

WARREN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BACKYARD CONSERVATION

PROJECT AND SPECIFICATION GUIDE



The guidelines and specifications must be followed in order to receive cost-share reimbursement.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The purpose of this program is to help Warren County residents with the necessary means to establish, enhance, restore, and/or maintain a backyard conservation project.

Eligibility

- 75/25 cost share rate not to exceed \$200.00 (Reimbursed 75% of expenses, up to \$200)
- One application per household (Warren Co. residents only)
- The application must be approved before starting a project
- The project must be completed within the respective project guidelines and specifications (if you have questions regarding if something is eligible for reimbursement, please ask prior to purchase)
- Photographs and receipts must be submitted for reimbursement
- Applicants are subject to spot-check.
- Please complete your project within 90 days.

Find an application on our website, warrenconservation.com!

PROJECT OPTIONS

- Insect Hotels**
- Native Tree Planting**
- Rain Garden**
- Pollinator Oasis**
- Beginning Beekeeping**
- Rain Barrels**
- Composting**
- Bat Houses**
- Purple Martin Houses**
- Invasive Species Removal**

Interested in something else? Ask us if it's possible!

Project Description

Insect hotels are the birdhouses of the insect world. In the wild, solitary insect species, like wood-boring beetles and solitary bees, search for cavities in wood to lay eggs. These cavities are typically left by burrowing beetles, woodpeckers, or the tree's own natural growth. Some species, like carpenter bees, will chew their way through wood to make a nesting cavity. Insect hotels are simply man-made replicas of the natural habitats these organisms search for in the wild.

The most important feature of the hotel should be to keep it as natural as possible. A wooden frame can be filled with natural materials for nesting sites. The following table breaks down which insects and other invertebrates can be expected to utilize each type of material. -The University of Michigan-Dearborn

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Build anytime.
- Are there location limits? Yes, refer to publication.
- To receive cost-share for this project you may purchase a pre-built hotel or use one of the following hotel designs:

<https://umdearborn.edu/environmental-interpretive-center/education-programs/pollination-project/insect-hotels>

Project Description

Trees in your backyard can be home to many different types of wildlife. Trees can also reduce your heating and cooling costs, help clean the air, add beauty and color, provide shelter from the wind and the sun, and add value to your home.

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Plant trees November—February.
 - If you plant in March—April, extra watering is required.
- To receive cost-share for this project you must purchase native trees to our area and follow the native tree and planting guidelines:

Tree Species List: <https://www.uky.edu/hort/Native-Trees-of-Kentucky>

Regions: <https://www.uky.edu/hort/sites/www.uky.edu.hort/files/pages-attachments/planttable2.PDF>

Tree planting tips: <https://eec.ky.gov/Natural-Resources/Forestry/urban-forestry-and-community-programs/Pages/Tree-Planting-Tips.aspx>

*WCCD will only reimburse for native trees to our area.

Project Description

Rain gardens can remove standing water in your yard, reduce mosquito breeding, filter runoff pollution, and conserve water. They also create an environment that supports an increase of beneficial insects that can eliminate pest insects.

Rain gardens are particularly important in urban areas because developed land (pavement, buildings, and compacted soils) increases stormwater runoff. Rain gardens are one of several stormwater management practices that homeowners can use to reduce their property's negative impact on water quality and flooding.

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Build anytime weather allows.
- Are there location limits? Ideally, a rain garden will be constructed where runoff from various sources collects in your yard.
- To receive cost-share for this project you must follow the guidance from this publication:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/HENV/HENV205/HENV205.pdf>

***WCCD will only reimburse for native plants to our area, please refer to the above publication.**

Project Description

Rain barrels are an effective way to manage stormwater runoff and reduce the amount of pollutants in waterways. This can reduce the demand for municipal water supplies by using the stored water to supply gardens and lawns.

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Build anytime weather allows, utilize barrel Spring—Fall.
- Are there location limits? Yes, it must attach to a downspout to catch rain runoff.
- To receive cost share for this project you may purchase a rain barrel or construct one based on guidance from this publication:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/henv/henv201/henv201.pdf>

Project Description

Compost bins can be used to decrease the amount of yard trimmings and food waste going to landfills. Compost is a soil conditioner made of decomposed organic material that improves the physical condition and fertility of the soil. Using compost can improve aeration, root penetration, and water infiltration.

