

Olney Crossing Homeowners Association Newsletter

April 2024

A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT STARTS IN YOUR YARD

Whether you like to dig in the soil, nurture flowers and vegetables, make a home for bees and birds, or just have a few hearty plants for landscaping, you can contribute to a healthier outdoor environment. Olney Crossing resident and master gardener, Linda MacNeil, has some basic recommendations for attracting pollinating birds and bees and keeping our local and regional waterways clean.

Attract the beneficial critters, discourage the problem ones

Vegetables and herbs from your garden depend on natural pollinators – bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies. You can attract them with plants such as milkweed, butterfly weed, and joe pye weed. Also, using flowers and herbs as borders for your vegetable gardens can discourage pests that want to eat your produce before you do.

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Steer away from large, high maintenance lawns

By decreasing the size of your lawn, you also decrease the work and cost of maintaining it. Perennial native groundcovers can take up large spaces and more contained grasses and bushes can provide shelter and food for our feathered friends. Ways to reduce the use of turf grass and replace it with attractive shrubs and grasses can be found at: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/lawn-alternatives/>.



Support native plants

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Passcode: 912254

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,5955630249#,,, *912254# US (Washington DC)

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HOA Dues

Our thanks to all homeowners who pay their dues on time or in advance.

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Olney Crossing Homeowners Association Newsletter

April 2024

A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT STARTS IN YOUR YARD

Whether you like to dig in the soil, nurture flowers and vegetables, make a home for bees and birds, or just have a few hearty plants for landscaping, you can contribute to a healthier outdoor environment. Olney Crossing resident and master gardener, Linda MacNeil, has some basic recommendations for attracting pollinating birds and bees and keeping our local and regional waterways clean.

Attract the beneficial critters, discourage the problem ones

Vegetables and herbs from your garden depend on natural pollinators – bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies. You can attract them with plants such as milkweed, butterfly weed, and joe pye weed. Also, using flowers and herbs as borders for your vegetable gardens can discourage pests that want to eat your produce before you do.

Only trout love mosquitoes, and the best way to avoid them is not to breed them. Empty standing water from birdbaths, yard toys, and other areas that collect water where mosquitoes can lay their eggs in as little as a teaspoon of water. Here are some tips to foil mosquitoes: <https://marylandgrows.umd.edu/2023/06/30/the-4-es-for-easy-breezy-beautiful-mosquito-source-reduction/>.

Steer away from large, high maintenance lawns

By decreasing the size of your lawn, you also decrease the work and cost of maintaining it. Perennial native groundcovers can take up large spaces and more contained grasses and bushes can provide shelter and food for our feathered friends. Ways to reduce the use of turf grass and replace it with attractive shrubs and grasses can be found at: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/lawn-alternatives/>.



Support native plants

You only need to see a tree taken over by invasive English Ivy to see the damage this plant does. But there are so many different invasives it can be difficult to keep track. UMD extension service can steer you towards native plants and away from invasive ones.

Linda's final tip is to start gradually and grow plants you can manage, considering that perennials require thinning out every few years.

These are just a few starter ideas. The University of Maryland Extension service website has a bounty of information and ideas that are easy to search for and put into action: <https://www.extension.umd.edu/>. Also, there is information specific to Montgomery County under the **location** tab.

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