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CREATING A HEALTHY APARTMENT OR TOWNHOUSE

Even if you live in an apartment, townhouse, or condominium development without much space for landscaping, the right mix of ingredients on a balcony, patio, terrace, or rooftop can be an oasis that provides food and rest for wildlife in an urban concrete desert. Coordinated efforts by neighbors can transform an entire multi-unit building or complex into a thriving urban habitat that is part of a larger living landscape.

BIRDS IN SMALL PLACES

A small urban setting can still contribute to the conservation of birds, while creating a richer place that is full of life and energy, takes the edge off a hectic urban world, and connects your home with the natural world. Inviting birds to your patio, terrace, or balcony may be as simple as creating a green space that stands out. Birdscape your single dwelling, several units, or an entire building complex by providing birds with plants for food and shelter, feeders, a nest box, and a source of fresh water. Try to provide these basic needs for locally common native birds, additional species you'd like to attract, and other birds that need the most help in your area. Consider providing native flowers and a feeder for hummingbirds.

URBAN BIRDS

Cities often support more individual birds than suburban or rural areas. However, these abundant urban birds are mostly House Sparrows, European Starlings, and Rock Pigeons—highly adaptable European species that have learned to thrive in urban settings. By covering or replacing bare pavement and buildings with native trees, bushes, and wildflowers, urban areas—including apartment complexes—can attract a wider range of native bird species and can serve as valuable habitat for birds migrating through the city. For more information on how you can attract native birds to your apartment, condominium, or townhouse, visit www.audubonathome.org/apartment.

BATS—THE NIGHT SHIFT

The United States is home to 47 bat species, and bats are often found in urban areas, where they may hunt for insects attracted to streetlights. In more suburban settings, bats may live around multi-unit dwellings, finding their insect prey over open fields and waterways. Bats that roost in crevices may take advantage of a bat house placed at a height of 10 feet or higher on a structure that faces the morning sun. For more information, visit www.audubonathome.org/bats.

BUTTERFLY BALCONIES

A patch of bright-colored flowers in a sea of concrete can serve as a magnet for butterflies. Make your patio, balcony, or small yard explode with color. Paint flowerpots yellow, orange, and red and plant them with colorful native flowers. Butterflies may also come to drinking water placed for them in a shallow bowl filled with pebbles and water, or drink nectar from an artificial butterfly feeder. For more information on attracting butterflies, visit www.audubonathome.org/butterflies.

THE OTHER “B”

Most of the bees that pollinate native plants do not live together in hives. Many of these native solitary bees are declining, but you may be able to help them by building a bee box. Simply drill small holes into an untreated block of wood, or tie a bundle of dried stems together and place them outdoors. Solitary bees will lay their eggs in the holes, which then serve as a nursery. For more information on how to help these beneficial insects, visit www.audubonathome.org/solitarybees.

CONTAIN YOUR NATIVES

In a small urban habitat, flowerpots, wall-mounted planter boxes, and hanging plants can add interest and accommodate a variety of plants that may attract birds and butterflies. Consult with your local native plant society to learn which native plants work best in containers. As a general rule, bigger containers are better and give roots room to grow. Always include

a bottom layer of rocks or pieces of broken pots for good drainage and to guard against overwatering.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

Share your enthusiasm for your bird and butterfly oasis to initiate positive change within your community. Get together with your neighbors and form a cooperative “gardening for wildlife” group. Surround your building with greenery and enjoy your new bird and butterfly neighbors. Take this poster to a homeowner’s association meeting and offer your ideas as inspiration. If you live in a high-rise building, promote dimming nighttime lights during migration to avoid attracting migratory birds that may become disoriented and collide with lighted buildings and windows. Plan your landscaping to complement nearby natural areas, and get adjacent landowners to join your efforts as well. For more information on working together to help birds and other wildlife in your community, visit www.audubonathome.org/neighborhood.

HEALTHY YARD PLEDGE

Create and maintain a healthy environment for you, your family, and local wildlife by pledging to:

- ✓ Reduce pesticide use
- ✓ Conserve water
- ✓ Protect water quality
- ✓ Remove invasive exotic plants
- ✓ Plant native species
- ✓ Support wildlife on your property

Visit www.audubonathome.org/pledge to make the pledge online.

The **AUDUBON AT HOME** website contains information and downloadable resources to help you plan and develop your property in a wildlife-friendly way. You'll find regional resources and information about the birds, other wildlife, and native plants in your area. Visit www.audubonathome.org.

NRCS'S BACKYARD CONSERVATION website also shows ways to help the environment and to make your yard more attractive and enjoyable. Visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard.

AN INVITATION TO A HEALTHY APARTMENT



Invite Birds, Bats, and Butterflies to YOUR APARTMENT OR TOWNHOUSE

1 With the clearing of hollow trees and the capping of chimneys, Chimney Swifts are losing preferred places to nest and roost. Attractive **CHIMNEY SWIFT TOWERS** can house these high-flying insectivores and, when used to display information, can even double as community nature kiosks.

2 Your building's barren roof area can become an attractive green hilltop. **ROOFTOP GARDENS** save energy by insulating building interiors, reduce runoff, last longer than conventional roofs, and provide habitat for birds, butterflies, and other beneficial insects.

3 **BIRDHOUSES** offer a good alternative for cavity-nesting chickadees, titmice, and wrens.

4 Bats are important insect predators in many urban areas, and a **BAT HOUSE** can give them a place to roost during the day.

5 Hummingbirds will more readily find a **HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER** in the midst of plants, especially those with tubular flowers. More of these tiny winged jewels may visit if you and your neighbors create a network of adjoining green balconies, roofs, or patios.



For more information, visit www.audubonathome.org/apartment • For individual copies of this poster, call 1-888-LANDCARE.

6 A balcony, terrace, or patio **GARDEN** becomes an inviting “microhabitat.” If you encourage your neighbors to cultivate their outdoor space as well, your combined efforts will create even more habitat for birds and butterflies.

7 An estimated 1 billion birds die each year from crashing into windows. Decorate the outer surface of your **WINDOWS** to make the glass visible to birds, or put up a protective screen to prevent them from flying into it.

8 Seed-eating birds have an uncanny ability to find **BIRD FEEDERS**—even in the most urban settings. A ready food source may attract common city dwelling birds, as well as more unusual species passing by.

9 Fresh **WATER** in a birdbath or shallow container can provide drinking and bathing opportunities for many birds.

10 A community-wide effort to keep **CATS** indoors will keep cats safe and healthy, while reducing cat predation of birds and other small animals.

BIRDS TO HELP IN YOUR AREA

If your apartment, townhouse, or condo is in an urban area, your primary goal may be to provide additional habitat for common native birds—to provide an oasis for birds moving through your neighborhood. Consider providing food, shelter, and nesting sites for five or six local species. Then keep a close watch to see how the birds respond to your efforts. To determine which species to help in your area, and how you can attract them to your apartment, condo, or townhouse, visit www.audubonathome.org/birdstohelp.

My target species

Action points
