

# Habitat Certification Application

Use this form to certify a wildlife-friendly space in your yard, school, or anywhere in your community. If your habitat meets the requirements, you'll receive a personalized certificate suitable for framing and become a member of National Wildlife Federation, receiving their award-winning National Wildlife® magazine and a 10% discount on all NWF catalog merchandise.



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Property owner or organization \_\_\_\_\_  
*If you are filling out this application for someone else, please write their name in the space provided above.*

If organization, contact person \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) to Appear on Certificate \_\_\_\_\_  
Maximum 30 characters, spaces included.

Address of Habitat \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

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I would like a free site visit and consultation from a trained Habitat Steward (*optional*)

**In what type of area is your property?**

Urban     Suburban     Rural

**What watershed to you live in (if known)?**

**How big is your property?**    \_\_\_\_\_ acres

**Check the option that best describes your habitat.**

- Home
- Apartment
- Business/ Corporation
- Park/Community Garden
- Farm
- Place of Worship
- School/ University/ College
- Nature Center/ Educational Setting

**FOOD SOURCES:** Plants provide the basic foods for wildlife. Feeders can be used as a supplemental source of food. Remember that some creatures will become food for others in a balanced habitat. Encourage a natural diversity of wildlife in your yard to ensure a healthy ecosystem. How do you provide food for wildlife? **(Minimum requirement: 3)**

**Plant Foods:** \_\_\_ Seeds \_\_\_ Nuts \_\_\_ Pollen  
 \_\_\_ Berries \_\_\_ Fruits \_\_\_ Nectar  
 \_\_\_ Sap \_\_\_ Foliage/Twigs

**Supplemental Feeders:** \_\_\_ Seed \_\_\_ Suet  
 \_\_\_ Squirrel \_\_\_ Butterfly  
 \_\_\_ Hummingbird

**PLACES FOR COVER:** Wildlife need shelter from bad weather and hiding places-for both predators and prey. How do you provide cover for wildlife? **(Minimum requirement: 2)**

\_\_\_ Wooded Area \_\_\_ Dense Shurbs/Thicket  
 \_\_\_ Bramble Patch \_\_\_ Evergreens  
 \_\_\_ Rock Pile/Wall \_\_\_ Burrow  
 \_\_\_ Cave \_\_\_ Meadow/Prairie  
 \_\_\_ Roosting Box \_\_\_ Water Garden/Pond

**WATER SOURCES:** Wildlife need a clean water source for drinking and bathing. How do you provide water for wildlife? **(Minimum requirement: 1)**

\_\_\_ Birdbath \_\_\_ Water Garden/Pond  
 \_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_ Butterfly Puddling Area  
 \_\_\_ Lake \_\_\_ Rain Garden  
 \_\_\_ Ocean \_\_\_ Stream/River  
 \_\_\_ Seasonal Pool \_\_\_ Shallow Dish

**PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG:** In order to provide complete habitat. you must provide places for wildlife to engage in courtship behavior and to mate, and then to bear and raise their young. How do you provide places to raise young for wildlife? **(Minimum requirement: 2)**

\_\_\_ Mature Trees \_\_\_ Dead Trees/Snags  
 \_\_\_ Meadow/Prairie \_\_\_ Dense Shrubs/Thicket  
 \_\_\_ Nesting Box \_\_\_ Water Garden/Pond  
 \_\_\_ Wetland \_\_\_ Burrow  
 \_\_\_ Host Plants \_\_\_ Cave  
 for Caterpillars

To apply, please send:

- Completed application (incl. Sustainable Gardening Checklist) - REQUIRED
- \$25 non-refundable application fee payable to NWF - REQUIRED
- \$25 check or money order payable to Delaware Nature Society for each requested Certified Wildlife Habitat Sign (12" x 9") – OPTIONAL
- \$10 check or money order payable to Delaware Nature Society for each requested Certified Wildlife Habitat Flag (18" x 12") - OPTIONAL

DELAWARE NATURE SOCIETY

ATTN: Kerry Wilson

Kerry.Wilson@DelNature.org

3511 Barley Mill Road Hockessin, DE 19707



Allow 4-6 weeks for processing.  
 Please keep a copy of this application for your records.

# SUSTAINABLE GARDENING CHECKLIST

Please complete and return with your Habitat Certification Application



Sustainable gardening practices are an important part of your home landscape. There are many ways to promote healthy soil and water quality while providing habitats for wildlife on your property. Certified properties are asked to implement a **minimum of 8 conservation techniques** throughout any of the following categories. Check ( ✓ ) the practices that you implement.

