

# Urban Wildlife Management Practices

## Artificial Feeders

### General description

Artificial feeders are used primarily to feed songbirds and butterflies for viewing purposes. A wide variety of feeder designs, methods, and foods are available. Most bird species prefer black-oil sunflower seeds and white proso millet. Species such as hairy woodpecker prefer suet (fat) rather than seeds. Some species, such as mourning dove and song sparrow, prefer to eat on the ground than on an elevated feeder.

It is important to realize artificial feeders can be hazardous to birds. Disease transmission is often problematic because feeders draw birds close together. Salmonellosis, aspergillosis, and mycoplasmal conjunctivitis are fatal diseases among songbirds and are readily transmitted at heavily used bird feeders. Feeders should be cleaned periodically with hot soapy water and a mild bleach solution. In addition, feeders pose danger via nonnative predators, specifically house cats. Although house cats may be fed, they continue to hunt and kill millions of birds and small mammals each year. It is irresponsible to own a cat and leave it outside because of the unnatural pressure they put on native wildlife. Feral cats should be reported to local animal control officials, removed from the area, and euthanized.

### Effect of practice

- Provides supplemental food source, primarily for viewing purposes.



*Backyards can be arranged in various shapes and with various plantings and nest boxes so that they are more attractive and useful for wildlife.*

## Plant Flowers

### General description

Annual and perennial forbs can be planted to attract a number of wildlife species. A variety of species will flower over a longer period. Species and varieties should be selected to provide food and cover throughout the year where possible. Forbs should be planted in proximity to other cover sources to make them readily available.

### Effect of practice

- Provides a supplemental source of food and cover.

## Rooftop/Balcony Gardens

### General description

Residential green space is limited in urban areas. Urbanites can create rooftop or balcony gardens to provide additional food, water, and viewing opportunities. Although limited in space, the goal of rooftop or balcony gardens is to create habitat; thus, rooftop or balcony gardens should provide food, water, and cover for species that are adapted to the space restrictions. Moving water, such as a small waterfall, may attract more wildlife than stationary water.

### Effect of practice

- Provides food, cover, and water, though in small amounts, for wildlife in urban areas.