Research has shown that suburban yards landscaped with native plants host 8 times more native birds than those planted with non-native plants. Native plants are also ideally suited to our climate and soils and are adapted to co-exist with our native insects, which are a critical food source for native birds. Over 95% of land birds rely on insects – primarily caterpillars - to feed their chicks. This means **we need to re-think our attitude towards insects in our gardens.**

### Native Plants for attracting birds to your garden:

#### Trees

Oak (Quercus macrocarpa/ bicolor/rubra/ x schuettei)

a) Hosts 532 species of caterpillars of butterflies & moths that birds feed on.
b) Acorns are an important food source for many types of birds (as well as many native mammals)
c) Mature trees provide cavity nesting sites

Maple (Acer saccharum/rubrum)

a) Hosts 297 species of caterpillars
b) Summer-through-fall seeds eaten by many bird species including robins, vireos, warblers, finches and wrens

Hackberry (Celtis occidentalis)

a) Fruit is a source of winter food for over 20 species of native birds.
b) Host to several species of larval butterflies & moths
c) Provides shelter/cover and nesting sites (thorns)

Musclewood (Carpinus caroliniana)

a) Host to 66 species of butterflies & moths
b) Nutlets are eaten by many birds including cardinals and goldfinches

Poplar (Populus tremuloides)

a) Hosts 365+ species of caterpillars
b) Mature trees provide cavity nesting sites
Shagbark Hickory (Carya ovata)
   a) Hosts 235 species of caterpillars
   b) Sweet flavored nuts are favored by wildlife

Birch (Betula nigra / glandulifera)
   a) Seeds are favored by many native birds, including Pine Siskin, Fox Sparrows & American Tree Sparrows

Juniper (Juniperus virginiana)
   a) Fruit is a source of winter food for over 50 species of native birds. Including Cedar Waxwings, Bluebirds & Finches
   b) Provides shelter/cover in all seasons

Beech (Fagus grandifolia)
   a) Small brown nuts (inside prickly outer shell) are an important fall & winter food source for birds, including chickadees, titmice, warblers, nuthatches, woodpeckers and jays

**Shrubs**

Elderberry (Sambucus canadensis / pubens)
   a) Fruit is mid-season food source for 100+ bird species (including Robin, Cardinal, Brown Eyed Thrasher, Bluebird & Woodpeckers)
   b) Provides shelter for nesting

Staghorn Sumac (Rhus typhina)
   a) Fruit is winter food source for 20+ bird species (Catbird, Robin, Bluebird, Wood Thrush, Red-Eyed Vireo)

Dogwood (Cornus alternifolia / sericea / amomum / racemosa)
   a) Fruit eaten by 30+ bird species
   b) Dogwoods host over 118 species of caterpillars of butterflies & moths

Chokeberry (Aronia macrocarpa)
   a) Shelter for nesting
   b) Fruit eaten by Cedar Waxwing, Bluebirds & Finches

Ninebark (Physocarpus opulifolius)
   a) Dense growth provides excellent nesting sites

Buttonbush (Cephalanthus occidentalis)
   a) Late season showy flowers are popular with many pollinators
   b) Flowers attract hummingbirds
   c) Persistent fruit is winter food source for ducks and other waterfowl
Native perennials for attracting birds:

Aster (Aster azuriius / ericoides)
- Seeds eaten by Cardinals, Goldfinches, Sparrows, Chickadees, Nuthatches, Towhees and Indigo Bunting.
- Hosts 112 species of caterpillars of butterflies & moths
- Valuable late season nectar source for beneficial pollinators

Ironweed (Vernonia fasciculata)
- Hosts 19 species of caterpillars of butterflies & moths
- Valuable late season nectar source for beneficial pollinators

Joe Pye Weed (Eupatorium maculatum)
- Seeds eaten by many bird species
- Hosts 42 species of caterpillars of butterflies & moths
- Valuable late season nectar source for beneficial pollinators

Aquilegia (Aquilegia canadensis)
- Funnel shaped red flowers attract hummingbirds

Cup Plant (Silphium perfoliatum)
- Seed is a favorite food of finches
- Leaves cup stem and create natural water reservoir for both birds & insects

Purple Coneflower (Echinacea pallida)
- Seed is a favorite food source of finches

Gayfeather/Blazing Star (Liatris pycnostachya)
- Seeds eaten by finches
- An important nectar source for native pollinators

Leadplant (Amorpha canescens)
- Persistent seeds are winter food source
- Valuable nectar source for beneficial pollinators

Native Grasses:
All are valuable winter food source for songbirds and provide nesting habitat for ground nesting birds. Host dozens of species of moth & butterfly caterpillars.
- Little Bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium)
- Big Blue Stem (Andropogon gerardii)
- Prairie Dropseed (Sporobolus heterolepis)
- Northern Sea Oats (Chasmanthium latifolium)