



LANDSCAPING

FOR

WILDLIFE

An all-in-one guide, with information to help you transform your yard into an area abundant with birds and wildlife.

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Landscaping for Wildlife is a reference guide for anyone interested in creating a backyard in harmony with nature, enjoying the wonders that wildlife can bring and contributing to a more earth-friendly environment. Whether it is a small city plot or a large yard, the information provided can help any person, group or school with their own naturalization project.



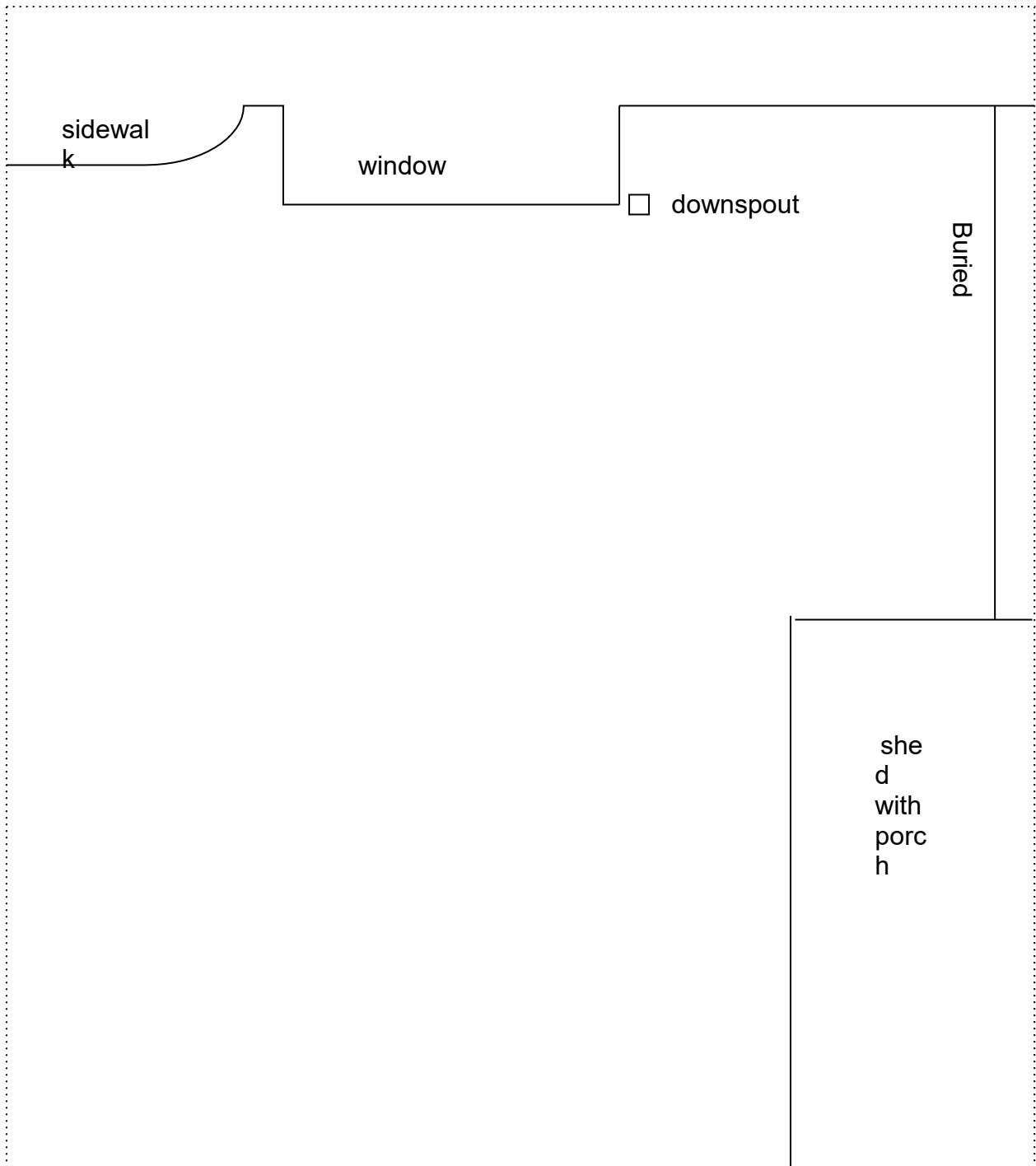
People are increasingly interested in naturalizing their yards as we realize that every little bit done to conserve our environment is critical. Using native species has a multitude of benefits. A native plant is defined as being a species that was found here prior to European settlement. These species are well adapted to local weather conditions, diseases and pests. They are a valuable food source and create habitat and cover for local insects and wildlife.

Southern Ontario was once home to vast areas of prairie and now less than 1% of the original tallgrass prairie remains. The Windsor/LaSalle area is home to some of the last large prairie remnants. With more than 750 species of plants and over two thousand species of insects, birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, this is Ontario's richest and most diverse habitat. Creating a prairie garden in your area helps re-establish our natural heritage. Prairie plants thrive on our hot summer days and demand the sub-zero temperatures of winter. They make an ideal choice for any garden, as they are hardy, require no watering once established, attract a host of birds, butterflies and insects, and require no fertilizer or pesticides.

