



# ABQ Backyard Refuge Program Newsletter

# SUMMER 2022

[www.ABQbackyardRefuge.org](http://www.ABQbackyardRefuge.org)



## Upcoming Events

### Happy Summer!

As I write, over sixteen of this year's neighborhood Bushtit fledglings are settling into our *Vitex* shrub for a nap. I am feeling profoundly lucky to share my space with them and to get to work with so many wonderful people who want to make our home a better place for both humans and wildlife.

### Re-certify your space!

The recertification application is up on the website! If you certified your space six or more months ago, you can use [the form](#) to give us an update on your space. You can share observations you've made and get the 2022 Swallowtail Butterfly sticker for your sign.



**Please recruit your community members!** It is exciting to meet new participants and their yards, and watch our total certified acreage grow. We now have 171 participants and almost 74 acres of certified backyard refuges!

### Help with our VdO habitat restoration!

If you enjoy pulling weeds that could out-compete our native plantings, please visit [page 13](#) and help with the restoration efforts at Valle de Oro NWR.

Cheers, and happy habitat!

Laurel Ladwig  
Program Director



NATIONAL  
WILDLIFE  
REFUGE SYSTEM

### City of Albuquerque Open Space Neighborhood Nature Festivals

**Saturdays, 9am to Noon**

**Phil Chacon Park:** June 18 and August 27th

**Alamosa Park:** July 16 and September 24th

See [page 15](#) for a flyer and visit

Join us and other CABQ partners for live music, a bilingual nature storytelling and puppet show, nature-themed carnivale performers, bosque ecosystem traveling exhibit truck, hands-on science activities, nature-based games, show-n-tell with urban wild animals, Esperanza bike repair clinic, food trucks, on-site language interpreters, and more!

### Water Conservation Workshops

Our partners at Bernalillo County Water Conservation, Arid LID, The Water Authority, and Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District are holding water conservation workshops as a part of their Backyard Farming series.

**June 25** Online Workshop:

*Residential Rainwater Harvesting: Q&A with Local Experts*

**June 27** Gutierrez Hubbell House

*Selecting Plants for Rainwater Harvesting Basins*

See [page 16](#) for details and register here:

[bernco.gov/openspacesignup](http://bernco.gov/openspacesignup)

You can also view the excellent **Residential Rainwater Harvesting** video series anytime at:

[www.bernco.gov/rainwater](http://www.bernco.gov/rainwater)

**Watch our new video:  
"A Tale of Two Neighborhoods"**

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# A Tale of Two Neighborhoods

The International District is a culturally vibrant area in Southeast Albuquerque. Unfortunately, it is also considered an urban heat island and food desert. In light of these challenges, residents are trying to reverse the trend with green space and pocket gardens.

Valle de Oro is an urban National Wildlife Refuge currently rewilding a former dairy farm located in Albuquerque's Mountain View community in the South Valley. Surrounded by industrial sites, the refuge is bringing back the wildlife habitats that previously flourished there.



Building backyard refuges is creating space for conversation, and connecting communities, both human and wild. This is a story of how the International District and Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) collaborated to create common ground for the people.

Our Student Conservation Association Intern Ani Jamgyal worked with videographer Rachel Hendrix and many staff and partners to create this video as a part of their capstone project with the refuge. Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=238RyjuJCSw>

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## Relationship to Nature Survey

We are doing research regarding environmental knowledge, attitudes, and ethics, and the correlations to willingness to take action for our wild neighbors. Please take our survey here:

[relationship to nature survey](#)

Complete the survey and receive a free sticker as a thank-you gift for your participation. We want to survey our program participants, those receiving this newsletter who have not yet have a certified backyard refuge, and the general public. ***Please share the link above with your friends!***



# Not Your Average Cup of Tea

by Corva Rose

I'll never forget the first time it happened.

