

# Bird Friendly Habitat Property Visit & Certification Report



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Property size: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Site visit team: \_\_\_\_\_

## NATIVE PLANT SPECIES

**Canopy Trees:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Understory & Sapling Trees:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Shrubs:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Perennial/Biennial/Annual Flowers:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Grasses, Sedges, and Ferns:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**All 3 Vegetative Layers Present? (trees, shrubs, herbaceous/ground cover)** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Natural Ground Layer Description (leaves and other decaying organic matter vs wood mulch/pine straw):**

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Estimated percentage of AVAILABLE property with Native Plants: \_\_\_\_\_ %

**INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES** Only severe or significant threat count against certification.

**Severe or Significant Threat Invasive Species:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Lower Threat Invasive species:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Estimated percent of area of property with severe or significant threat invasive species: \_\_\_\_\_%

**WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS** Explanations found at: [forsythaudubon.org/safe-and-friendly-habitat/](http://forsythaudubon.org/safe-and-friendly-habitat/)

**WILDLIFE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS** You will be attracting wildlife to your property by using native plants. It is essential that it be a safe environment, or it will not be a refuge.

- No mosquito spraying and no use of rodenticides. Minimal use of other pesticides. [REQUIRED]
- No cats or cats are kept indoors and in outdoor enclosures such as catios. [REQUIRED]
- Property owners agrees to not buy plants treated with neonics after explanation given to them. [REQUIRED]
- Windows are protected with a method to reduce bird window collisions.
- Outdoor lighting is turned off at night, is on motion sensors, or yellow bulbs are used.
- Wildlife is protected when doing routine maintenance, e.g., mower blades raised higher, not mowing in evening and not shearing or cutting back shrubs or vines during Spring/Summer nesting season.
- No basement window well present, or guards have been put on basement window wells so frogs, toads and baby birds don't get trapped and die.

**Total SAFE Habitat Items:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WILDLIFE FRIENDLY IMPROVEMENTS** There is more to do than planting natives and removing invasives to build an ecosystem that fully supports wildlife. Here are some needed steps.

- All 3 Vegetative Layers are present or in the planning stage (as site allows). [REQUIRED for CERTIFICATION but not Under Construction]
- Leaves are left on property and used for natural mulch. [REQUIRED for CERTIFICATION but not Under Construction]
- Some Keystone Species of native plants are present. [REQUIRED for CERTIFICATION but not Under Construction]
- The lawn area with non-native turfgrass is reduced to the minimum needed.
- A wildlife water feature is present such as a well-maintained bird bath (in winter kept unfrozen), water drips, small pond with sloped edges etc.
- Nest boxes are present for brown-headed nuthatches and/or bluebirds.
- A variety of nectar and host plants are present that bloom throughout growing season to support pollinators.
- Plants that have died back are left during the winter and pithy stems are left 1' to 2' high during the spring cleanup.
- Snags and nurse logs are left.
- A spot of bare ground is left for native bees to nest.
- Only compost or organic fertilizer is used, if any.
- Electric-powered mowers, blowers, and string trimmers are used instead of gas-powered.

**Total FRIENDLY Habitat Items:** \_\_\_\_\_

## CERTIFICATION LEVEL

### BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT UNDER CONSTRUCTION

*Property does not yet qualify for full certification, but property owner plans to add enough native plants, remove enough high threat invasive plants, and make other wildlife habitat improvements to achieve certification. All vegetative layers including trees, shrubs, and the herbaceous layer are present or are in the planning stage as the site permits. Required wildlife habitat improvements are satisfied. There are at least **3 of the safe habitat items** checked off and **4 of the friendly habitat items** checked (required ones are included in the count). An "Under Construction" sign will be given.*

### CERTIFIED BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT

*Property has at least 50% of plantable area covered by native plants (counting tree canopy), and property owner plans to continue to add species. High threat invasive plants cannot cover more than 15% of property, and property owner develops a plan to keep them under control or to remove them. All vegetative layers including trees, shrubs, and the herbaceous layer are present as the size of the property permits. Required wildlife habitat improvements are satisfied. There are at least **4 of the safe habitat items** checked off and **7 of the friendly habitat items** checked (required ones are included in the count). A "Certified" sign will be given.*

## VISIT SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Brief property description and visit observations:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**If not fully certified, steps needed to be certified. If certified, steps to continue improvement.** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other recommendations:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## RESOURCE:

- Visit our Bird Friendly Habitat page: [forsythaudubon.org/bird-friendly-habitat/](https://forsythaudubon.org/bird-friendly-habitat/)