

Plants aren't the only living things in our gardens. Many of us invite feathered friends in by incorporating birdfeeders, birdbaths and birdhouses into our garden schemes. You might want to check out these organizations that help conserve and care for the environment.

One of the best ways to learn about birds is to join our local Kitsap Audubon Society. The Society meets the second Thursday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at Liberty Bay Presbyterian Church at the intersection of Hwy 305 and Harrison Street in Poulsbo. The church is immediately south of ReMax Realty. Membership in Audubon is \$20 per year which includes six issues of Audubon Magazine and eight issues of the Kingfisher (the Kitsap Audubon Society newsletter).

You can also access Kitsap Audubon on the Web by keying in www.avisys.net/Kingfisher.htm. The newsletter states, "The purpose of Kitsap Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world through education, environmental study, and habitat protection; and to promote awareness and enjoyment of local and regional natural areas." Anyone interested can attend meetings; you don't necessarily need to join, however you'll probably want to after attending one of their informative meetings.

Remember this is the perfect time of year to plant bird-attracting shrubs, perennials and trees in our gardens. Fay Linger, Audubon President and master gardener suggests these native plants. Nectar plants to attract hummingbirds: red columbine (*Aquilegia Formosa*), fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*), Western trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*), black twinberry (*Lonicera involucrate*), penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.), and red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*). Berried shrubs to attract robins, varied thrushes, cedar waxwings, band-tailed pigeons, quail, jays and other local birds: serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*); red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), California wax-myrtle (*Myrica californica*), red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), and evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*). Plants to attract small seed-eating birds such as sparrows, juncos and finches: red columbine (*Aquilegia Formosa*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), and rushes (*Juncus* spp.).

Fay is speaking at the Olympic Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, at the PUD Building at the corner of Finn Hill Road and Rude Road in Poulsbo. Fay will give a talk and slide presentation of native plants that can be used in the landscape and are readily available at local nurseries. You can access the Washington Native Plant Society Web Site at www.wnps.org. You'll find the link to the Olympic Chapter web site. If you don't have a computer you can call Wendy McClure at 779-3820 for more details.

Two local nurseries, open daily and carrying a wide variety of native plants, are Roadhouse Nursery (779-5989) and Valley Nursery (779-3806). Reflective Gardens (598-4649) and Heronswood Nursery (297-4172) also carry many native plants and are open by appointment only. Be sure to check with your own favorite nurseries because they can often order specific plants for you.

The Kitsap County Conservation District at 817 Sidney Avenue in Port Orchard is an excellent source of information on Native Plants. Carla Pizzano and her staff are available Monday through Friday to answer your questions. Staff members are assigned to specific regions of the county and will often visit your property to give advice on practicing conservation methods especially those using native plants. The District publishes a newsletter and also has a plant sale each spring. Orders must be placed before late January. Call 360-337-7171 for more details or to be placed on the newsletter mailing list. You can reach Pizzano via email at: Carla-pizzano@wa.nacdn.org.

Another great site featuring birds is www.birding.about.com. Visit this site and discover numerous links to other sites plus abundant information about feeding and attracting birds. Wild Birds Unlimited in Gig Harbor invites you to join their new "Bird Tracks On-Line" e-mail list. You will receive national information via their network of 280 stores across North America. Each week you'll receive information on unusual sightings, educational websites and new birding products. To subscribe by e-mail contact Jim Ullrich at wildbirds@sinclair.net. Your email address will not be shared or forwarded to anyone. You can also call Jim Ullrich at 253-851-2575 for more information.

Two books you might want to add to your "want list" are "Landscaping for Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest" by Russell Link (\$29.95 paperback) and "My Recipes are for the Birds" by Irene Cosgrove (\$7.95 paperback).

You can email comments to Peg at gardenmentor@yahoo.com or in care of this newspaper.