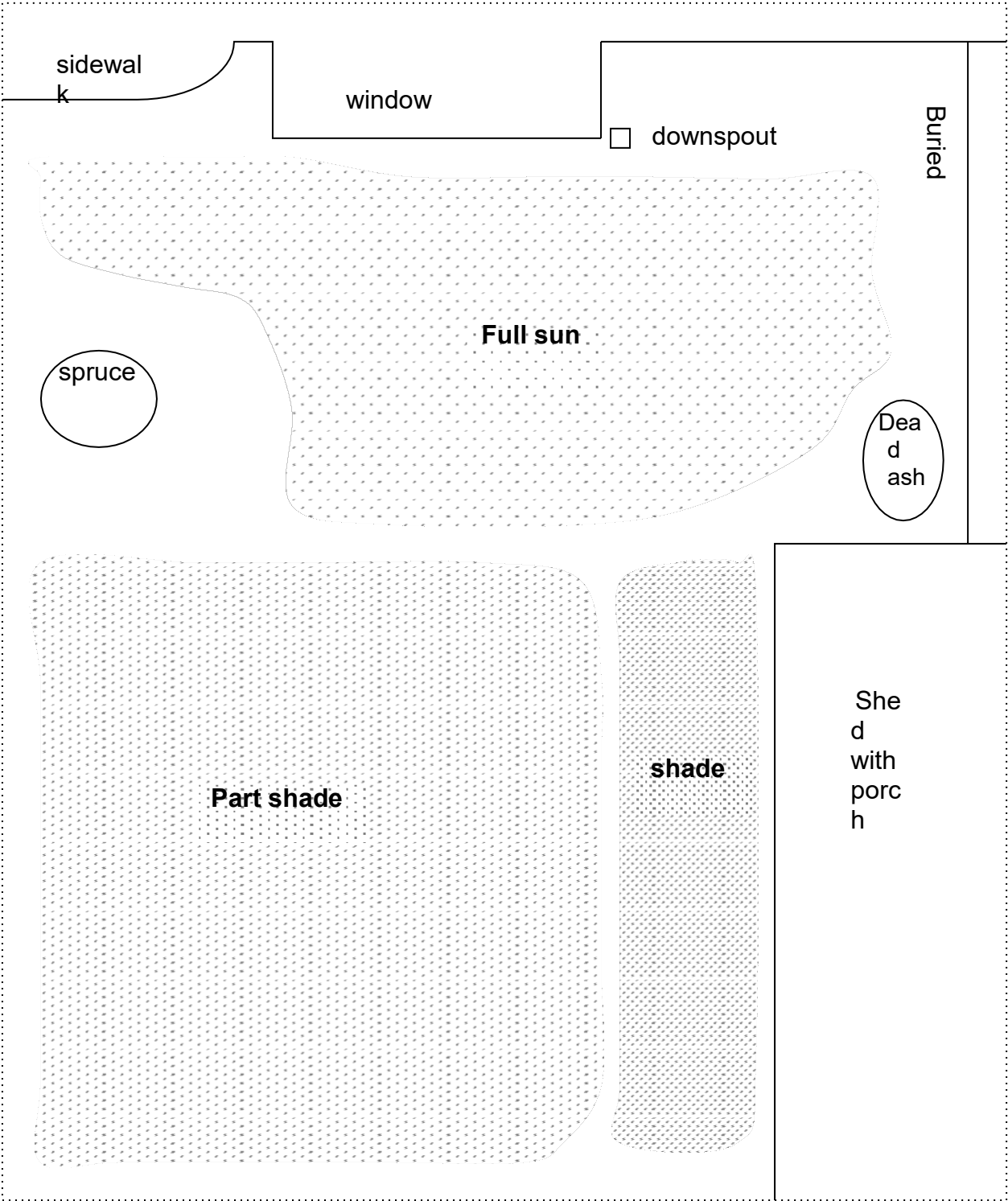
Discover nature in your own backyard. Attract birds, butterflies and other wildlife to your yard through planting choices and landscaping methods.

Getting Started: Planning and Mapping

1. Take an inventory of the trees, shrubs and plants you already have. Decide what you would like to keep, move or pull out.
2. Map your yard to scale (using graph paper or overhead transparencies), include all hardscape features: house, deck, patio, pool, sheds, and existing paths you will be keeping. Also include any power lines, pipes, septic tanks and underground cables. Make note of flaws or problems you currently have: flooding/wet areas, hot/dry areas, heavy traffic, etc.






