

# HABITAT HERALD

Wildlife Austin's monthly Newsletter



## February 2014



### Wildlife Austin

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Parks and Recreation  
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### UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, February 7: Seed Island Creation at Onion Creek, 11A-3P, [www.austinparks.org/calendar](http://www.austinparks.org/calendar)

Saturday, February 8: Ready, Set, Plant at Lake Walter E. Long Park, 9A-12P, <http://www.treefolks.org/volunteer-opportunities/>

Saturday, February 8: Ready, Set, Plant at Bartholomew Metro Park, 9A-12P <http://www.treefolks.org/volunteer-opportunities/>

Saturday, February 15: Tarrytown Park Seed Island Planting, 10A-2P, <http://austinparks.org/calendar.html>

Thursday, February 20: Seed Island Creation at Bartholomew Park, 11A-3P, [www.austinparks.org/calendar](http://www.austinparks.org/calendar)

Saturday, February 22: Free Composting Class at North Village Branch Library, 1P-2P, <http://austintexas.gov/event/free-composting-class-north-village-branch-library>

Hello Everyone,

The month of February is quite a busy month for volunteer opportunities as well as recreational opportunities in the city. As some of you may already know, the Celebrate Urban Birds event is happening this month throughout Austin. The event will take place over two weekends in various locations. There will be bird crafts, free lectures and even a homing pigeon demonstration!

If you're looking for even more fun outdoors bring out your family for the 2nd annual Zilker Fairie Garden event in the month of February. There will be tea parties, fairie house exhibits and landscaping workshops to help you keep your miniature gardens alive and thriving!

For more details, check out pages 7 and 8 in the newsletter. Happy February!

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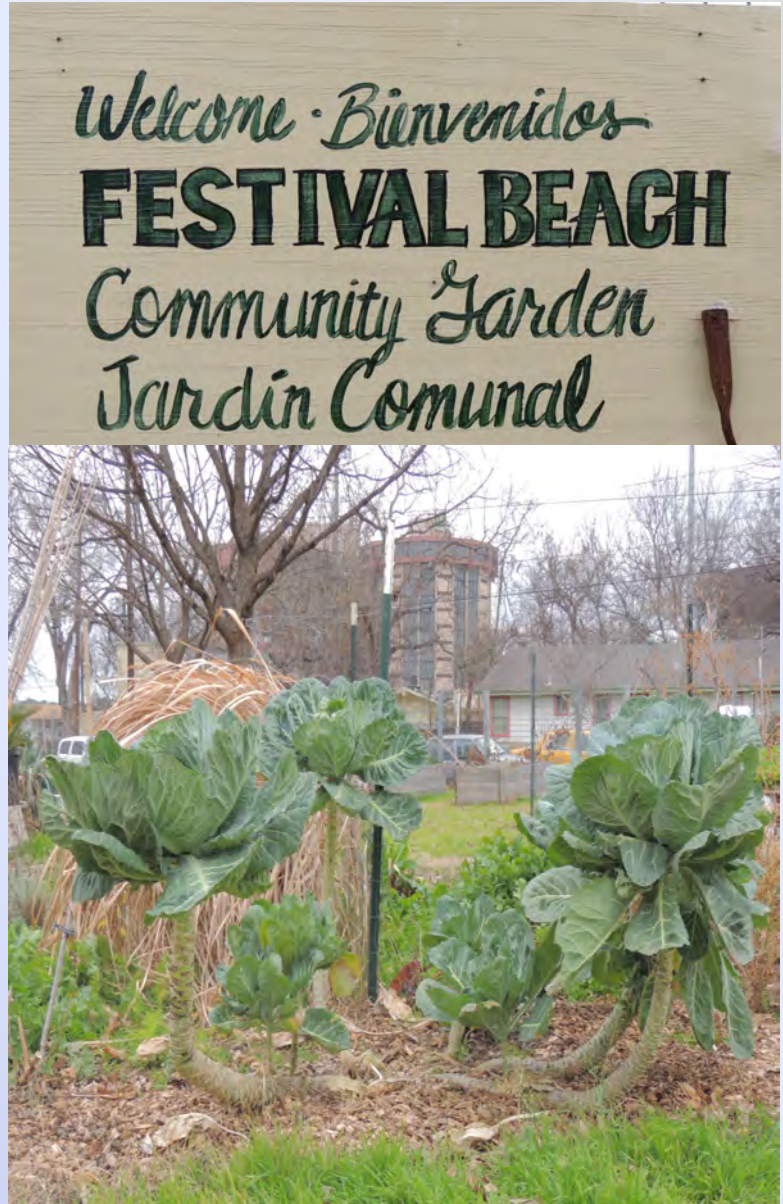
### Would you like to receive the newsletter?

E-mail us at [wildlife@austintexas.gov](mailto:wildlife@austintexas.gov)



# Garden of the Month

This month's garden of the month comes to us from the Festival Beach Community Garden! Started in April 2010, this community garden is now home to over 70 plots. The gardeners not only have private plots to rent but also have a community area where the produce generated in that area of the garden is donated to local shelters and centers such as the RBJ Public Health Center, a center for seniors and those with disabilities. Along with the community area, Festival Beach has areas dedicated to wildlife habitat, composting, and water retention. Thank you to all of you who help make this garden an example of all the wonderful things a community garden can do!



# Garden of the Month



**Would you like to share your yard with other gardeners? If so please write to [wildlife@austintexas.gov](mailto:wildlife@austintexas.gov) for more details!**

# LIVING IN A WUI WITHOUT ALL THE HOOEY

## Bird Shelter for All Seasons

Many people maintain nesting boxes for songbirds to raise their nestlings in during the spring and summer breeding season. If properly built and maintained, a nest box can be a great supplement to naturally-occurring cavities in accommodating cavity-nesting birds, but did you know that birds can also benefit from boxes built specifically as winter roosting shelters?



