

## **GARDENING BASICS**

### **WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING FLOWERS**

#### **Elevation**

#### **Light Conditions**

Sun, partial light, or shade;  
Morning/evening exposure

#### **Water Availability**

#### **Average Temperatures**

#### **Soil Type**

Sand, loam, silt, or clay

#### **Growing Type**

Shrub, Vine, Tree, Herb

#### **Size or Eventual Height**

#### **Blooming Time**

Days - Months

Fall/ Winter/ Spring

#### **Availability**

How common is the flower in garden centers? Do you need to have seeds shipped? If so, consider how much fuel and impact to the environment it might cause.

#### **Native vs. Non-native**

A native plant is from the area and is less likely to cause unexpected effects in the ecosystem.

#### **Benefits**

Some plants will be better at attracting certain wildlife and insects, providing nutrients to the soil, or indicating if the environment is in trouble.

### **WILL YOUR PLANTS RETURN?**

#### **Annuals**

Annuals are plants that will only last for one year. They would need to be repurchased if you want to have them again next year.

#### **Perennials**

Perennials are plants that will regrow on their own the following year. As long as the conditions are right, you should see them year after year.

#### **Sowing Seeds Naturally**

Some plants can have their seeds harvested and re-planted. Others will naturally drop their seeds and regrow from them the next year. This is a simple way to have an annual plant come back again.

### **WHAT YOU CAN ADD TO YOUR GARDEN**

#### **For Shelter/ Protection**

Boxes for habitat supplement are available for birds as well as butterflies. Fences can deter larger herbivores from eating the flower heads. Larger bushes and shrubs can provide safety for birds.

#### **For Food**

Suet, bird and wildlife feed can be purchased or made using seeds grown in the garden. Hummingbird feeders may also be added and only require a simple sugar-water solution.

#### **For Water**

Non-Chlorinated water fountains, ponds, bird feeders, or even small and shallow dishes of water with rocks or stones can be extremely helpful for birds and butterflies in bathing, drinking, and breeding.

#### **For Nutrients**

Research the best plant food or soil enrichment. Try to select ones with higher Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Sulfur, and cast concentrations.

#### **For Entertainment**

Consider adding a wildlife trail camera to your garden.

### **HOW TO BECOME NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION CERTIFIED**

Go to [www.nwf.org/certified-wildlifehabitat](http://www.nwf.org/certified-wildlifehabitat), pay the small application fee, explain how your garden supports wildlife, and they will review it to be certified. Your garden should provide food, water, cover, places to raise young, and use sustainable practices. You can then post your earned sign showing others that you did it!

