



# Site Report

*Plant Roots, Create Habitat, Transform the World... One Yard at a Time*

## Contact Information

Contact(s):

Property Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

## Site Information

Site Assessment Date:

Technician:

Total Lot Size:

Total Plant-able Area:

Water sources/flooding:

Slopes/erosion:

## Site Description

At the time of the initial assessment, this welcoming yard in SE Portland has a pleasing mix of grass, natives, edibles, and ornamentals. The owners have been in the home only a couple of years and are excited to start creating more habitat for wildlife.

The **Front Yard** is mostly flat, with a centrally located mid-sized dogwood and foundation beds planted with flowering ornamental plants. The growing conditions are: sunny, with some shade created by the dogwood and home, and medium soil moisture. Naturescaping would be a great addition under the dogwood trees, which would provide additional food and shelter for pollinators and birds.

The **Back Yard** consists of raised beds for veggies, a raspberry area, a grassy jungle gym area for the kids. The growing conditions are: sunny, with some shade created by the dogwood and home, and medium soil moisture. Naturescaping would be a great addition along the back property line. Consider a pollinator hedgerow.

**(Optional)** Steep slope: Due to the presence of a steep slope on the property, it is important to exercise care before taking actions that could impact erosion and slope stability. These are all general recommendations aimed at improving habitat; they are not site specific and do not address erosion and slope stability. Please be sure to consider consulting with appropriate experts (such as a geotechnical engineer) prior to undertaking any of these recommendations, and prior to making any changes with regard to stormwater, to make sure they comply with the experts' own analysis, and will not increase risk of erosion and slope instability..

# Certification Objectives

## 1. Removing Nuisance Weeds

Nuisance weeds are a serious problem to the ecology of our region. They smother and kill native plants that wildlife depend on, damage property, increase erosion, degrade habitat, and are a major cause of global biodiversity loss.

### **Nuisance weeds removal for certification:**

A checked box indicates presence of the weed during the initial assessment. Removal information for each weed listed is available through our [Resource Library](#).

### **Remove the following weeds to reach silver certification:**

- Armenian Blackberry
- Evergreen Blackberry
- Garlic Mustard
- Giant Hogweed
- Ivy (all cultivars)
- Knotweed
- Orange Hawkweed
- Pokeweed
- Policeman's Helmet
- Purple Loosestrife
- Scot's Broom
- Spotted/Meadow & Diffuse Knapweed
- Spurge Laurel
- Traveler's Joy/Clematis
- Yellow Archangel
- Yellow Flag Iris

### **Remove the following weeds to reach gold certification:**

- Butterfly Bush
- False Brome
- Hedge Bindweed
- Italian Arum
- Japanese Butterbur
- Lesser Celandine
- Pampas Grass/Jubata Grass
- Robert Geranium
- Shining Geranium
- Black Locust (under 20ft)
- English Hawthorn (under 20ft)
- English Holly (under 20ft)
- Norway Maple (under 20ft)
- Tree-of-Heaven (under 20ft)

### **Remove the following weeds to reach platinum certification:**

- Creeping Jenny
- English/Portuguese Laurel
- Fennel
- Large-leaf Periwinkle
- Small-leaf Periwinkle
- Reed Canarygrass/Ribbon Grass
- Black Locust (over 20ft)
- English Hawthorn (over 20ft)
- English Holly (over 20ft)
- Norway Maple (over 20ft)
- Tree-of-Heaven (over 20ft)

## 2. Naturescaping with Native Plants

Native plants are adapted to our climate and are naturally resistant to pests and diseases. They require less maintenance and help manage stormwater. They also provide food and shelter to support the entire life cycles of pollinators and birds they have evolved with in our ecoregion.

For certification, we define a “*naturescaped*” area as one where the majority of plants are native to the Willamette Valley (according to the [Portland Plant List](#)) and where at least 3 native canopy layers are present (e.g. tall shrub, small shrub, groundcover).

### **Naturescaping requirements for certification:**

Silver: **5% of your yard** (about \_\_\_\_\_ ft<sup>2</sup>) and **3 out of 5** canopy layers

Gold: **15% of your yard** (about \_\_\_\_\_ ft<sup>2</sup>) and **4 out of 5** canopy layers

Platinum: **50% of your yard** (about \_\_\_\_\_ ft<sup>2</sup>) and **all 5** canopy layers

**Existing naturoscaping (present at initial site assessment)**

SQ FT naturoscaped: \_\_\_\_\_

Percent naturoscaped: \_\_\_\_\_

**Native Canopy Layers Present:**

- Ground cover, grasses, bulbs:
- Small/medium shrubs and ferns (up to 5ft):
- Large shrubs (up to 20ft):
- Small trees (up to 30ft):
- Large trees (more than 30ft):

**Native plant recommendations for your yard:**

**Area A:**

- Ground cover, grasses, bulbs:
- Small shrubs and ferns (up to 5ft):
- Large shrubs (up to 20ft):
- Small trees (up to 30ft):
- Large trees (more than 30ft):