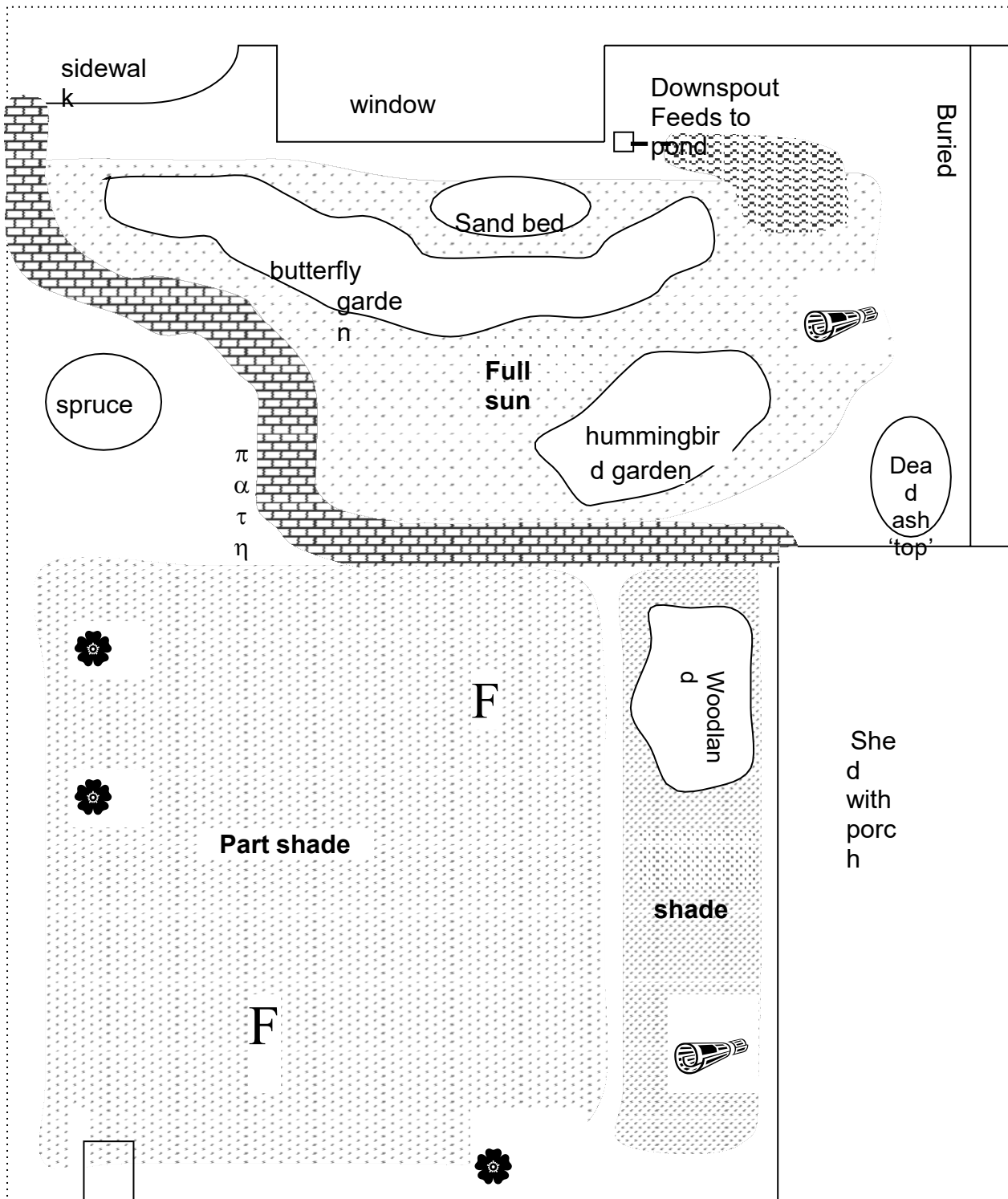
3. Add existing plantings that you plan on keeping. Sketch in general sun/shade patterns. Hint: afternoon sun can be as warm as full day sun. Also keep in mind wind direction; you may need to plant hardy shrubs or evergreens as windbreaks.



4. Add to your map the species that you would like to include, taking into consideration the *five factors* listed on the next page. Include any of the elements listed on the next few pages (feeders, bird houses etc.).

Legend:

F = feeder  = native shrub  = native tree = log/rock pile 



Five Factors to Consider

Size	What is the height and spread of trees/shrubs, now and at maturity?
Soil	What type of soil, drainage, workability, and fertility?
Sun	What areas receive sun/shade and for how much of the day?
View	Are there any views you want to maintain or hide?
Seasons	What food/cover is available for each season?

The greater the diversity of vegetation and areas, the more species you will attract to your wildlife garden

How you plant is just as important as what you plant.

Wildlife tends to congregate where two different habitats meet, therefore, try to design your yard to alternate plant masses with open areas. Also, by planting shrubs and small trees under the spreading branches of large trees you can encourage species diversity.



Features of a Wildlife Garden: Plants

Grasses and Legumes provide habitat for ground-nesting birds (pheasants, meadowlarks), forage for plant eating mammals (white-tailed deer, cottontail rabbits, and meadow voles), winter cover and food for seed eating winter birds. In addition, legumes „fix“ atmospheric nitrogen and thus improve the condition of your soil.



