

# Cary Garden for Wildlife Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What are the basics of the Cary Garden for Wildlife program?

The Town of Cary is partnering with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) to:

- Promote the NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat Program to our community in order to educate citizens about easy ways they can support the 3Bs: birds, bees, and butterflies in their own outdoor spaces.
- Work towards national recognition as a Community Wildlife Habitat assuming a certain number of certifications are achieved in the Town of Cary

### 2. How will the National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program help wildlife in Cary?

Cary is one of the best places to live in the region and, as a result, has been undergoing continuous growth for many years. Through the Community Wildlife Habitat program, the Town will work with its citizens to conserve and protect its environment while creating more well-connected habitats allowing wildlife like birds, bees, and butterflies to continue to thrive.

### 3. How will the certification help Cary as a Town/community?

The Community Wildlife Habitat certification program has been running successfully for more than 40 years, with more than 75 communities certified nationwide. The certification will put Cary's name on the national map alongside other communities who have shown a commitment to creating and nurturing natural habitat. The certification provides an excellent opportunity for Town of Cary residents to conserve and sustain the natural environment and wildlife populations.

### 4. As an individual and a Cary resident, what can I do to contribute to this community initiative?

The Cary Garden for Wildlife Program is a community initiative and is largely dependent upon the participation and involvement of its residents for success. For Cary to become a Community Wildlife Habitat it needs to meet a certain threshold in terms of minimum number of homes, schools and common areas that get the certification. As a resident you can do multiple things to contribute:

- Register your own backyard or outdoor space for certification
- Spread the word! Talk to and encourage your extended family, friends, neighbors, neighborhood schools etc. to sign-up for and participate in the program. Invite friends to take a tour of your backyard habitat once you get certified.
- Get involved, participate and volunteer in [environmental outreach programs](#) that the Town organizes. A great way to stay in touch is by liking our Cary It Green Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/caryitgreen](http://www.facebook.com/caryitgreen)

**5. Can non-Cary residents participate in the program?**

Anyone can participate in [NWF's certification program](#) as an individual property; however only certifications within the Town of Cary will help us work towards certifying our community as a whole.

**6. Is there a fee to participate?**

There is a nominal one-time fee of \$20 for any individual, school, business or common area that wishes to participate and get certified. The fee can be paid online when you fill in your application.

**7. What does the fee cover?**

The fee helps NWF increase declining habitat for bees, butterflies and birds and other wildlife nationwide! Additional benefits include

- A personalized certificate once your habitat is certified.
- 10 percent off NWF catalog merchandise, such as a yard sign proudly declaring your yard as a certified Wildlife Habitat.
- Subscription to monthly e-newsletter Garden for Wildlife.
- One full-year's membership to NWF and s one-year subscription to its National Wildlife magazine.

**8. I am very proud to say that my property is now certified. I would love to get a sign that shows that I'm part of this program. Where can I get it?**

NWF sells two different signs online. Please visit [the online store](#) to purchase your sign.

**9. Will I get snakes and other dangerous wildlife in my backyard if I take part in this program?**

Whether participating in this program or not, one can always see snakes and other wildlife in North Carolina backyards. Participants in this program are typically satisfied with seeing an increase in birds, and insect pollinators, like bees and butterflies, in their yards and do not see increases in dangerous wildlife. Certainly, we ask that you use caution if you see an animal in your yard or space that is unfamiliar to you, and move a safe distance away. The [Town's animal control website](#) offers tips for [nuisance wildlife](#).

**10. I am curious to know who else in the Town, or even my neighborhood, is certified. Is it possible to get a list of such folks?**

Unfortunately, due to privacy concerns, we are unable to share any names. We would encourage you to talk to others in your neighborhood, community groups, and on our [Cary It Green Facebook](#) page to create community around this effort.

**11. I live in an apartment/condo/townhouse and do not have a backyard. I would still like to participate in this initiative. What can I do?**

You can still take part in the certification program. If you have a porch or a balcony you can use that to create a wildlife habitat. You will use the same [application](#) as people with backyards to apply for the certification. You may also want to consider participating by encouraging others

to get certified. Consider talking to your neighborhood school or an official who takes care of the park/playground/common area in your neighborhood about becoming a certified habitat.

**12. I have some specific questions about plants and/or wildlife. Who should I get in touch with?**

There are several resources available for help.

For specific and/or technical questions about plants and wildlife, Mark Johns, a Town of Cary employee who is a Certified Wild Biologist and Certified Environmental Educator and who leads educational programming at Cary's Stevens Nature Center at Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve, can assist. Email is the fastest way to reach Mark: [Mark.Johns@townofcary.org](mailto:Mark.Johns@townofcary.org)

Additional resources are available at the [Cary Garden for Wildlife webpage](#) that you can find by searching "Cary Garden for Wildlife" at [www.townofcary.org](http://www.townofcary.org) and scrolling down to the "Resources" section.

**13. What happens when I move? Does this affect my deed or is it legally binding in any way?**

The certification is a way for you to personally demonstrate that you manage your yard to be wildlife-friendly. When you move the certification for your yard ends, but you can recertify at your new location! The certification is not a legal document like a deed or an easement. The certification is a tool for you to look at simple changes that you can make in your own yard to create a beautiful and healthy space for you and the birds, bees, and butterflies that visit you there.