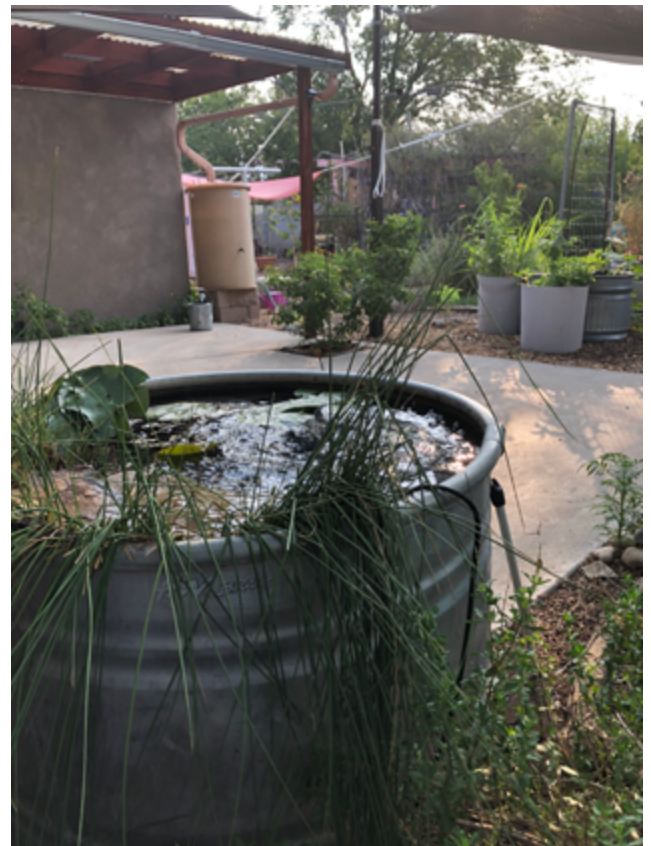
I was barely awake, standing at the kitchen counter, stirring honey into my tea. I noticed that it was eerily silent in the backyard. I paused in the stirring to listen. Yep. Silence... at an hour when there's normally a cacophony of birdsong. Weird. I walked to the back door, turned the handle, walked straight onto the porch, and came face to face, well, more like 10 feet away, but it FELT like face to face – with a hawk.

I think I mumbled something like, “good morning sweetheart,” which isn't technically the appropriate way to greet a hawk. I think it's more like, “good morning your highness” accompanied by a deep bow. But you gotta remember I wasn't fully awake yet. I backed slowly away from her, across the threshold, and closed the door. Shocked and giddy at the same time, I started running from room to room to see which window offered the best view, and the hawk followed me with its gaze as I moved to each window. If you've ever experienced that gaze, you know how it changes you.

It felt like her eyes pierced right into my heart. Without a shadow of a doubt, she saw me. I was seen. I couldn't hide. And the question, “What are you doing?” came into my mind, almost as if she was asking me. It made me ask myself, “What am I doing?” In the months since this encounter, I've asked myself that question a lot. And I've also asked myself the bigger question, “Am I doing what I'm here to do?” You might be asking yourself the same question these days.

Now, I know what you're thinking, “they must have one of those ginormous ponds and they're probably near the Bosque.” Nope. We just have a small livestock water tank that's roughly 3' across and 2' deep, plus 2 small bird baths, and we live in Uptown. And yet there she was, perched on the rim of the tank, drinking. I was stunned. Since getting hooked on habitat creation a year or so ago I've been excited to watch more birds and butterflies and skunks show up, but I guess I never expected a Cooper's hawk to actually visit our little piece of the habitat quilt. How incredibly cool!

That morning taught me a few things – one is that a habitat doesn't need to be 'perfect' or complex in order to start functioning as HOME for wildlife. In our case, our backyard habitat is far from being as diverse as I'm hoping for it to become. I'd like to try my hand at growing more native plants that produce berries and seeds. I'd like to create more swales



Corva's backyard refuge  
photographs by Corva Rose

and berms to passively harvest rainwater. A few more water plants in the pond would be groovy, too. But look who showed up at the party, letting me know it's wonderful just as it is.

