

Small spaces, big benefits

# The Little Habitat Project

Creating community & connectivity for wildlife.



Soil



Water



Plants



Infra-  
structure



Education

The Little Habitat Project  
An Initiative of Marion SWCD  
[www.marionswcd.net/little-habitat-project](http://www.marionswcd.net/little-habitat-project)



971-382-2000  
[kassi.rooth@marionswcd.net](mailto:kassi.rooth@marionswcd.net)  
Kassi Rooth, Urban Conservation Planner



# Checklist of Actions



The Little Habitat Project aims to build ecosystem resilience in places where wildlife and people intersect (developed areas) by promoting habitat connectivity, enhancing biodiversity and food webs, and engaging community members in conservation efforts. Use this checklist for planning purposes. Visit the Little Habitat webpage to enroll and for lots more info.

## Soil Actions



Level I: Choose 1



Level II: Choose 2



Level III: Choose 3

- Add compost from off-site.
- Leave the leaves.
- Plant cover crops.
- Add wood chips.
- Create a compost pile.
- Create a vermicompost bin.
- Pick up and dispose of pet waste.



## Water Actions



Level I: Choose 1



Level II: Choose 2



Level III: Choose 3

- Install a wildlife water feature.
- Install a puddling area.
- Create a garden pond.
- Eliminate lawn watering.
- Disconnect downspouts (where appropriate).
- Install a rain garden or bioswale.
- Improve irrigation efficiency.



## Infrastructure



Level I: Choose 1



Level II: Choose 2



Level III: Choose 3

- Add and maintain a nesting box.
- Add and maintain a bee house.
- Add and maintain a bird feeder.
- Create a habitat rock pile.
- Install a catio.
- Install motion detector lights.
- Install bird deterrents on windows.
- Use permeable walkways (mulch, pavers, stones, etc.).



## Education



Level I: Choose 1

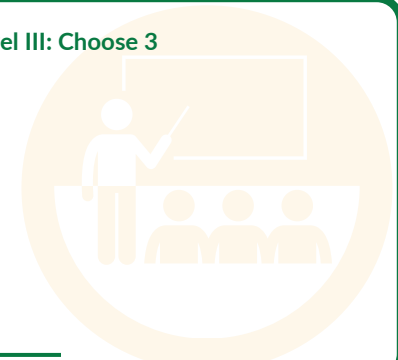


Level II: Choose 2



Level III: Choose 3

- Participate in a community science project.
- Attend/ host continuing education opportunities.
- Write a blog post for Marion SWCD.
- Recruit two new Little Habitat participants.
- Teach your neighbors about habitat.
- Volunteer in support of wildlife habitat.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_





# Plant Actions

Plants are central to the Little Habitat Project. We recommend that project sites have at least 70% native plants for the greatest wildlife benefits.

## Manage Noxious Invasive Plants



Required for all levels.

- Actively manage noxious invasive plants. Revisit every season. Select most effective, lowest risk approach (manual, mechanical, cultural, chemical...).
- Minimize the use of pesticides (including herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and rodenticides) and look for alternatives.
- If using pesticides, understand: when to apply, how to interpret label directions, and how to calculate mixing and application rates.



Weed List

## Provide Vegetation Layers

- Canopy: tall trees (D)
- Midstory: understory trees (C)
- Shrubs: shrubs of all heights (B)
- Ground: flowers/groundcovers (A)



Level I: at least 1



Level II: at least 2



Level III: at least 3



## Incorporate Native Plant Species

You have at least...



Level I:  
8 species.



Level II:  
16 species.



Level III:  
24 species.

\*Native to the Willamette Valley and neighboring ecoregions.

## Add Plant Practices



Level I: at least 8



Level II: at least 16



Level III: at least 24

### Wildlife Gardening Techniques

- Provide resources for a focal wildlife species.
- Leave dead stems and seed heads over winter.
- Add native evergreen plants for winter cover.
- Create a wildlife corridor with a neighbor.
- Create areas of dense plantings.
- Plant drought-tolerant native plants.
- Replace low-value ornamental plants with native species.

### Planting for Pollinators and Insects

- Plant native Spring-blooming plants.
- Plant native Summer-blooming plants.
- Plant native Fall-blooming plants.
- Plant native late Winter-blooming plants.
- Add native caterpillar host plants.
- Plant at least 5 different flower colors.
- Plant big patches of each species.

### Incorporate Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Features

- Plant a new native tree.
- Plant fruit-producing plants
- Install a native hedgerow.
- Retain a snag or nurse log.
- Create a brush pile.
- Shade impervious surfaces.
- Prune plants to provide hollow stems.

### Provide Ground Layer Habitat

- Reduce the area of lawn.
- Reduce mowing frequency.
- Leave areas un-mowed.
- Plant a bee-friendly lawn.
- Plant a native wildflower meadow.
- Plant native ground covers.
- Include understory plants.



# The Little Habitat Project

The Little Habitat Project encourages community participation in creation of a network of connected habitats in developed areas that provide corridors for wildlife to travel and the habitat elements they need to thrive. The Little Habitat projects serves residents in developed areas, includes benefits for the participants and ecosystem, and offers three certification levels: Level I (Acorn), Level II (Seedling), and Level III (Oak).

## Service Area

The Little Habitat Project serves developed areas of Marion County including:

- Private Yards/Gardens
- Townhomes/Apartments
- HOA Common Areas
- Schoolyards/  
Universities/Community Colleges
- Assisted Living Centers
- Public Parks
- Places of Worship
- Municipal Buildings
- & more!

## Benefits

Ecological benefits include:

- greater support for biodiversity.
- increased habitat connectivity across the landscape.
- more resilient food webs.

Successful applicants will receive:

- Little Habitat Project yard sign.
- native plant sale coupons.
- membership in a supportive community.

## Certification Level Calculation

Circle your level for each section. Certify at lowest level satisfied in all sections. Take more actions to move up.



Soil	I	II	III
Water	I	II	III
Plants - Invasives	<i>required</i>		
Plants - Layers	I	II	III
Plants - Natives	I	II	III
Plants - Practices	I	II	III
Infrastructure	I	II	III
Education	I	II	III

## Certification Process

Follow these steps to become a certified Little Habitat:

1. Review the Certification Checklist.
2. Determine which actions you will take to qualify.
3. Submit an enrollment form. The Little Habitat Project coordinator will contact you to review the next steps.
4. Implement any practices needed to qualify for your certification level.
5. Submit application form online.



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