## **Water Quality & Conservation**

- Use a rain barrel with a mosquito-proof cover to capture roof runoff
- Maintain a rain garden
- Water your lawn or garden areas only during the early morning or evening hours without excessive watering that leads to unnecessary runoff
- Allow vegetated buffers of at least 10 feet around natural water features including ponds, streams and wetlands
- Direct roof downspouts away from impervious surfaces onto lawn, garden, gravel areas or rock beds
- Limit paved surfaces to favor more porous options such as wooden decks and gravel paths
- Wash your car away from paved surfaces so that soap does not flow directly into the sewer, wash your car with low phosphorous soaps, use a professional car wash where they recycle the water, or never wash your car
- Never apply chemicals within 15 feet of a waterway
- Other— explain \_\_\_\_\_

## **Fertilizer**

- Conduct a soil test (every 3 years for lawns) to see how much if any fertilizer is needed. (The University of Delaware Cooperative Extension can provide this service at a nominal cost)
- Never apply more than the recommended amount of fertilizer according to label directions or results of soil test
- Create and/or use compost
- Use only organic fertilizers such as:
  - Nitrogen (N) – grass clippings, compost, blood meal, cotton seed meal, fish emulsion
  - Phosphorous (P) – compost, bone meal,
  - Potassium (K) – compost, aged manure, fire wood ash, green sand, seaweed
  - Minerals (magnesium, zinc, iron, sulfur) – kelp meal
- Reduce nutrients and bacteria by removing pet waste from your yard
- Keep fertilizer, grass clippings, leaves and other debris off of paved surfaces including walks, driveways, streets & stormdrains
- Other— explain \_\_\_\_\_

## **Lawns**

- Only fertilize in fall
- Never remove grass clippings
- Allow clover to grow in your lawn
- Use controlled-release, slow-releasing (coated fertilizer) or insoluble organic sources of nitrogen (bloodmeal, compost)
- Use a Livable Lawn landscaper or took the Liveable Lawns Pledge ([www.delawarelivablelawns.org](http://www.delawarelivablelawns.org))

**Pesticide & Herbicide**

- Eliminate use of chemical pesticides (including Herbicide, Insecticide and Rodenticide)
- Practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which involves implementing a variety of strategies to control pests, while causing minimal impact to the environment
- Choose the least toxic control methods available, explain \_\_\_\_\_
- When applying chemicals, read the entire label and follow directions carefully, wear protective clothing, and dispose of excess materials appropriately (reuse or bring to a hazardous waste drop-off site)
- Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Soil Conservation**

- Prevent erosion by stabilizing steep slopes with plants, rocks, or terraces, protect exposed soil during construction projects with a tarp, or simply inspect your property for signs of erosion and manage as needed
- Use groundcovers or natural materials such as leaves, twigs and pine needles as mulch on garden beds to protect soil and discourage weeds
- Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Promote Native Species Diversity**

- Plant native plants
- Remove invasive plants
- Reduce lawn areas to incorporate more natural landscapes
- Keep cats indoors or closely monitored outside and never feed feral cats
- Install a deer fence or use natural repellents to promote diverse growth of native plants
- Allow fallen leaves and perennial stems & seedheads to remain until mid-spring
- Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate what % of your property is naturalized (meadow, woods, wetland) or in gardens \_\_\_\_\_ %

**How did you hear about this program?**  Friend/Neighbor  DelNature website  NWF  
 Facebook  Brochure  Sign  Program  Presentation  Habitat Steward  
 Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in learning about Delaware Nature Society Membership

***Thank you for helping to improve Delaware's environment!***



**\*For New Castle County Residents Only:** DNS is an approved certifier with New Castle County. A pollinator garden may exceed 25% of the front yard and may exceed 50% of the rear yard if it is certified by the Delaware Nature Society as a pollinator benefiting garden or landscape. Properties must abide by New Castle County Codes ([Ordinance 24-035-Pollinator and Rain Gardens-April 2, 2024.pdf](#))

Occupant:

Phone:

Email Address:

Address:

Property Owner:

Certification:

I certify that my pollinator garden: (must check all to qualify)

- Complies with the setback requirements
- Has edging installed
- Contains at least 2 pollinator-friendly species

Complies with New Castle County Code Chapter 7 Section 302.4.9.1 ([Chapter 7 - PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE | Code of Ordinances | New Castle County, DE | Municode Library](#))

I acknowledge that a certificate from the Delaware Nature Society does not exempt the pollinator garden from New Castle County Code requirements and understand that my pollinator garden may be inspected by New Castle County Code Enforcement.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Photographs must be submitted with a certification request that clearly shows pollinator friendly species, edging material, and shows compliance with the setbacks.**

**Documentation (including this application and photographs) shall be submitted to the New Castle County Department of Land Use, Code Enforcement Division to, [PropertyMaintenance@newcastlede.gov](mailto:PropertyMaintenance@newcastlede.gov)**

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Delaware Nature Society, 3511 Barley Mill Road, Hockessin, DE 19707