Another thing the appearance of this hawk confirmed is that with a bit of instruction, anyone can create habitat. Granted, I've been a plant nerd for decades, but to be honest here, until relatively recently I was intimidated by the word habitat. It felt too advanced somehow, like a word that could only be used by those who study such things in depth, can name all the species of butterflies who migrate through our flyway, and create those super cool interpretive signs for places like Valle de Oro. I love me some interpretive signage, and I love the people who make them! But this hawk confirmed that in my own way, I was making a difference, and it didn't even matter that I didn't know what kind of hawk it was! (Which I didn't...I had to look it up.)

**Habitat basically means home.** When we create habitat, we're creating homes for wildlife to find refuge in. The encounter with the hawk made me fall in love even more with creating habitat. When we participate in programs like the VDO Backyard Habitat Certification Program, we are creating patches of HOME for our animal family. These patches will eventually bump up against each other and knit themselves together in a gorgeous quilt. With each plant we nurture and each water source we create in our patch of the quilt, we're saying to every living being, in a tangible way, "I see you. You matter to me. You are welcome here."

*Corva Rose is a certified arborist, bona-fide tree hugger, and owner of Tree School in Albuquerque, NM. She's doing what she's here to do – teach folks how to create climate resilient habitats and food forests in her Mentorship, Private Sessions, and Playshops. In her spare time she can be found in the hammock, nurturing the garden in her heart and thinking up new plant-related puns. She can be reached at [treeschoolnm.com](http://treeschoolnm.com) and on Instagram @tree\_school\_nm.*



**TREE  
SCHOOL**



Corva Rose  
ABQ Backyard Refuge Program Partner

# Taking care of your backyard refuge this summer



## Plants

Do you have cacti in your backyard refuge? Some native bees only collect pollen/nectar from cactus, and some use pads or stalks for nests. Also, plant extra tomato plants for pollinators as leaves are food for sphinx moth caterpillars. For pollinating those tomato plants, add habitat for bumble bees and carpenter bees. Tomatoes require buzz-pollination that honey bees cannot perform. Download the latest version of our [plant list](#) and search for “bumble” to find the best plants to support these pollinators. Also leave bare ground near your pollinator plants for tiny ground-nesting bees that can’t fly very far. If you have ample blooms in the summer and fall, your yard could be their entire world.

## Birds & Wildlife

In summer, wildlife are raising families. You can provide a diversity of native plants and food sources to help wildlife find enough fruit, insects, seeds, or other prey to feed their hungry little ones. With so much habitat struggling in the drought, supplemental bird feeders are welcomed. Clean and refill your hummingbird feeders twice per week during the hot summer months. If you are unable to clean them regularly, put them out only when you are able to maintain them. A black mold can form when sugar water is left out in the heat. Ingestion of this mold by hummingbirds can sicken or kill them so keep their food fresh! Planting hummingbird-friendly plants is the best way to feed our hovering friends. Take the Hummingbird Care Pledge on [page 6](#).

## Water

Our extreme drought makes this summer challenging for our community. The combination of heat and low humidity can cause your plants to need more water than in prior years. Watch over your backyard refuge and look for plants that may look parched. Even those plants that survive on our minimal yearly rainfall may need supplemental water this year, especially if you are hoping for blossoms to support our pollinators.

Water in the desert attracts lots of wild neighbors. Put out open water like a bird bath or a shallow dish with clean water in it. Bird baths are most frequently used when the water is not deeper than the bird’s legs. You can add rocks that break the surface of the water for small birds and insects to safely get a drink. Clean the bath and put in fresh water every few days.



505outside.com



## We still have mulch!

Pick up mulch from the refuge for retaining moisture in your backyard refuge soil! Contact **Joe Mackey**, Valle de Oro NWR’s Maintenance Worker at [joseph\\_mackey@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_mackey@fws.gov) to arrange for a Special Use Permit.