Guidelines & Publications

- To receive cost-share for this project you may purchase a compost bin or construct one based on guidance from these publications:
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ho/ho75/ho75.pdf>
<https://www.piercecountywa.org/DocumentCenter/View/1176/ThreeBinDIY?bidId=>

Resources

All about composting: http://www.rs.uky.edu/consumer/extension_pdfs/id192.pdf

*WCCD will only reimburse for prefabricated compost bins, and/or materials to construct a bin. Countertop bins, compostable bin bags, etc. are not eligible.

Project Description

Raised beds are great for growing small plots of vegetables or flowers. They prevent soil compaction, provide good drainage, and serve as a barrier to pests and pathway weeds. Raised beds can be used to overcome poor soil conditions and bring the garden to an easier-to-reach height.

Guidelines & Publications

- Are there location limits? Yes, a vegetable garden should be allowed full sun.
- To receive cost-share for this project you may purchase raised bed containers or construct beds based on guidance from these publications:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID248/ID248.pdf>

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/lawn-garden/raised-bed-gardening/>

Resources:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/extpub/ho-200-w/>

*WCCD will not reimburse for soil, soil amendments, plants, seed, gardening tools, etc.

Project Description

Support pollinators by supplying shelter, food, and a water source to attract them to a specific area. Regardless of their size, a pollinator oasis will impact our crops and assist with fruit and vegetable production.

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Plant April 15- June 30.
- Are there location limits? Yes, follow planting requirements for pollinator mixes.
- To receive cost-share for this project you may purchase a native pollinator-friendly mix or native pollinator plants from Busy Bee Nursery and Consulting, Roundstone Native Seed Company, Ironweed Native Plant Nursery, etc.
- A habitat must be built based on these guidelines:

<https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/18-014.pdf>

https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/12-015_02_XercesSoc_Nests-for-Native-Bees-fact-sheet_web.pdf

<https://www.backyardecology.net/include-a-mason-bee-house-on-your-property/>

<https://www.backyardecology.net/provide-habitat-for-ground-nesting-bees/>

<https://www.backyardecology.net/make-a-bee-waterer/>

<https://www.backyardecology.net/pine-for-carpenter-bees/>

<https://www.backyardecology.net/leave-flower-stems-for-bees-and-small-solitary-wasps/>

<https://www.backyardecology.net/3-easy-ways-to-provide-bumble-bee-nesting-sites/>

Are your plants native? Refer to these resources to find out!

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/for/for71/for71.pdf>

https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/22-029_01_NPPBI%E2%80%94Southeast_web.pdf

<https://www.pollinator.org/guides>

<https://www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder/plants>

<https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>

***WCCD will only reimburse for native plants or pollinator mixes and will not reimburse for soil, soil amendments, gardening tools, etc.**

Need help?

Busy Bee Nursery & Consulting- info@busybeenurseryandconsulting.com

Roundstone Native Seed Company- 270-531-3034

Ironweed Native Plant Nursery- 270-250-3587

soky.wildones.org

Project Description

Beekeeping is a rewarding hobby that encourages the care of pollinators. Bees are a valuable animal and resource that pollinates many of our crops. Beekeeping is one way to aid in the health and sustainability of honey bees.

Before committing to this project, understand that beekeeping is rewarding; however, there are many aspects and requirements to doing it properly.

Guidelines & Publications

Individuals who are interested in applying for the WCCD BYCP honeybee project area must meet the following criteria:

- Satisfy eligibility requirements of the KSU Beginning Beekeeper program
- Currently a member of the Warren County Beekeeper Association and/or KSBA
 - To join the Warren County Beekeepers contact:
warrencountykybeekeepers@gmail.com
- Complete 6 Beekeeping Continuing Education Units (CEU) and submit verifying documentation (Courses can be free with a membership to the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association)
- Commit to improving the genetics of Kentucky bees by agreeing to:
 - Purchase nucs/hives from local beekeepers and/or swarm trapping
 - Purchase queens with varroa mite-resistant genetics

Eligible reimbursements:

