



Backyard Conservation

Warren County Conservation District

Our Service

- This program is designed to assist Warren County residents in establishing, enhancing, restoring, and/or maintaining backyard conservation projects.



About Us

- Cost-Share Rate: 75/25, not to exceed \$200
- (Participants will be reimbursed 75% of eligible expenses, up to \$200)
- One application per household
- Project approval is required before starting
- Projects must meet program guidelines and specifications
- Photos and receipts are required for reimbursement
- Applicants may be subject to a spot check
- Projects must be completed within 90 days of approval

Contact

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Insect Hotels

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Insect hotels are like birdhouses for bugs. In the wild, solitary insects such as wood-boring beetles and bees nest in small cavities found in trees—often made by other insects, woodpeckers, or natural decay. Some, like carpenter bees, carve out their own. Insect hotels replicate these habitats. A wooden frame filled with natural materials provides nesting spots. The table below shows which insects prefer which materials.

GUIDELINES

- 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>

Native Tree Planting

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Trees in your backyard offer more than just natural beauty—they provide habitat for wildlife, clean the air, offer cooling shade in summer and shelter from winter winds, reduce energy costs, and boost your property's value. Choosing native species is especially important, as they are better adapted to local conditions and provide the most benefit to local ecosystems and wildlife.

GUIDELINES

- 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://horticulture.ca.uky.edu/KYnativetrees>

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

FYI

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

Rain Garden

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rain gardens reduce standing water, limit mosquito breeding, filter runoff pollutants, and conserve water, while attracting beneficial insects that control pests. In urban areas, where hard surfaces increase runoff, rain gardens help manage stormwater and lessen a property's impact on water quality and flooding.

GUIDELINES

- 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>

FYI

- WCCD will only reimburse for plants on the list in this publication (pages 8&9):
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/HENV/HENV205/HENV205.pdf>
- Mulch, erosion control fabric, and plants are eligible for reimbursement
- Rakes, wheelbarrows, etc are not eligible

Rain Barrels

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rain barrels help manage stormwater runoff, reduce pollution in waterways, and lessen demand on municipal water by supplying stored rainwater for gardens and lawns.

GUIDELINES

- When is this in season? Build anytime weather allows.
- 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>

FYI

- If you construct a rain barrel these items are cost-share eligible: plastic food-grade drum with a solid screw-on lid, one $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch brass adapter, One brass Y valve #14 O-ring (set of 4), one conduit lock nut, clear silicone sealant, charcoal aluminum screen mesh (36 by 84 inches), 2-inch PVC adapter with a male threaded end, 2-inch PVC 90° elbow with a female threaded end, garden hose coupling (optional), garden hose section (optional), 20 plastic cable/zip ties (8 inch)
- Private sales are not eligible

Composting

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Compost bins reduce the amount of yard trimmings and food waste sent to landfills. The resulting compost improves soil structure, fertility, aeration, root growth, and water infiltration.

GUIDELINES

- 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=>

FYI

- **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, tools, etc. are not eligible.
- Private sales are not eligible.

Raised Garden Beds

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

GUIDELINES

- 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/>

FYI

- Eligible reimbursements: lumber or metal for bed sides, fasteners/nails/etc
- WCCD will not reimburse for soil, soil amendments, plants of any kind, seeds, gardening tools, etc.
- <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/extpub/ho-200-w/>

Pollinator Oasis

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Support pollinators by providing shelter, food, and a water source to attract them to a specific area. No matter the size, a pollinator oasis can positively impact crop yields and support the production of fruits and vegetables.

GUIDELINES

- When is this in season? Plant April 15-June 30.
- To receive cost-share funding for this project, you may purchase a native, pollinator-friendly seed mix or native pollinator plants from approved vendors such as Busy Bee Nursery and Consulting, Roundstone Native Seed Company, Ironweed Native Plant Nursery, or similar suppliers.

A habitat must be built based on these guidelines:

- <https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/18-014.pdf>
- <https://www.backyardecology.net/provide-habitat-for-ground-nesting-bees/>
- <https://www.backyardecology.net/make-a-bee-waterer/>
- <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>

FYI

- Only native plants are eligible
- Busy Bee Nursery & Consulting- info@busybeenurseryandconsulting.com
- Roundstone Native Seed Company- 270-531-3034
- Ironweed Native Plant Nursery- 270-250-3587
- soky.wildones.org
- backyardecology.net
- WCCD will only reimburse for native plants or pollinator mixes and will not reimburse for soil, soil amendments, gardening tools, etc.

Beginning Beekeeping

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Beekeeping is a rewarding hobby that promotes the care and conservation of pollinators. Honey bees are vital animals and natural resources, responsible for pollinating many of the crops we rely on. By keeping bees, you contribute to the health and sustainability of their populations. However, before committing to this project, it's important to understand that successful beekeeping requires time, knowledge, and ongoing responsibility. While it can be highly fulfilling, it also involves specific practices and requirements that must be followed to ensure healthy hives.

GUIDELINES

Individuals who are interested in applying for this project area must meet the following criteria:

- Satisfy eligibility requirements of the KSU Beginning Beekeeper program
- Currently be 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

FYI

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

Bat Houses

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

- 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>

FYI

- <https://www.batcon.org/>

Purple Martin Houses

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

- 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/housinglocation/>
- To receive cost-share for this project you must purchase a premade Martin house, and follow guidance from this source: <https://www.purplemartin.org/housing/>

FYI

- <https://www.purplemartin.org/>

Invasive Species Removal

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

- **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.

FYI

- 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.

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

The most effective way to control most invasive species is with herbicides applied during the growing season, typically requiring two treatments. WCCD does not provide chemical recommendations, but the UK Cooperative Extension Service may offer guidance. If using herbicides, always follow label instructions, including safety setbacks from wells, streams, ponds, and other water sources. Choose a product effective in the first application, and combine it with mechanical treatment when possible.

After the initial treatment, some regrowth or resprouting is normal. Follow up with spot or foliar treatments while plants are small (under 2 feet) and easier to control. Untreated stumps will resprout quickly and should be chemically treated or removed.

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

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

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- 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.