### SUMMER WATERING RECOMMENDATIONS (JUNE - AUGUST) FOR GREATER ALBUQUERQUE AREA

Plant Type	How Often?	How Deep?
TREES	2 TIMES PER WEEK	24" INCHES
SHRUBS	1-2 TIMES PER WEEK	18" INCHES
FLOWERING PLANTS	2-3 TIMES PER WEEK	12" INCHES
DESERT ACCENTS	1-2 TIMES PER MONTH	12" INCHES
GROUNDCOVER	1-3 TIMES PER WEEK	12" INCHES
GRASS: TURF (COOL SEASON)	3-5 TIMES PER WEEK	4" INCHES
GRASS: TURF (WARM SEASON)	2-3 TIMES PER WEEK	4" INCHES
GRASS: ORNAMENTAL	1-2 TIMES PER WEEK	12" INCHES
VINES	1-3 TIMES PER WEEK	12" INCHES

🌧️ MONTHLY   🌧️ WEEKLY

# If you provide hummingbird feeders, take the **Hummingbird Care Pledge!**

I pledge to use hummingbird feeders to care for our hummingbird neighbors by:

- using a ratio of 1 part sugar dissolved completely in 4 parts water
- only using white sugar (*not brown or raw sugar (these contain a bit of molasses and causes the nectar to spoil more quickly)*)
- cleaning the feeder and filling it with fresh nectar at least every three days and using a brush to clean the feeder ports thoroughly

**OR**

- taking the feeder down until able to do so  
(*when sugar water is left out more than a few days, a dangerous mold can form*)
- conserving sugar by only filling the feeder with enough nectar to last for a few days
- if possible, planting hummingbird-friendly plants and encouraging friends and family to do so. A feeder is a great supplement but plants provide the best food!

## Hummingbird-Friendly Plants

^ also thrives in the East Mountains

<i>Agave havardiana</i> ^	Havard Agave
<i>Agave palmeri</i> ^	Palmer's Agave
<i>Mirabilis multiflora</i> ^	Native Four O'clock
<i>Penstemon palmeri</i> ^	Palmer Penstemon
<i>Salvia darcyi</i> ^	Texas Red Sage



### hummingbird-friendly plants that thrive in containers

<i>Agave parryi</i> ssp. <i>neomexicana</i> @	Parry's / Mescal Agave
<i>Echinocereus coccineus</i> ^ @	Scarlet Hedgehog Cactus
<i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i> ^ @	Red/Yellow-flowering Yucca
<i>Opuntia cacanapa</i> "ellisiana" @	Spineless Prickly Pear
<i>Opuntia engelmannii</i> ^ @	Desert / Engelmann Prickly Pear
<i>Opuntia macrocentra</i> ^ @	Purple Prickly Pear
<i>Opuntia phaeacantha</i> ^ @	Brown-spined Prickly Pear
<i>Aquilegia chrysantha</i> ^ @	Golden Columbine
<i>Gaillardia</i> spp.^ @	Blanketflowers
<i>Penstemon strictus</i> ^ @	Rocky Mountain Penstemon

### hummingbird-friendly shrubs and trees

<i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus</i> var. <i>wrightii</i> ^	Flame Anisacanthus
<i>Buddleja</i> sp.	Butterfly Bush
<i>Caesalpinia gilliesii</i>	Yellow Bird of Paradise
<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i> 'Compactum'	Compact Ceniza
<i>Leucophyllum langmaniae</i>	Rio Bravo Rainsage
<i>Salvia dorrii</i> ^	Desert Sage
<i>Salvia greggii</i>	Autumn or Cherry Sage
<i>Salvia lycoides</i> x <i>greggii</i> ^	Ultra-Violet' Sage
<i>Chilopsis linearis</i> ^*	Desert Willow

See the latest version of our [full plant list](#) at [www.ABQbackyardRefuge.org](http://www.ABQbackyardRefuge.org) to learn about these plants and a few hundred others that provide great habitat for our wild neighbors!

Our [plant list](#) now indicates the species that are great for container gardens! Just download the pdf and search for the '@' symbol.