Butterfly, Bee and Moth Plants - One of the greatest opportunities for enhancing your yard for wildlife is to provide plants that will attract butterflies, bees and moths. Among the most common butterflies in our area are the monarch, swallowtails, and sulphurs. While native species of plants are preferred in most situations the addition of other species can benefit butterflies and hummingbirds. Bees rely especially on plants that are available when they first emerge in the spring, including lantana, weeping lantana, grape hyacinth, and pussy willow. Moths and butterflies enjoy bergamot, bee balm, butterfly milkweed, joe-pye-weed, purple coneflower, and asters as adults and many others as a source of larval food. Many of the best bee and butterfly

plants are herbs. So, planting an herb garden has culinary as well as wildlife benefits. Plant butterfly species in a sunny, sheltered spot and provide for a seasonal progression of flowering plants to keep them coming all summer. Large hawkmoths will visit plants such as phlox, bouncing bet and tobacco flower at dusk. See Appendix 1 for a complete list of plants for butterflies, caterpillars, and hummingbirds.

Hummingbird Plants- Hummingbirds eat tiny insects and flower nectar and are most attracted to tubular red flowers. Provide plants that bloom at different times from May to October (late August to September is the best time to attract them). Spotted touch-me-not, cardinal flower, salvia and columbine are heavily visited by hummingbirds. In the spring hummers will visit apple, cherry and other fruit trees. Hummingbird feeders should be hung in partial shade and filled with one part table sugar and four parts water. Try hanging two or more feeders, as a hummer will spend much time chasing other birds away from a single feeder.



Conifers include pine, spruce, fir, juniper, and cedar trees. These provide escape cover, winter cover and nesting sites for birds and small animals. The sap, needles, twigs, buds, and seeds are eaten by wildlife.

Aquatic and Moist Soil Plants - The addition of a pond to your landscape not only provides wildlife with a source of water, it also affords you the opportunity to include aquatic and moist soil plants which are important sources of food for wetland wildlife such as reptiles, amphibians and waterfowl. Some native species for planting: arrow arum, bulrush, pickerel weed, blue flag iris, sweet flag, marsh marigold.

Summer Fruit, Berry and Cover Plants - These provide food and nesting cover from June to August. An added benefit of such plants as choke cherry, raspberry, and grape vines is their tendency to spread by suckering to create dense thickets ideal for cover and shrub-nesting birds

like the catbird and brown thrasher. See Appendix 2 for a list of plants and trees to attract wildlife and a list of plants to avoid planting.

Fall Fruits and Cover Plants - Shrubs and vines provide sources of food, and shelter even into the winter. Dogwood and elderberry, for example, produce berries, that are consumed by cedar waxwings, black-capped chickadees and white-breasted nuthatches. Fall fruits are very important to migrating birds that eat to build up fat reserves prior to migration.

Winter Fruits and Cover Plants - Choose plants that produce persistent fruit with low appeal to wildlife when they first mature so that the fruit will be available for consumption in the winter when animals are most pressed to find food. Red-splendour crabapple, staghorn and smooth sumac, and highbush cranberry are suitable species as their fruit is not tasteful until late winter after the berries have gone through a couple of freeze/thaw cycles.

Plants that Produce Nuts and Acorns - Nuts and acorns are significant foods for squirrels and chipmunks. Oaks, hazel and shagbark hickory produce nuts and acorns used by wildlife. As a bonus, such trees are long-lived, provide habitat for cavity-dwelling and nest-building animals and provide shade for the yard and house.

Structural Aspects



Nest Boxes can be incorporated into your yard to supplement natural cavities. House wrens, bluebirds, and screech-owls are only a few of the birds who will use nest boxes. Try to install nest boxes as far away as possible from feeding areas. Birds feel threatened by other birds when they come near their nesting sites. See Appendix 3 for specific information regarding size of nesting box, diameter of entrance, and height for a few species.

Brush Piles and Rock Piles create escape cover, nesting and den sites for cottontail rabbits, chipmunks, gartersnakes and many other small animals. When placed along a pond's edge, these piles are great shelter and basking areas for reptiles and amphibians. A note of caution: brush and rock piles may create predator cover and make animals more vulnerable to ambush by predators. Thus, choose your sites wisely.

Dead Trees (Snags), Fallen Trees and Perches - Perching sites, from your fence to a dead tree, are important to most backyard birds. A dead tree is an important feature of any wildlife landscape as it provides habitat for insect larvae, which are food for woodpeckers. Woodpeckers will dwell in cavities they create in the snag. Screech owls, chickadees and nuthatches will inhabit abandoned woodpecker cavities as well. Dead trees can be „topped“ (leaving only the trunk) to make them safe (live trees should never be topped). Consider using a dead log(s) on the ground. The rotting log will have insects, which in turn will attract a variety of birds that feed on insects.

Water is essential for wildlife and will attract a wonderful variety of songbirds, small mammals, amphibians, and insects. Many wildlife prefer to drink from pond edges where the water is shallow. The provision of a source of water can be as simple as an upside down garbage can lid to a large elaborate backyard pond. Birds love to bathe and splash around in water that is

approximately 1” deep. Dripping or flowing water is more attractive to wildlife than still water and will not attract mosquitoes.

