

Every Bit Counts

Meet Connie. 7 years back, Connie Morrow Fairchild began planting natives on her half-an-acre property after listening to a talk by a well known expert. Today, about a third of her property has native plants that give flowers and nectar through the seasons, play host to several butterfly species, are pollinator magnets as well as provide berries, seeds and nesting spaces for many species of birds. Watch a [black swallow tail butterfly](#) laying eggs in her garden. Goldfinches visit and feast on the aphids helping the garden thrive. Honey bees buzz on the lawn that is covered with flowering clovers. Connie makes sure that her garden is safe for the wildlife; she does not spray any pesticides. Connie lets the plants die back naturally through winter and provide safe spaces for animals to shelter and insect eggs to overwinter. Can you imagine her excitement when she discovered a native Praying Mantis egg-case on a bush one winter day! Connie has won recognition from several agencies: Penn State Pollinator Friendly Garden, Audubon Bird Habitat, PHS Garden of Distinction and the NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat.

Connie welcomes nature with all its 'damage' that most gardeners loathe. When she sees holes in her violets patch that she grows as a green mulch, she knows that it is a good thing – the Fritillary butterfly caterpillars must have had a good lunch! When her Coral Honeysuckle were attacked by aphids, she waited it out until the ladybugs got them – she did not spray, but let nature play it out.

It is estimated that we are losing 6,000 acres of natural habitat areas to expanding urban and suburban areas that provide significant ecosystem services – from clean water and natural flood control to wildlife habitat and biodiversity ([USFS](#)). The Lower Makefield Township supports **planting of native species** through an [Ordinance](#). On her patch of land, Connie has created a stop for wildlife to feed, shelter and reproduce. More such patches can help create wildlife corridors that are essential for their survival. **Every bit counts.**

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