We have a mild winter climate here in Austin, but the cold days we do have can still drive wildlife to seek shelter from the low temperatures. A well-designed roost box can provide shelter and warmth to birds that commonly seek shelter in natural cavities, such as chickadees, titmice, bluebirds, and woodpeckers.

While some birds successfully use nesting boxes as shelter for roosting, a proper roost box has some differences in design from a nesting box.

-Nest boxes are designed to allow for air flow when they are occupied during the hot spring and summer months, and should have ventilation at the top of the box. A roost box should be built to conserve heat, and should be sealed at the top.

-Nest boxes have raised entry holes in order to protect the eggs and nestlings in the nest at the bottom of the box, while roosting boxes should have entry holes at the bottom of the box in order to trap rising heat inside the box.

-Nest boxes do not have interior perches, since they are built to accommodate a single incubating adult bird on a nest. Roost boxes can be built to accommodate many adults, and should include interior perches.

-Neither nest boxes nor roost boxes should be built with exterior perches at the entry hole. Exterior perches are not necessary for cavity-nesting and roosting birds to enter the box, but they do provide easier entry for predators to gain access to vulnerable nesting and roosting birds.

Prefabricated roosting boxes can be purchased at most wild bird suppliers, or you can build your own with this free design:



# Celebrate Urban Birds

Come learn all about the amazing birds you see right around you every day and why we want to celebrate their presence in our city! Activities are happening across the City featuring our feathered friends with arts and crafts, scavenger hunts, demonstrations, presentations, and 10 minute bird counts.

## February 9th: Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum

12:00pm - 4:00pm, Bird Friendly Crafts & Activities, 605 Robert E. Lee Road 78704

## February 15th: Austin Nature & Science Center, 10:00am - 2:00pm

10:15 and 11:15	Beginner Bird Walk and Tour
10:30, 11:30, 12:30	Live Bird Comparison
12:00 and 1:00	Bird of Prey Exhibit Tour
12:00-2:00	Kids' Bird Drawing Activity



## February 15th: Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center

2:30pm – 3:30pm, “Gardening for Backyard Birds” – Jane Tillman, Travis Audubon, Barton Springs Bathhouse in Zilker Park 78746

## February 19th: Lorraine “Grandma” Camacho Activity Center

9:00am - 12:00pm, Paddling & Viewing Birds on Ladybird Lake (Rain date: February 26th, 9:00am - 12:00pm)  
34 Robert Martinez Jr. Street, 78702. (Space is limited. RSVP to [ryan.eaker@austintexas.gov](mailto:ryan.eaker@austintexas.gov) or 512-391-1863)

## February 22nd: Elisabet Ney Museum

1:00pm – 4:00pm, Homing Pigeons Demonstration & Family Activities, 304 E 44th Street, 78751

*Presented by Austin Parks and Recreation Department, Travis Audubon Society, and Texas Master Naturalist, Capital Area Chapter*



If you have suggestions on what you would like to see in the newsletter please contact [wildlife@austintexas.gov](mailto:wildlife@austintexas.gov), we'd love to hear from you!

“Like”

[Austin Parks and Recreation-Parks in Nature](#)

*Wildlife*  
**Austin**



The City of Austin is proud to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require assistance for participation in our programs or use of our facilities, please call (512) 974-6700.

# FAIRIE GARDEN EVENTS

The second annual Woodland Faerie Trail features faerie homes and gardens created by Austin area gardeners, architects, and others. To enter your faerie home creation for installation on the trail, complete the application and register by February 20th, 2014.

January 11, 2014; 2:30 to 4:00pm

## **Faerie Tea Party**

\$15/child, limited space, see [registration](#) information below

Come dressed in your faerie best for a tea party overlooking the garden. Create magical wands as you wander through the garden and plant bulbs in a faerie ring. Includes fruit, miniature cupcakes, tea, and juice.

January 19, 2014; 1:00 to 4:00pm

## **Afternoon in the Garden: Forts and Faerie Homes**

Free drop-in program

Create a hidden space in the Garden using natural materials. Learn about structure and construction. This event is part of our regular drop in programming and is free with admission.

February 2, 2014; 1:00 to 4:00pm

## **Afternoon in the Garden: Faerie Gardens**

Free drop-in program

Plant the flowers that attract faeries and learn about special qualities of plants. This event is part of our regular drop in programming and is free with admission.

February 15, 2014; 10 to 12 am

## **Faerie Luminaries (SOLD OUT)**

\$7/child, limited space, see [registration](#) information below

Create fabulous faerie woodland luminaries to take home and to hang along the woodland trail.

April 19, 2014; 2:30 to 4:00pm

## **Faerie Tea Party (SOLD OUT)**

\$15/child, limited space, see [registration](#) information below

Come dressed in your faerie best for a tea party overlooking the garden. Create magical wands as you wander through the garden and plant bulbs in a faerie ring. Includes fruit, miniature cupcakes, tea, and juice.

May 17, 2014; 9 to 11:00am *or* 12 to 2:00pm

## **Faerie Landscaping Workshop**

\$5 per participant (+ \$25/garden kit) - see [registration information](#) below.

Create adorable faerie miniature gardens using live plants and natural materials to take home and invite a faerie into your backyard. Working with gardeners and horticulture staff, learn what is needed to keep your miniature landscape alive.

For more information and to register for an event please visit <http://www.austintexas.gov/event/zilker-faerie-homes-gardens-february-15-2014>