Dust and Grit - Many species of birds will dust bath in beds of dry soil to help control external parasites. Grit (fine to course sand) is swallowed by some birds to grind up seeds and other foods. Butterflies are attracted to wet sand for its moisture. If you wish to increase the number and variety of birds and butterflies that visit your backyard, you can put out a tray or bed of sand near your birdfeeder.

Feeders - The finishing touch to a wildlife landscaping plan is an assortment of wildlife feeders that supplement the foods already provided by trees, shrubs and flowers. There are a wide variety of feeders that you can make or purchase and a selection of seed as well, each attracting specific species or groups of species to your yard. Feeders attract animals to your yard so that they can be seen and enjoyed from the comfort of inside (be sure to locate them where you can see them from indoors). In turn, animals benefit from being fed, especially in the winter when regular sources of food are scarce. See Appendix 4 for some suggestions of simple feeders you can make and Appendix 5 for birdseed types and feeding preferences.

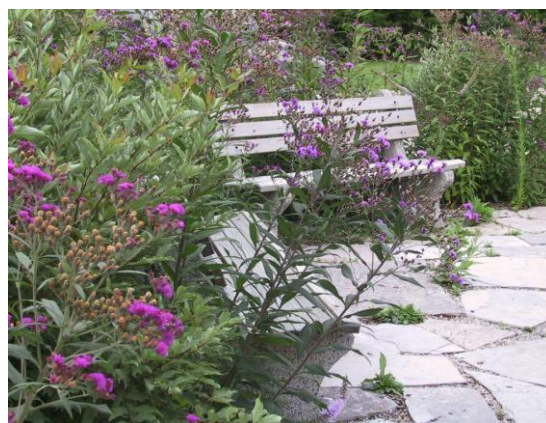


Topography – When wet areas, heavy traffic or ATV’s are problem, try randomly filling spots in the area with soil. You can excavate one area lower and pile the dirt next to it alleviating wet spots, discouraging people and ATV from using that area.

Rain Barrels – A rain barrel or cistern that collects rainfall from your roof is a great garden reservoir for watering plants and trees, especially when your area has a lot of new plantings that need to be watered regularly. Try to keep a screen on top to prevent leaves and debris from getting in and making the water stagnant. Make sure to empty and turn upside down in the late fall before freezing. The barrel will likely crack if it has water in it and it is allowed to freeze.

Viewing Areas – Don’t forget to include a viewing area, possibly with benches.

Composter – By building a composter in one discreet corner of the yard, you can create nutrient rich organic matter that is wonderful for mixing in with existing soil. Place your composter in a spot with adequate air circulation, out of full sun, away from wooden structures and close to a source of water (rain barrel is ideal!). Weeds, grass clippings, leaves, yard waste, food scraps, fruit wastes and coffee grounds can all be composted. Do not use meat, dairy, branches or weeds that have gone “to seed”.



Maintaining Your Garden

The first couple of years are very crucial to your garden. Weeding and watering must be done when needed. Weeds should never be allowed to overtake the garden, as they will quickly choke out and kill any young plants. The use of mulch around new trees and shrubs will aid in moisture retention, reducing the need for watering. Prairie species should not be mulched, as they need the soil to be warm and not too wet.

Learn and follow recommended pruning and trimming procedures for the plants and shrubs you have used. This ensures all plants stay healthy and robust.

Don't try to achieve your ideal garden in the first year, plan it in stages. This will make each year's goals attainable. Don't be afraid to change your plan in future years. You may find that what you had initially thought would work, doesn't quite fit your idea. It is all right to move plants, feeders and other small items.

After your plants have established themselves and start producing fruit and seeds, you can collect these seeds for further plant propagation. This allows you to expand and fill out your garden without incurring further cost. Learn the different methods of over-wintering seeds as most need a hard freeze in order to germinate the next year.

Use the winter to bring inside and do any repairs on hardscape features in your garden. Birdhouses should be thoroughly cleaned and checked over for damage or chewing and repaired as needed.

Burning or Mowing Prairie

Historically, periodic fires kept trees and shrubs at bay in prairie ecosystems. Fire burns leaf and plant material, returning valuable nutrients to the soil and exposing the soil to the sun's warm and drying rays in early spring, a must for prairie plants. Large prairie stands are still burned by managed prescribed burns, but as setting fire to areas close to a house, school and neighbours is not possible, mowing areas is an adequate substitute. Visually divide your prairie garden into two areas and mow one of these areas each year.

Mowing should be done early spring (beginning of April) before any plants have started to sprout. This will expose the soil and take care of the previous years leaves and dead plants tops, chopping them up, allowing them to decompose faster.



