

Creation Care Ministry News

Remembering all of God's Creatures

In talking with his disciples, Jesus would invite them to recognize the paternal relationship God has with all his creatures. With moving tenderness he would remind them that each one of them is important in God's eyes: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God" (Lk 12:6). "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them" (Mt 6:26). (Laudato Si 96)

Laudato Si reminds us at OLPH that in caring for His Creation we must care for His creatures!

As the winter season progresses for us here in the Midwest, Spring will be here before you know it and so let us remember all of God's creatures. Here are a few things that you and your family can do this winter and all year in the spirit of Laudato Si.

These tips come from the National Audubon Society—Part I.

1. Reduce or eliminate pesticide and herbicide use. By using fewer chemicals in and around your home, you will help keep birds, pets, and your family healthy.
2. Create or protect water sources in your yard. Birds need water to drink and bathe in, just like humans. Be sure to keep birdbaths clean and change the water three times per week when mosquitoes are breeding.
3. Identify the non-native invasive plants in your region, and work to remove them from your yard. And don't bring any new invasives into your backyard habitat because they don't provide as much good food or shelter as natives do and can threaten healthy ecosystems.
4. Make your windows visible to birds to prevent collisions. Put up screens, close drapes and blinds when you leave the house or stick multiple decals on the glass (decals need to be no more than two to four inches apart to be effective).
5. Let your yard get a little messy. Leave snags for nesting places and stack downed tree limbs to create a brush pile which is a great source of cover for birds during bad weather.
6. Close your blinds at night and turn off lights you aren't using. Some birds use constellations to guide them on their annual migrations and bright lights from windows and skylights can disrupt their steering senses.
7. Plant native plants. Native flora provides birds with food in the form of fruit and seeds, and is home to tasty invertebrates like bugs and spiders. Plants with flowers for nectar and insects (songbirds feed insects to their young), fruit-bearing plants to provide fuel for migration and winter, layers of plants for cover and thermal protection, and nesting habitat and materials. You can also expand your patch of bird habitat into a larger urban oasis by working with neighbors. This winter you can also put out bird seed for our native birds that stay with us all year around.
8. Attract hummingbirds with sugar water. Combine four parts hot water to one part white sugar and boil for one to two minutes. Never use honey, artificial sweeteners or food coloring. Clean feeders with a solution of one part white vinegar to four parts water once a week.

Let's take care of God's creature OLPH! The Creation Care Ministry

