

## Nature's Best Hope:

The Interfaith Earthkeepers just finished reading [Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard](#) by Douglas Tallamy.

This book's theme is that we can no longer assume that nature "out there" somewhere is enough for the wildlife. We need to turn our urban and suburban areas into habitat, starting with native pollinator gardens. Imagine a pollinator-friendly neighborhood, with native plants in bloom through as much of the growing season as possible, from one yard, patio, front porch to another! Imagine birds, bees, and butterflies welcomed back to our cities! Tallamy calls it a "Homegrown National Park".



Chapter 11, the final chapter, has a helpful summary – **What Each of Us Can Do** – with a list of ten things to do in our own yards to help create a Homegrown National Park and give nature hope.

1. Shrink our lawns to wide paths and "area rugs".
2. Remove invasive species that have a habit of spreading to natural areas.
3. Plant native keystone trees and plants (see native plant finder).
4. Plant generously, both upper and understory plants.
5. Plant what specialist bees need - perennial sunflowers, asters, goldenrod, native willows, and blueberries.
6. Network with neighbors to increase the area of a particular conservation effort.
7. Protect wildlife with hardscape such as window-well covers, motion sensor lights, water features, and bee hotels.
8. Create caterpillar pupation sites under trees, with ground cover, leaf litter, and a decaying log.
9. Do not spray pesticides and do not fertilize.
10. Educate your neighbors, your town, and lobby your HOA to change landscape regulations.