## Pocket Habitats & Events (We've been busy!)

Thanks to New Mexico State University's Integrative Pest and Pollinator Management Center, New Mexico Department of Game & Fish Share with Wildlife, Explora, Bernalillo County Water Conservation Program, and the City of Albuquerque Open Space Division, we've been very busy installing new pocket habitats, and doing workshops and events.

### CABQ Loma Linda Community Center

We held a planting day in conjunction with Bernalillo County Urban Ag Project & Health Equity Council, workshop. Bernalillo County Water Conservation Program showed participants how to convert IBC totes into rain barrel and added many plants around the vegetable garden to provide habitat for birds and pollinators.



San Pedro Library hosted a City Nature Challenge ABQ to document the species visiting their one-year-old pocket habitat! A Black-chinned Hummingbird declined the request for a photograph, but the Greater Roadrunner walked up to the Autumn Sage and posed.



We planted many pollinator plants at Bernalillo County's Tiny Home Village.



We did a planting afternoon and a City Nature Challenge event at Van Buren Middle School in April with the school garden club.



& trans-located some cacti who needed a new home. They are now happily installed in Valle de Oro NWR's upland habitat area.



We worked with Bernalillo County Parks & Recreation to add habitat plants to the Nature Explore outdoor classroom at Bernalillo County's Mountain View Community Center.

The RMYC crew cleared cobbles, amended the soil, and had fun ripping invasive tree species out by the roots using the Uprooter. The crew members who did all the prep work were called away to help with the aftermath of the fires up north and a new crew planted the 56 shrubs, grasses, and perennial wildflowers.

A Youth Conservation Corps crew will be working with Parks & Rec to finish the project later in June.



You can find us at CABQ Open Space's Neighborhood Nature Fest every month! See [page 15](#) for details.



A tiny Desert Cottontail came to visit the planting crew each day.





At Dorn Community Charter School, we did activities with the classes and planted dozens of pollinator plants. Our carpenter and Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew also rebuilt a shade structure and added Green Stormwater Infrastructure to capture rainwater with a rain barrel provided by the Bernalillo County Water Conservation program.



We're working with the newly certified CABQ Greenhouse, and our Neighborhood Ambassadors who volunteer there, to create an interpretive exhibit about our program at their beautiful demonstration garden. We're excited about this new partnership and working with them to add more habitat plants in the CABQ Parks the Greenhouse crew and volunteers manage.

# Backyard refuge demonstration habitat at the new Valle de Oro visitor center!

We are growing a demonstration habitat at Valle de Oro's new visitor center! Our partners at the New Mexico State University Integrative Pest and Pollinator Management Center provided the plants and we had a fun morning planting them with the help of Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps and Youth Conservation Corps. Our VdO Biology Team helped with the plant selection and beautifully organized the group planting session. Each plant is a species from our official [plant list](#) and we'll be developing interpretive signs and brochures to accompany the habitat garden. Our VdO staff, Youth Conservation Corps members, and Neighborhood Ambassadors have already started giving the plants lots of loving care!



## Summer Species: Native Bees!

New Mexico is home to over 1000 bees. Thirty percent of them are cavity-nesters and might take up residence if you add a bee house to your habitat. The other seventy percent are ground dwellers and all you have to do to provide for them is to leave bare patches of ground (without weed cloth) near your pollinator plants!

The **American Bumble Bee** (*Bombus pensylvanicus*) and other bumblebee species are in decline and classified as vulnerable. You can help these species by adding plants specifically for them and leaving brush piles for them to build nests. Download the latest version of our [plant list](#) and search for “bumble” to discover over 20 species they visit.

Remember, bumble bees, carpenter bees, and other native bees such as ground-nesting digger bees can do something honey bees cannot: buzz pollination. Without these bees, your tomatoes won't be pollinated unless you do it yourself. Learn more about supporting bumble bees at the Xerces Society [website](#).

