



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Wildlife Diversity News

Conservation and Recreation

January 15, 2025

## What About Wildlife Where I Live?

---

The festive season is over and it's a new year. Here in the depths of winter, it is a time to ponder how we want this year to be. Peaceful? Exciting? Full of Awe? Fun? At the Wildlife Diversity Program, we also think about goals and resolutions at the start of each year and we focus on how we'd like the world to be for all of the non-game wildlife species we share our state with. In 2025, we are taking inspiration from this year's theme for [World Migratory Bird Day](#): Shared Spaces – Creating Bird Friendly Cities and Communities. We really want to share with everyone just how possible, important and rewarding it is to fully embrace the role all of us play in supporting wildlife where we live.

---

**In his book *Nature's Best Hope*, Dr. Doug Tallamy makes the argument that “Conservation that is confined to parks will not preserve species in the long run, because these areas are too small and too separated from one another.”**

---

And he's right! We all have the opportunity whether we are living on 1,000 or 0.0001 acres to make choices and take actions that make the world just a little bit friendlier for all the wild lives that share our home ground.

To share our passion for that particularly crimson Cardinal brightening our mornings with his songs or the lightning bugs making our summer evenings magical and even that vibrant milk snake hurriedly gliding away from us into protective brush, we will be releasing a series of articles throughout the year on how to support wildlife where you live.

# Wildlife Where You Live

5 Things YOU Can Do For Wildlife At Home



**Plant Native Plants**



**Add Water**



**Use the Right Lighting**



**Reduce Hazards to Wildlife**



**Embrace Wildness**



**IOWA | DNR**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



We will focus on five areas where humans and wildlife can connect. They all represent positive actions that can be taken to make your little corner of the world a little more welcoming to wildlife.

- **PLANT NATIVE PLANTS:** One of the most impactful and easiest things to do on your property is to incorporate more plants - trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers - that are native to Iowa. A native plant is one that has not been introduced by humans and has historically been a part of Iowa's natural ecosystems. Native wildlife and native plants have a long history together and those established relationships can be used to provide a welcoming environment for both wildlife and people!
- **ADD WATER:** We all need water and for wildlife it can be particularly hard to come by during certain times of the year or during periods of drought. Providing a reliable, sustainable source of water will make your space a haven year-round.
- **USE THE RIGHT LIGHTING:** The lighting we use outside and even inside our homes during certain times of the year can really cause problems for wildlife. We'll share some simple actions you can take to make your lighting wildlife friendly.
- **REDUCE HAZARDS TO WILDLIFE:** We may be cheating a little with this one as there are several things that fit into this category. From windows, to rat poison, to our beloved feline companions, we can sometimes

unintentionally make the world more dangerous for our local wildlife. We will highlight a few of these hazards.

- **EMBRACE WILDNESS:** This element references both a way of thinking and some very concrete actions you can take. Wildlife usually appreciate a little bit of "messiness" in their homes, and there are likely quite a few of us who would rather not have to mow or weed every square inch of our land or would be thrilled to save the garden cleanup for later and instead watch a skipper butterfly taking advantage of the last of the autumn blooms. We'll provide some easy ways you can embrace some "messiness" on your property and benefit both wildlife and people.
- 

## Join Us in Helping Them!

Keep an eye on your emails as we share more over the coming months. We hope everyone has a wonderful new year and that you will join us in welcoming wildlife in your yards, balconies and acreages. Let's make 2025 a wild year!

---

## Are you anxious to get started RIGHT NOW?

If you don't want to wait for future emails before you get started, here are a few organizations that have good in depth information on many of these topics that you can dig into:

- [Homegrown National Park](#)
- [The Audubon Society](#)
- [The American Bird Conservancy](#)
- [The Xerces Society](#)
- [DarkSky International](#)
- [Partners for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation](#)