- Veil *
- Hand smoker *
- Hive tool (hive tool with J hook is recommended) *
- Jacket
- Gloves (nylon)
- Basic hive box materials: base board, bottom screen, bottom board, inside cover, regular cover, frame (a Nuc box is recommended with five frames)
- Entrance excluder
- Front feeders
- Mite test
- Varroa and tracheal mite treatment

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ent/ent41/ent41.pdf>

Project Description

Did you know bats are pollinators? Not only are they pollinators, but globally, bats provide vital ecosystem services in the form of insect pest consumption, plant pollination, and seed dispersal, making them essential to the health of global ecosystems. batcon.org

Scientists estimate that insect-eating, or insectivorous, bats may save U.S. farmers roughly \$23 billion each year by reducing crop damage and limiting the need for pesticides. batcon.org

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Build anytime weather allows, and put up according to the publication below.
- Are there location limits? Yes, refer to the below publication's mounting recommendations.
- To receive cost-share for bat boxes you may purchase premade bat houses that are 24"x16" with no mesh or fabric, or construct one based on guidance from this publication:

<https://www.batcon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/4-Chamber-Nursery-House-Plans.pdf>

For more information: <https://www.batcon.org/>

Project Description

Purple Martins are a nice option for pesky flying insect control. If you'd like to add some wildlife to your backyard, consider purple martin houses!

Guidelines & Publications

- When is this in season? Put up your Martin housing a few weeks before the Martins are due to arrive, around March 15.
- Are there location limits? Yes, <https://www.purplemartin.org/purple-martins/attracting/114/location/>
- To receive cost-share for this project you must purchase a premade Martin house, and follow guidance from these publications:

<https://www.purplemartin.org/uploads/media/housingstandardshs-254.pdf>

<https://www.purplemartin.org/purple-martins/housing-standards/60/choosing-purple-martin-housing/>

For more information: <https://www.purplemartin.org/>

Project Description

Invasive species are commonly used as landscape plants, but let's change that! This project will give homeowners the option to remove invasive plants to improve biodiversity.

Guidelines & Publications

- **Mechanical Treatment \$15 per square yard of treatment area**

Mechanical control is an option if you do not wish to utilize chemicals. However, this option is very labor-intensive and time-consuming. This treatment involves the physical removal of invasive plants by hand-pulling small plants; and removing larger plants with weed wrenches or loppers. Plants that are larger or denser may require the use of Weed Eater™ with metal blades, shears/loppers, or similar equipment. Follow-up treatment will be required to control re-sprouting.

- **Chemical Treatment \$15 per square yard of treatment area**

The most effective way to control most invasive species is with herbicides that are applied during the growing season. In most instances, treatment requires two herbicide applications. **WCCD does not provide chemical recommendations.** However, they may be provided by the UK Cooperative Extension Service. If chemicals are used, **follow all label requirements** including mixing/loading setbacks from wells, intermittent streams and rivers, natural or impounded ponds and lakes, and reservoirs, etc. Select a chemical that will be effective in the first application. Oftentimes, mechanical treatment must occur concurrently with chemical application in the initial treatment. Following the initial application, some regrowth, resprouting, or occurrence of brush is to be expected. Spot treatment of individual plants or a follow-up foliar treatment should be performed while it is small (< 2 ft. in height) and most vulnerable to the treatment procedures. Stumps that are not chemically treated, deadened, or otherwise removed will resprout quickly.

- **Professional Removal up to \$200 based on receipts**

Any invasive tree eight feet in height or taller may be considered for professional removal.

Here are a few common invasive landscape plants:

- Bush Honeysuckles
- Purple Loosestrife
- Wintercreeper
- Crown Vetch
- Burning Bush
- Chinese Silver Grass
- Asian Bittersweet
- Japanese Knotweed
- Princess-Tree
- Bradford Pear
- Privet
- Lesser Celandine
- Sweet Autumn Clematis
- Autumn Olive/Russian Olive
- Porcelain-Berry
- Mimosa
- Chocolate Vine
- Japanese Barberry

All removal methods may receive up to \$200. Mechanical and chemical treatments are flat-rate reimbursements per square yard. Professional removal is 75% cost share up to \$200.