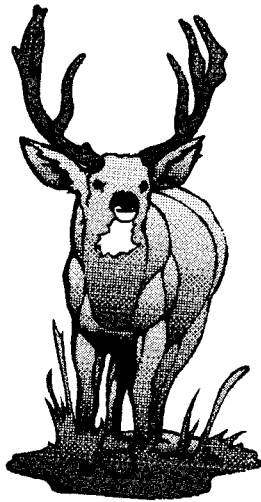


Backyard Wildlife

Habitat Certification

Have your backyard or school yard certified as an official **Kentucky Backyard Wildlife Habitat Site**. To apply, simply complete the application from included in your *Backyard Wildlife Habitat Kit* (or contact the Backyard Wildlife Program to request an application form) and send the form to the address on the bottom of the form. A five dollar certification fee is required. Certified habitat sites receive an attractive certificate and a water-proof I'm Going Wild in My Backyard sign.

Three levels of certification are possible: Standard, Silver, and Gold. The level of certification is based on how well your backyard meets a number of criteria related to the habitat needs of wildlife in your region.



Private backyards and schoolyards are each evaluated using somewhat different criteria, with schools being required to involve students, as well as the community, in the process. Each of the criteria are scored, and the total score determines the level of certification. Certification usually requires 2-3 weeks.

Each year, the backyard and the schoolyard with the highest scores are selected to receive a special award for outstanding contribution to wildlife conservation in Kentucky. The award is presented at a special ceremony hosted by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Hope we see you there this year!

Backyard Wildlife



Certification Application



Please complete all sections of this form to the best of your ability. A sample completed Application Form is included in each Habitat Kit.

Applicant Name (Individual, school, club, etc.) _____

Address _____ City _____

County _____ Zip Code _____ Telephone _____

Contact Person (if other than Applicant) _____

SECTION A. THE LANDSCAPE PLAN. Please attach a sketch or map of your backyard, along with photographs if available, depicting the location of food, cover and water resources used by wildlife. Please send duplicate copies because we cannot return them to you.

SECTION B. SITE CHARACTERISTICS (Check all boxes that apply)

Type of Site: Backyard Habitat Outdoor Classroom

Size of Site (in sq. ft. or acres): _____ Sunny Shady Wet Dry Average

SECTION C. HABITAT COMPONENTS AND WILDLIFE USE

1. Wildlife Food Plants. List the kinds and numbers of plants in your habitat that produce nectar, nuts, berries, seeds and other wildlife foods and the wildlife observed using each type. Include overstory trees, understory trees, shrubs, vines, grasses, wildflowers and other plants. Indicate also whether the plant is native to your region (y=yes, n=no, u=unsure).

Plant Name	Number	Wildlife Use	Native
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Please use additional sheets as necessary to complete the lists in this section.

Office Use Only

Date Received _____ Fee Paid _____ Certification: _____ Standard _____ Silver _____ Gold _____

2. Other Food Sources. List the kinds and number of each kind of feeder in your backyard, the kinds of foods provided, and the wildlife observed using each kind.

Feeder Type	No.	Foods	Wildlife Visitors
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Cover. List the types and number of cover in your habitat, the kinds of wildlife observed using each, and (in the 'Purpose' column) whether they were used as shelter (s) or for raising their young (r). Common examples of cover are dense tree and shrub borders, dense ground covers, evergreen trees, natural tree cavities, hollow logs, cavities in fence posts or buildings, log and brush piles, rock piles and walls, weedy fencerows or hedges, leaf litter and mulch piles, tall grassy wildflower meadows, and densely wooded streambanks.

Cover Type	Number	Wildlife Use	Purpose
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

4. Nest Boxes. List the kinds and numbers of nest boxes provided and the wildlife you observed using them. Please indicate if successful reproduction was noted (y=yes, n=no).

Nest Box Type	Number	Wildlife Use	Repro.
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Water Resources. List the kinds and number of water sources in your habitat, the wildlife observed using each, and if each is available year-round (p) or seasonally (s). Common sources include bird baths, misters and drippers, lined (artificial) ponds, unlined (natural) ponds, streams, lakes, marshes and other natural wetlands.

