



Missouri Prairie Foundation™
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Keeping Nature Near™

DID YOU
KNOW?

Songbirds Need Native Plants

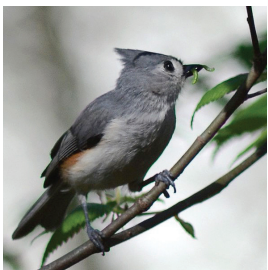
Did you know that choosing native plants for your yard or land will help songbirds thrive?



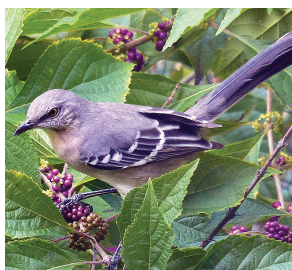
MARGY TERPSTRA



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CHRIS KIRMAIER



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Our beloved birds—like cardinals, chickadees, orioles, bluebirds and so many more—**must feed their babies insects and other invertebrates.**

For example, to raise one nest of chickadee babies, parents must forage up to 9,000 caterpillars to feed them (Brewer 1961).

What nourishes caterpillars? Native plants! Beneficial insects (and their caterpillar larvae) are dependent on native plants as their food sources—for example, more than 500 different kinds of caterpillars feed on oak trees—and these plants flourish despite the munching.

BUTTERFLY AND MOTH SPECIES CATERPILLARS SUPPORTED BY NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE PLANTS

Native Oaks
500+

Native Cherries & Plums
429

Native Asters
105

Non-native Boxwood, Forsythia, & Butterfly Bush

Non-native Daylilies, Hostas, & Lilyturf (Monkey Grass)

10

And remember: pesticides—including those sprayed on plants—are harmful to insects and the baby birds that eat insects.

In addition to needing native host plants for insect food for their babies, adult songbirds also need **protein-rich and fat-rich fruits and seeds.** Shrubs like native viburnums and deciduous holly provide fruits that songbirds relish. Prairie plants like native coreopsis and native grasses provide seeds to sustain goldfinches and sparrows.

Planting a variety of native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees provides songbirds **diverse habitat structure they need to nest and to escape predators and severe weather.**



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Create a **Bird Bistro** with native plants, shrubs, and trees to help songbirds thrive—and beautify your landscape!

Choose native plants. Find them from Grow Native! professional members. See www.grownative.org for resources.