

Delaware River Watershed Initiative

Tucked inside the Delaware River Watershed, sits the ecologically and economically vital region of the Schuylkill Highlands. It is a deeply special place where wildlife abounds and clean water flows steadily through tributaries of the Schuylkill River. An area of over 170 square miles in northern Chester and southern Berks counties, it is home to a delicate tapestry of unbroken forests, high quality streams, and unique habitat for numerous species of birds like the Louisiana Waterthrush. Yet, the region faces continuous pressure from increased development.

To help protect this special place, Audubon Pennsylvania, in collaboration with partners across the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, has developed a Plants for Birds habitat program. It is specifically tailored for the Schuylkill Highlands region and is focused on maintaining the very best of what already exists while enhancing clean water and wildlife habitat for future generations.



Make A Difference

When you add native plants to your yard, you provide tangible benefits to birds, wildlife, and the community. Native plants offer food and habitat to wildlife, filter groundwater, and reduce flooding from storms, all while adding natural beauty to the landscape.

- **Is your home located along or near a stream or creek?**
- **Would you like to add native plants to your yard?**

If you answered yes to both, we can provide the resources and expertise to help you get started! Visit us online for more information. pa.audubon.org/plantsforbirdsSH

About Audubon

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation. Audubon's state programs, nature centers, chapters, and partners have unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire, and unite diverse communities in conservation action. Since 1905, Audubon's vision has been a world in which people and wildlife thrive.

Audubon Pennsylvania works across the state to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity in Pennsylvania.

Schuylkill Highlands

Plants for Birds

Creating Habitats that Welcome Wildlife and Support Healthy Communities



Cultivating Healthy Habitats with Native Plants

NECTAR & SEEDS: Plants that offer nectar from blooms or sap from the trunk are critical food sources for many types of birds, most famously hummingbirds. Blooms with large seed heads provide a feast for hungry birds as seasons change. Opting to let seed heads stand after the blooms have fallen away keeps this beneficial buffet open to birds well into winter.



Eastern Phoebe. Photo: Andrea Hedblom/Audubon Photography Awards

Best Bets:

- Black & Brown-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia* ssp.)
- Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)



Great Blue Heron Photo: Tiffany Englander/Audubon Photography Awards

GRASSES, FERNS & SHRUBS:

Native grasses and shrubs offer shelter and food for a wide variety of insects while also bolstering stream banks with an added layer of erosion control and storm water absorption.

Best Bets:

- Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*)
- Cinnamon Fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*)
- Common Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*)

Nature is always speaking. From the bird song choruses of the morning to the blooms and changing leaves in our gardens. Each change tells a story



Louisiana Waterthrush. Photo: Darla J. Oathout/Audubon Photography Awards

about the diversity of the wildlife, health of the water, and vitality of the land. Audubon Pennsylvania is working

in your region and we invite you to engage in a native plant habitat program thoughtfully designed just for the Schuylkill Highlands.



Northern Rough-winged Swallow. Photo: Linda Cleveland/Audubon Photography Awards

For a limited time, volunteer to add native plants to your streamside property and Audubon Pennsylvania will provide you with resources, expertise, and native plants to support you in creating a habitat that protects the birds and water so critical to the healthy balance of your community. This partnership with streamside property owners is targeted, tailored, effective, and happening right now!



Belted Kingfisher. Photo: Janet DiMattia/Audubon Photography Awards

BERRIES:

Berry-producing plants are crucial for birds. In early spring, their foliage attracts insects, an excellent food source for growing birds. And in fall, the high fat content of the berries can fuel the migratory journeys of birds large and small. A variety of berry plants can tip the scale in a bird's favor as it navigates seasonal cycles.



Wood Thrush. Photo: Will Stuart

Best Bets:

- Northern Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
- Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*)
- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* ssp.)

TREES & NUTS:

Planting native trees brings many benefits including reduced flooding and the strengthening and reinforcement of stream banks. They are hosts to a myriad of insects and their natural production of nuts makes them a high-value food source for songbirds.



Scarlet Tanager. Photo: Linda Steele/Audubon Photography Awards

Best Bets:

- Oak (*Quercus* ssp.)
- River Birch (*Betula nigra*)
- Dogwood (*Cornus* ssp.)