Appendix 1

Plants for Butterflies

Native Species:

black-eyed susan	common milkweed	dogbane	indian hemp
wild bergamot	butterfly milkweed	dense blazing star	purple coneflower
tall ironweed	Virginia mountain mint	joe-pye-weed	grey-headed coneflower
field thistle	New England aster		

Food Plants for Caterpillars

Plant	Caterpillar which feeds on plant
dill, parsley, carrot	eastern black swallowtail
milkweeds	monarch
violet	great spangled fritillary
New England aster	pearl crescent
stinging nettle	Milbert's tortoise shell, question mark, hop merchant, red admiral
field thistle	painted lady
everlastings	American painted lady
white clover	clouded sulphur
alfalfa	alfalfa butterfly
snapdragon, plantains	buckeye
pussy willow, plum, cherry	viceroy
willow	mourning cloak, red-spotted purple, acadian hairstreak
poplar	red-spotted purple, viceroy
elm	mourning cloak, question mark
sassafras	spicebush swallowtail
black cherry, birch, apple, tulip tree	tiger swallowtail
pawpaw	zebra swallowtail

Plants for Hummingbirds

Early summer

wild columbine
foxglove
tall salvias
apple and cherry trees

Mid-summer

scarlet trumpet vine
bee-balm
coral bells
firebird penstemon
tropical sage
canna lily
honeysuckle vine *

Late

bergamot
cardinal flower
cardinal vine
scarlet runner bean
trumpet creeper
late blooming scarlet sage

Other species: spotted touch-me-not, nicotiana, hanging basket fuchsia „Gartenmeister Bonstead“

Although brilliant in colour, most geraniums produce no nectar and should be avoided.

* Refer to “Avoid These Plants” section in Appendix 2

Appendix 2

Trees for Birds

white cedar	mountain ash	hackberry	redbud
white spruce	black cherry	white pine	sassafras
white and black oak (for dry sites)		pin, swamp white and burr oak (for wet sites)	

Shrubs for Birds

elderberry	service berry	choke cherry	raspberry
staghorn sumac	smooth sumac	nannyberry	winterberry
New Jersey tea	spirea	crabapple	dogwoods
hawthorn	spicebush	buttonbush	hackberry

Other Plantings:

honey suckles *	butterfly bush	lilac	phlox
mock orange	cardinal flower	bee balm	tobacco flower
coreopsis	french marigold	cosmos	oregano
scabiosa	vervain	zinnias	sweet rocket
sweet william	buddleia	alysum	echium
iberis	verbena	mints	daisies

* Refer to "Avoid These Plants" section

Orioles, a nectar loving bird, are attracted to the red/orange blooms of trumpet vine, tiger lilies, cherry and plum trees.

Avoid These Plants!

Non-native, garden species or ornamentals should be avoided at all costs. Although these species may grow well and require minimal care, they can take over a garden in one season and make removing them very difficult, sometimes requires years of dedicated time, if they have been allowed to go to seed.

Trees

Norway maple
horse chestnut
European birch
Russian olive
autumn olive
white mulberry
Scots pine/Scotch pine
white poplar/silver poplar
black locust
European mountain ash
Siberian elm

Shrubs

Japanese barberry
Oriental bittersweet
European privet
Japanese honeysuckle
multiflora rose
glossy buckthorn
European mountain ash
wayfaring tree
European highbush cranberry

Plants

periwinkle, myrtle
Japanese knotweed
reed canary grass
common reed/phragmites
silver dollar
goutweed
leafy spurge
European frogbit
yellow flag/yellow iris
Chinese silver grass