**Area B:**

- Ground cover, grasses, bulbs:
- Small shrubs and ferns (up to 5ft):
- Large shrubs (up to 20ft):
- Small trees (up to 30ft):
- Large trees (more than 30ft):

**(Optional) Area C:**

- Ground cover, grasses, bulbs:
- Small shrubs and ferns (up to 5ft):
- Large shrubs (up to 20ft):
- Small trees (up to 30ft):
- Large trees (more than 30ft):

**3. Wildlife Stewardship**

Our region provides critical habitat for more than 365 species of native fish and wildlife and over 10,000 native insects. Habitat loss, invasive plant and animal species, environmental contaminants, and a variety of man-made hazards make it difficult for wildlife to survive in our region. You can take steps to support wildlife by creating conditions to help them thrive.

**Wildlife stewardship requirements for certification:**

Silver: complete **1** wildlife stewardship item

Gold: complete **2** wildlife stewardship items

Platinum: complete **3** wildlife stewardship items

<b>Wildlife stewardship recommendations</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Recommended</b>
Bird/bat Nest Boxes: appropriate for native species, clean annually, only for yards without free-roaming cats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cats Indoors: domestic cats kept indoors or in an enclosure at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Native Pollinator Meadow: native forbs/grasses that bloom through the growing season	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pollinator & Beneficial Insect Nesting Habitat: small brush/ rock piles, bundles of stems and branches, mason bee house	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce Bird/Window Collisions: assess problem windows, treat to reduce strikes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce Outdoor Lighting: outdoor lights off during migration (Mar-May, Sept-Nov)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snag, Decomposing Nurse log or Brush Pile: provide dead wood onsite, >5ft long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildlife Water Feature: natural source (ie. Creek, pond, etc.), maintained bird/bug bath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Stormwater Management**

When rain washes over our roofs, driveways and sidewalks, it picks up a variety of pollutants, such as pesticides, motor oil, metals, and other chemicals. This polluted stormwater eventually drains into our rivers and streams, endangering water quality and making these waterways unhealthy for people, fish, and wildlife. Encouraging stormwater to infiltrate into your yard protects water quality and can be a useful source of water for your plants.

**Stormwater management requirements for certification:**

Silver: complete **1** stormwater management item

Gold: complete **2** stormwater management items

Platinum: complete **3** stormwater management items

<b>Stormwater management recommendations</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Recommended</b>
Disconnect Downspouts: manage stormwater onsite, when appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eco-friendly Maintenance Practices: petroleum-free yard care, responsible fertilizer use, and/or use landscapers from BHCP Arborist & Landscape Professionals Directory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecoroof: installed according to City specifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large Canopy Tree: over 30ft, cannot be nuisance species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Naturescape 10% more than certification level requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raingarden: manage stormwater onsite, where appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove Impervious Surfaces and/or Grass: more than 500ft <sup>2</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restore Soil: leave the leaves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water Conservation: eliminate lawn irrigation, water in morning and evening only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 5. **Pesticides Reduction**

We discourage the use of pesticides. Decreasing and eventually eliminating these substances is essential for pollinators, birds, other wildlife, and for our own health and well-being. We encourage using **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** to determine whether treatment is needed and to come up with a sustainable solution.

The Backyard Habitat Certification Program uses **Grow Smart Grow Safe (GSGS)** to guide the certification criteria. Please refer to this incredible educational resource to determine the toxicity of products you use (red, yellow, or green zone) and to find natural gardening alternatives.

### **Pesticide reduction requirements for certification:**

Silver: always use IPM strategy, do not use any products in the red zone of GSGS.

Gold: always use IPM strategy, do not use any products in the red or yellow zones of GSGS.

Platinum: always use IPM strategy, do not use any products in the red or yellow zone of GSGS and take the **Metro Healthy Lawn and Garden Pledge**.

<b>Pesticide reduction recommendations</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Recommended</b>
Always uses Integrated Pest Management strategy (IPM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No use of "red zone" products (Grow Smart Grow Safe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No use of "yellow zone" products (Grow Smart Grow Safe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metro Healthy Lawn and Garden Pledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 6. Education & Volunteerism

### Education and volunteerism requirements for certification:

Silver: complete **0** education & volunteerism items

Gold: complete **0** education & volunteerism items

Platinum: complete **2** education & volunteerism items

Education and volunteerism recommendations	Completed	Recommended
Volunteer for the Backyard Habitats Certification Program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend workshops: through <a href="#">East Multnomah SWCD</a> , <a href="#">West Multnomah SWCD</a> , <a href="#">Tualatin SWCD</a> , etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer for <a href="#">Friends of Trees</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Become an <a href="#">OSU Extension Master Gardener</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Continuing Education:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruit 2 neighbors to sign up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow site/yard to be showcased in yard tours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Next Steps

### **When you are ready to be certified, or move up a level:**

Contact **JP Marchetti-Mendez** at [jmarchettimendez@backyardhabitats.org](mailto:jmarchettimendez@backyardhabitats.org) or (971) 222-6100.

