

8 SIMPLE WAYS TO PROTECT INSECTS AND BIRDS

World Migratory Bird Day 2024

01



Insect-friendly gardens:

Plant native flowers, shrubs, and trees that provide habitat for insects. Insects prefer plants that are native to your area and need cover to survive. These plants are accustomed to the local weather and provide a good habitat for bugs.

02



Support organic farming:

Prioritize biodiversity by choosing organic products whenever possible to avoid agricultural practices that use harmful pesticides.



03

Minimize habitat destruction:

When developing or landscaping your property, minimize habitat destruction, try to compensate for the loss and preserve natural areas.

04

Don't rake!

Create a thriving ecosystem for insects and birds by leaving leaves in your garden or yard. The leaf litter acts as a natural shelter, food source, and breeding ground for various insect species. The decaying leaves also attract insects that are essential for insectivorous birds' diets.

05

Keep water clean by using eco-friendly soaps and cleaners. Some cleaning products and salts can be harmful to insects if they get into the water.



06

Support pollinator-friendly initiatives: Advocate for and support local policies and initiatives that protect insects and their habitats.



07

Teach your friends and family about the importance of insects. Support programs that educate people about insects and speak up for conservation in your community. Make sure rules about lawns and pesticides protect insects and get involved locally to support decisions that protect natural habitats, insects, and other wildlife.



**Environment
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08

Appreciate insects for the good things they do, like pollinating plants and being part of the food chain. Share positive pictures and stories about insects with your family and neighbors and on social media to help others learn their importance.



Did You Know?

- 1 Many birds that eat insects are disappearing at the same time and in the same places. Scientists think this may be because there are fewer insects for the birds to eat.



- 2 Almost all birds in North America give their chicks insects like caterpillars to eat. Caterpillars are especially important because they have lots of the nutrients young birds need to grow.

- 3 Insects are becoming harder to find. This could be because of changes humans are making, like farming more land, breaking up large areas of wilderness, or using the land differently, which all lead to fewer flying insects like flies, beetles, bees, grasshoppers, and butterflies for birds to eat. Out of these, caterpillars are especially important because they contain more nutrients (carotenoids) than other insects like grasshoppers, spiders, or worms.



- 4 Some migrating birds catch insects in mid-air, while others rely on insects found in water or on land. When there aren't enough of these insects, bird populations can drop because they don't have enough food.

- 5 One major issue is the widespread use of certain pesticides called neonicotinoids. These chemicals are meant to protect crops from pests but they end up hurting the bird populations too. In places where these pesticides are used, bird numbers can fall more than 3.5% each year.



- 6 In the last 50 years, birds that depend on insects at some point during the year (+304 species) have drastically declined—by over 2.9 billion birds! This decrease in bird numbers could be happening because of multiple reasons like habitat loss, changing climate, big-scale farming, light pollution, and harmful pesticides.

- 7 The largest part of the diet for hundreds young birds that migrate is made up of butterflies and moths, which are rich in protein and fat.



Protect Insects, Protect Birds

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