Appendix 3

Nest Box Dimensions

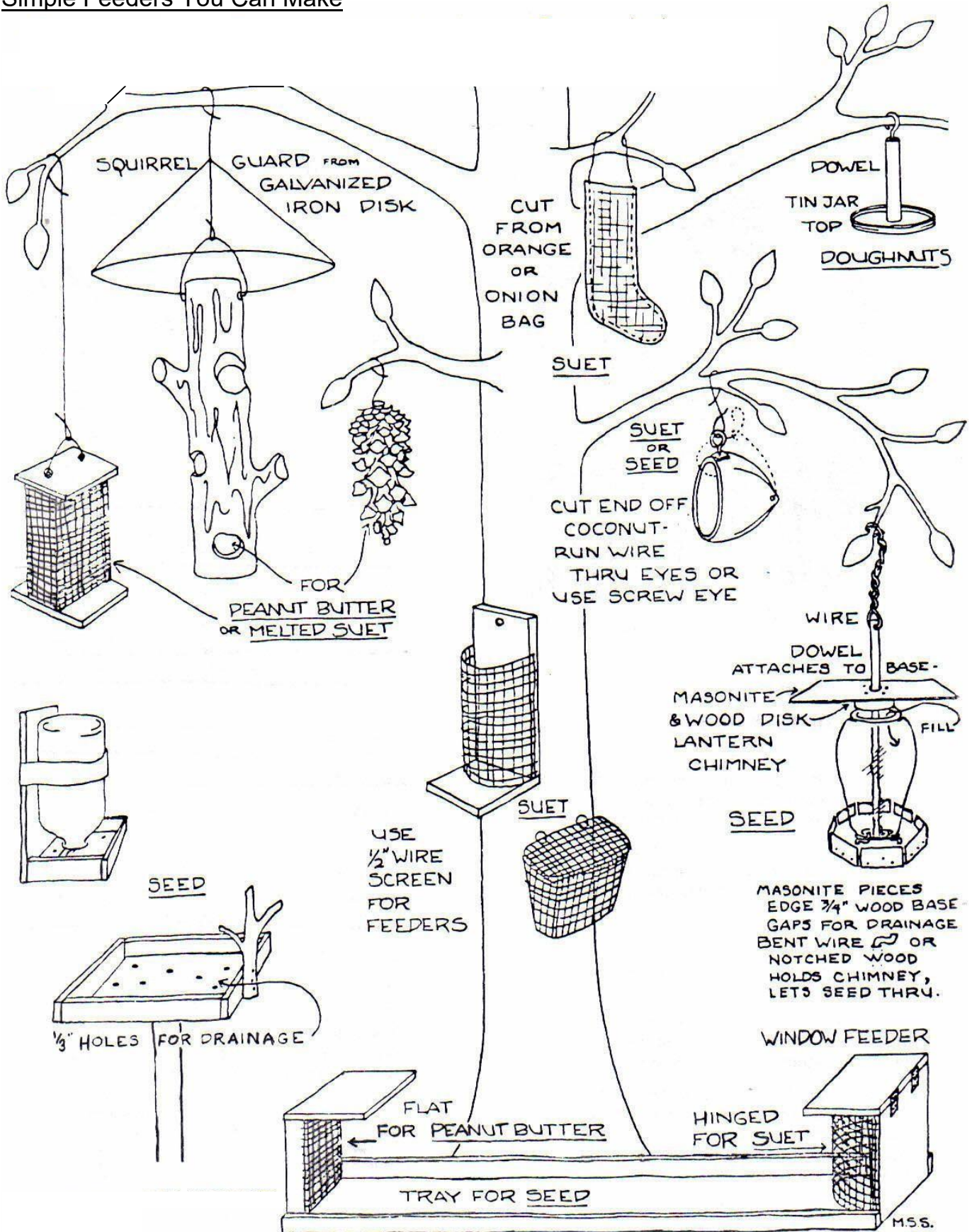
Species	Length x Width	Depth of cavity	From entrance to floor	Diameter of entrance	Height above ground
Bluebird	5x5 inches	8 inches	6 inches	1 ½	5-10 feet
Chickadee	4x4	8-10	6-8	1 ⅛	6-15
Titmouse	4x4	8-10	6-8	1 ¼	6-15
Nuthatch	4x4	8-10	6-8	1 ¼	12-20
House Wren	4x4	6-8	1-6	1-1 ¼	6-10
Carolina Wren	4x4	6-8	1-6	1 ½	6-10
Tree Swallow	5x5	6	1-5	1 ½	10-15
Purple Martin	6x6	6	1	2 ½	15-20
Flicker	7x7	16-18	14-16	2 ½	6-20
Downy Woodpecker	4x4	9-12	6-8	1 ¼	6-20
Hairy Woodpecker	6x6	12-15	9-12	1 ½	12-20
Screech Owl	8x8	12-15	9-12	3	10-30
American Kestrel	8x8	12-15	9-12	3	10-30
Wood duck	10x18	10-24	12-16	4	10-20
Bat	Visit www.batcon.org				10-30
<p>The size of the entrance hole is one of the most important factors when building nest boxes. The correct size hole will attract the birds you want and keep larger ones out. All nest boxes should face south to south-east, away from prevailing winds.</p>					

Project FeederWatch is operated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. It is a winter long survey of birds that visit feeders in North America. Watchers periodically count the highest numbers of each species they see at their feeders from November to April. FeederWatch helps scientists track movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance. Visit www.birds.cornell.edu scroll down to "Citizen-Science Gateway" and select Project FeederWatch.

Great Backyard Bird Count: An annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Participants count birds for as little or as long as they wish during the four-day period in February. Visit www.birdsource.org/gbbc for more information and instructions.

Appendix 4

Simple Feeders You Can Make



Appendix 5

Bird Seed

Striped Sunflower	Cardinal, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch, House Finch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Tufted Titmouse
Oil Sunflower	House Finch, American Goldfinch, Purple Finch, Tufted Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, Pine Siskin, White-breasted Nuthatch
Sunflower Chips	American Goldfinch, House Finch, Downy Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch
Mixed Seed	Ring-necked Pheasant, Mourning Dove, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Grackle, Dark-Eyed Junco, Rufus-sided Towhee, House Sparrow, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Blue Jay, Cardinal, American Goldfinch, Purple Finch, House Finch
Peanuts	Blue Jay, Cardinal, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch
Suet	Downy, Hairy, Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatch, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, European Starling
Niger Seed	American Goldfinch, Pine Siskin, House Finch

Bird Feeding Hints

- The best times to put out seed are early in the morning and at dusk when birds prefer to feed.
- Keep one feeder just for sunflower seed as it is a favourite for Cardinals, Blue Jays, Chickadees and Nuthatches.
- Putting out table scraps and bread will only attract Starlings, few other birds will eat these foods.
- Provide feed in different areas. While Jays and Nuthatches prefer to feed higher off the ground, many birds are just as happy to feed on the ground.
- Place feeders close to areas with protective cover. A row of evergreens or thick shrubs is ideal.
- To prevent squirrels from reaching your feeders, hang a squirrel guard or baffle above hanging feeders. For pole feeders, attach a section of stove pipe around the pole right under the feeder. These will only work if they can't get to the feeder from other ways (ie. nearby trees from which they can jump!)