Thank you for joining a growing community of people that are gardening sustainably and restoring wildlife habitat. Together we are contributing to a greener and healthier region for both people and wildlife.

## Backyard Habitat Tips

### 1. Removing Nuisance Weeds:

- Links to handouts with detailed information on how to identify, remove, and properly dispose of each weed listed above is included in the email with this site report. They also available on our [Resource Library](#).
- Many weeds, such as Lesser Celandine, Italian Arum, Yellow Flag Iris, and Garlic Mustard need to be bagged and placed in the **trash** (landfill waste), rather than compost/yard debris roll carts. These weeds require a multi-year strategy. They can be very difficult to eradicate completely, management options are limited, and in many cases the best course of action is to focus on minimizing risk of spreading into natural areas. Don't allow plants to go to seed. Ensure that no plants or bulbs travel from the property. Don't share plants with other gardeners.
- Check out [WeedWise](#), a website for Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation Districts' robust invasive weed program, packed with valuable information.

### 2. Naturescaping with Native Plants:

- **Start small.** Develop a concept plan (see our [Resource Library](#) for landscape design templates) for the yard that [reduces grass](#) and bare areas. Designate two or three sections of the yard that can be naturescaped (defined as areas with more than 50% native plants using at least three native canopy layers). Plan out where to plant trees first, then large shrubs, and ground cover last. Include a mix of deciduous and evergreen plants. Take note of the mature sizes of the trees and shrubs so that they don't block pathways or outgrow their space.
- **Focus on true, locally native species**, rather than cultivars, as much as possible. For certification, we'll be looking for native plants from the [Portland Plant List \(PPL\)](#), **which is the best resource** for learning about native plant communities, as well as preferred growing conditions and bloom times.
- The **best time to plant** is October through March because it gives roots a chance to grow before the dry summer months.
- Most new plants will still **need to be watered** during the summer months for the first two to three years. Long, deep, less-frequent watering sessions are better than frequent, short, shallow watering.
- **Mulch planting beds right after planting** & annually for water retention, soil amendment, and weed suppression.
- [Sheet Mulching to remove lawn](#), a handout by East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District.
- Check out [Chip Drop](#), a resource for FREE wood chips!
- Once established, native plants will thrive, and in fact be healthier, without summer water as long as they've been planted in a location that meets their shade/moisture requirements.
- When **shopping for native plants**, use the Backyard Habitat Program's exclusive discounts. Current nursery partners include: Echo Valley Natives, Cornell Farms, Bosky Dell Natives, and Friends of Trees. Watch for our quarterly e-newsletter for information about other local plant sales and special events.
- **Repeat what works.** If you have existing native plants in your yard they are likely well-suited to the existing growing conditions. Planting many individuals of the same species is better for wildlife, especially pollinators. While offering a diversity of plant species is important, planting in clusters is very beneficial to many birds and pollinators, will deter weed growth, and creates a pleasing-looking garden.
- **Join the [Friends of Backyard Habitats Facebook Group](#)** – a public Facebook group, managed by program fans, with over 1000 members that share plants, resources, and pictures. Excellent resource for plant identification (post pics of plants you don't know).

### 3. **Wildlife Stewardship:**

- Cat predation is one of the most significant causes of bird deaths in our region and in the country. If you have a cat that goes outdoors you'll need to have a plan in place to reduce their impact on birds in order to achieve Gold certification. Your plan could include:
  - Not letting cat outside during spring (March through June) when baby birds are learning to fly
  - Only letting cat outside when you are outside with them to supervise
  - Having a catio and only letting the cat "outside" within the catio
  - Platinum certification can be achieved if you always keep your cat indoors or only let them outside into a catio.
- Get to know the [beneficial insects](#) in our region. Most insects you'll see in your yard are an important part of the ecosystem and the foundation of a healthy food web.
- Providing water for food and insects is one of the most important wildlife stewardship actions you can take. [Learn more](#) about how to provide water in a way that is safe and healthy for wildlife.
- Placing a [wildlife brush shelter](#) on your property can add an interesting and important element to your backyard habitat, attracting a wide variety of wildlife that may have been missing.

### 4. **Stormwater Management & Soil Health:**

- [Leaving the leaves](#) is a fantastic way to support wildlife AND absorb rainwater. The fallen leaves absorb water above ground and then decompose and help create healthy soils, which also absorb significant amounts of water. A double win!
- Whether your yard is [sunny](#) or [shady](#), consider building a raingarden to help absorb rain during our rainiest months of the year.
- Soil organisms from [compost](#) continuously generate fertilizers for your plants so you don't have to. They recycle nutrients in dead plants and release them into the soil where roots absorb them and make them available to living plants.

### 5. **Pesticide Reduction:**

- Look up the pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers you're currently using in [Grow Smart Grow Safe](#) to determine their toxicity.
- Choose the [low hazard](#) options if treatment is absolutely needed.
- Take [Metro's Healthy Lawn and Garden Pledge](#) (required for Platinum certification).