeds from outcompeting natives.

*clip them at the crown to avoid disturbing the soil*

## 3. Install a rain barrel or drip irrigation!

### CONTAINER GARDEN

- Move pots to shade when it's hot.
- Small containers and clay pots dry out faster.
- Avoid standing water to prevent mosquito outbreaks. Use a battery- or solar-powered water wiggler in bird baths.
- Regularly clean hummingbird and seed feeders, as well as bird baths, to prevent the spread of disease.

### IN-GROUND

- Give fall-blooming perennials a "haircut" for more compact growth.
- If a plant wilts in the daytime but recovers in the evening, watering is not necessary.
- Apply compost, compost tea, or other slow-release organic fertilizers as needed.

# Care for Your Bird-Friendly Garden

in Fall ...

## 1. Leave the leaves!

*ground-foraging birds need them and they're nature's perfect mulch*

## 2. Leave flower heads intact.

*they contain seeds (bird food) and leftovers will re-seed*

## 3. Label your perennials.

*use waterproof stakes so you know what's what come spring*

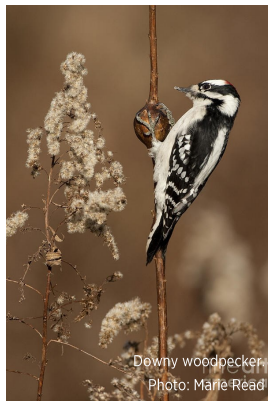


### CONTAINER GARDEN

- Water between rains, only when the soil feels dry.
- Take stock of what's missing. Evergreens? Berries? Fall color? And add them to your spring shopping list.
- Or better yet, plant them now! Fall is the best time to plant trees, shrubs, and spring bloomers.

### IN-GROUND

- Plant now for more robust blooms in spring!
- Water new shrubs and trees through the first year.
- If you plan to replace more turf in spring, mow the area to the ground now and cover with a thick layer of mulch. In spring, plant densely!
- Mulch with leaf litter, twigs, and dead perennial stems.



... and Winter

## 1. No need to overwater.

*little to no water is needed in winter*

## 2. Leave dried herbaceous stems standing.

*they will harbor overwintering beneficial insects that will emerge in spring*

### CONTAINER GARDEN

- Use containers that won't crack—metal, thick plastic, stone, concrete, or wood. Do not leave clay and ceramic outside.
- Cluster pots together on the north or east side of the home.
- For added insulation, pile leaves or snow between pots.
- If possible, wrap pots with heavy plastic, bubble wrap, fabric, burlap, old blankets, or insert pot into a larger pot.
- Don't bring plants inside. They're native and need to be outside year round!

### IN-GROUND

- Mulch with leaves, branches from Christmas trees, wood-chips, or mulch to prevent heaving when ground freezes.
- Prune woody shrubs and trees as needed.
- Avoid using salt as a de-icing agent. Consider environmentally-friendly alternatives—Calcium Magnesium Acetate, Ice Ban, gravel or sand.
- Remove heavy snow from branches, but leave it on the ground around plants.