Appendix 6

Birding Checklist

The following is a list of bird species that you can see in your wildlife area.

Species	Date Seen	Location
Mallard		
Sharp-shinned Hawk		
Cooper's Hawk		
Red-tailed Hawk		
American Kestrel		
Ring-necked Pheasant		
Wild Turkey		
Rock Pigeon		
Mourning Dove		
Eastern Screech-Owl		
Red-headed Woodpecker		
Red-bellied Woodpecker		
Downy Woodpecker		
Hairy Woodpecker		
Northern Flicker		
Blue Jay		
American Crow		
Black-capped Chickadee		
Tufted Titmouse		
Red-breasted Nuthatch		
White-breasted Nuthatch		
Carolina Wren		
Northern Shrike		
European Starling		
Northern Cardinal		
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		
Eastern Towhee		
American Tree Sparrow		
Chipping Sparrow		
Field Sparrow		
Fox Sparrow		
Song Sparrow		
House Sparrow		
White-throated Sparrow		
White-crowned Sparrow		
Dark-eyed Junco		
Red-winged Blackbird		
Rusty Blackbird		
Common Grackle		
Brown-headed Cowbird		
Purple Finch		
House Finch		
Pine Siskin		
American Goldfinch		

Appendix 7

Mammal Checklist

The following is a list of mammal species that you may see in your wildlife area.

Species	Date	Seen	Location
Virginia			Opossum Short-
tailed			Shrew Little-brown
Bat Big-brown			Bat
Eastern	Red		Bat
Eastern			Cottontail
European			Hare
Eastern	Gray		Squirrel
Groundhog/Woodchuck			
Eastern			Chipmunk White-
footed			Mouse House
Mouse Meadow	Jumping		Mouse
Meadow			Vole
Norway			Rat
Muskrat			
Coyote			
Red			Fox
Gray			Fox
Raccoon			Long-
tailed			Weasel Mink
Striped			Skunk White-
tailed Deer			



Appendix 8

Reptile and Amphibian Checklist

The following is a list of reptiles and amphibians that you may see in your wildlife area.

Species	Date Seen	Location
AMPHIBIANS		
Mudpuppy		
American Toad		
Western Chorus Frog		
Leopard Frog		
Green Frog		
Bullfrog		
REPTILES		
Snapping Turtle		
Common Musk Turtle		
Painted Turtle		
Red-eared Slider		
Common Map Turtle		
Blanding's Turtle		
Five-lined Skink		
Eastern Gartersnake		
Butler's Gartersnake		
Northern Watersnake		
Queen Snake		
Northern Red-belly Snake		
Northern Brown Snake		
Eastern Foxsnake		
Massasauga Rattlesnake		



Appendix 9

Native Prairie Seed Planting Guide

Local native prairie seeds and plants can be obtained from the Friends of Ojibway Prairie at Ojibway Nature Centre, 5200 Matchette Rd. Windsor, ON N9C 4E8 (519) 966-5852.

The following table can be used to help find a suitable location for planting. Please remember that these are wild seeds collected locally (with permission) in a prairie setting. Plant characteristics such as germination success, height and bloom time vary from place to place and year to year. Please be patient. Many of these species will take a couple of years to fully establish themselves. Seeds should be planted in late spring and not stored in airtight containers.

Species	Where to plant	Height	Colour	Bloom time
rigid goldenrod	1,D,M	2-5'	Yellow	Aug.-Sept.
butterfly milkweed	1,D,S	1-3'	Orange	July
tall coreopsis	1,M,W	3-7'	Yellow	July-Aug.
hairy beardtongue	1,M,D	1-2'	Blue	May-June
Virginia mountain mint	1,2,M,W	1-3'	White	July-Aug.
wild bergamot	1,2,3,D,M,W	2-4'	Purple	July-Aug.
thimbleweed	1,D,S	1-2'	White	June-July
tall ironweed	1,M,W	3-6'	Purple	August
prairie dock	1,D,M	5-10'	Yellow	July-Aug.
smooth beardtongue	1,D,M	1-3'	White	June
grey-headed coneflower	1,2,D,M,W	2-4'	Yellow	July-Aug.
tall sunflower	1,M,W	4-6'	Yellow	August
black-eyed susan	1,2,3,D,M,W	1-3'	Yellow	June-Oct.
Culver's root	1,2,3,M	2-5'	White	July-Aug.
Indian grass	1,D,M,S	4-6'	Grass	
switchgrass	1,D,W	3-4'	Grass	
big bluestem	1,D,M	5-7'	Grass	

Where to Plant:

1 - Full sun

2 - Full sun in spring, dappled sun in summer

3 - Half day sun

D - Dry site, well drained

M - Medium moisture

W - Wet site, puddles after rain

S - Sandy soil