Water Type	Number	Wildlife Use	Avail.
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Return your completed form to: Backyard Wildlife Program, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, #1 Game Farm Rd. Please include the \$5.00 certification fee, payable to same.

BACKYARD WILDLIFE CERTIFICATION APPLICATION (continued)

The following Sections apply to Outdoor Classrooms only. Please complete these sections to the best of your ability; attach additional sheets if necessary.

SECTION D. ASSISTANCE. Please list the names of all agencies, groups and individuals who donated funding, labor, materials or other assistance that helped make your project a success.

Type of Assistance	Provider	\$Amount
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

SECTION E. STUDENT INVOLVEMENT (*Schools only*). Below, please describe briefly how students in a variety of disciplines were involved in the development and use of your Outdoor Classroom.

SECTION F. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT. Below, please describe your plans for the continued maintenance and improvement of your Outdoor Classroom.

SECTION G. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS. Below please provide any additional comments you feel will help us to better understand the design, development and use of your backyard habitat.

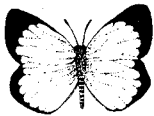
Thank you for your valuable contribution to wildlife conservation and education in Kentucky.

Backyard Wildlife

Criteria for Schools



Schoolyards provide unique opportunities to develop habitat sites that can be used for wildlife conservation and education. In support of schools developing outdoor classrooms with wildlife as an objective, the Backyard Wildlife Program offers onsite technical assistance and certification.



Technical Assistance

To receive technical assistance, schools should contact their district wildlife biologist. The biologist can offer several levels of assistance:

- participate on the outdoor classroom development committee
- choosing a site that will attract the greatest diversity of wildlife
- developing a wildlife-friendly landscape plan
- suggesting avenues of funding, labor and other forms of assistance to pursue



Backyard Wildlife Habitat Kit

Teachers are encouraged to purchase the *Backyard Wildlife Habitat Kit* (\$12), available from the Kentucky Afield Gift Shop at the Salato Wildlife Education Center in Frankfort (502-564-7863). The Kit is a packet of information about how to design, develop and maintain a low-maintenance landscape that provides habitat for a diversity of wildlife, including lists of the best native plants to use and a list of sources for plants and seeds.



Criteria

Once the school has developed a landscape plan that is approved by their district biologist, teachers and students should observe the following criteria:

- Use native plants included on the plant lists included in the *Backyard Wildlife Habitat Kit*, or approved by their district biologist. The use of invasive exotic plants will not be approved.
- Develop an outreach program within their community for the purpose of obtaining donations of materials and labor to construct nest boxes, feeders, water features and other landscape amenities.
- At least one of the teachers involved in the project will attend a Project Wild workshop during the current project cycle. Teachers should contact the Project Wild coordinator at 502-564-7863 for a schedule of workshops for the current year.



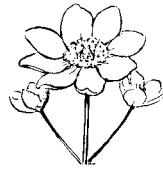
Certification

Schoolyards that meet the above criteria are eligible for certification as an official Kentucky Backyard Habitat Site. No certification fee is required. Certified habitat sites receive an attractive certificate and a water-proof *I'm Going Wild in My Backyard* sign.

Three levels of certification are possible: Standard, Silver and Gold. The level of certification is based on how well your backyard meets a number of criteria related to the habitat needs of wildlife in your region. Private

backyards and schoolyards are each evaluated using somewhat different criteria, with schools being required to involve students, as well as the community, in the process. Each of the criteria are scored, and the total score determines the level of certification. Certification usually requires 2-3 weeks.

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Kentucky Native Plant Program

The Kentucky Native Plant Program, an educational program of the Salato Wildlife Education Center, grows, demonstrates, and provides information on the use of native Kentucky plants in wildlife-friendly landscapes. Surplus plants grown through this program are often available to schools for their outdoor classrooms.

The program also offers workshops that can be useful to teachers developing native landscapes. Some of the recent topics include: harvesting native seeds, edible and medicinal natives, native plant propagation, growing birdhouse gourds, and habitat gardens.

For more information about the Native Plant Program, please contact the program coordinator at 1-800-858-1549.