If you want to provide for many species of native bees, Globemallows (Genus *Sphaeralcea*) are hardy drought-resistant plants that native bees love! Many bees in the subgenera *Macroteropsis* and *Coquillettapis* of genus *Diadasia* are globemallow specialists and rely exclusively on the beautiful orange flowers. Bumble bees also visit them. Globemallows tend to spread and cultivating a nice patch will provide for these native bees, large and small!

Learn more about our native bee neighbors by checking out ***The Bees in Your Backyard*** by Joe Wilson and local expert Dr. Olivia Messinger Carril. <https://www.beesinyourbackyard.com/>

Visit [pollinatorweb.com](http://pollinatorweb.com) for a wealth of information about pollinators and plants in the southwest.

You can contribute to bumble bee conservation by participating in “Ask a Bumble Bee”. See [page 17](#) for details.

**Write to us** and let us know what bees visit which plants in your backyard refuge. You can use the **iNaturalist app** or [website](#) to make identifications or just send pictures to us!

**You can also explore iNaturalist to discover what bees have been observed in our area. For example, Bumble Bees:**  
[iNaturalist Bernalillo Bumble Bee observations](#)

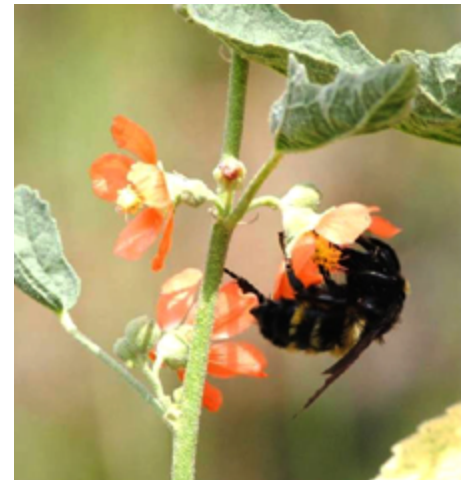
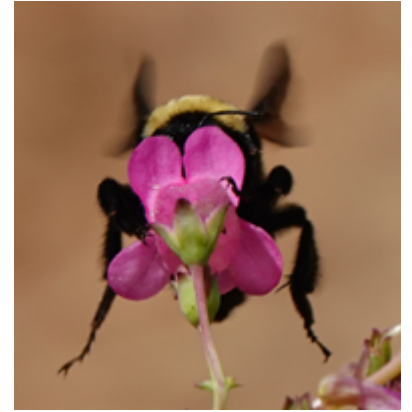
American Bumble Bee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*) at Blanketflower (*Genus Gaillardia*)

American Bumble Bee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*) at Desert Penstemon  
(*Penstemon pseudospectabilis*)

Carpenter bee (*Genus Xylocopa*) at Creosote (*Larrea tridentata*)

American Bumble Bee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*)  
at Globemallow (*Genus Sphaeralcea*)

*photographs by Laurel Ladwig*



## Summer Species: Backyard Bee Gallery



Globemallow specialist  
Subgenus *Coquillettapis*, a member of  
Genus *Diadasia*  
*photo by Laurel Ladwig*



Globemallow specialist  
Subgenus *Macroteropsis*, a member of  
Goblin Bees Genus *Macrotera*  
*photo by Laurel Ladwig*



Globemallow specialist  
Subgenus *Coquillettapis*  
© Elliott Gordon



Globemallow specialist  
Subgenus *Macroteropsis*  
© Elliott Gordon



California Digger Bee (*Larrea tridentata*)  
*photograph by Laurel Ladwig*

Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge is

# seeking landscaping volunteers!



*Help native plants!  
Pull weeds!*

## **Landscaping Lead Volunteer**

We are looking for a volunteer with experience in landscaping, gardening and/or drip irrigation to lead the stewardship of the plantings around our new visitor center.

Scan the QR code to apply online now!



## **Landscaping Crew Volunteers**

Just want to pull weeds? Apply to be one of our Landscaping Maintenance Crew volunteers!

Scan the QR code to apply online now!



For questions, more information or to request a paper application form contact: [dakota\\_dominguez@fws.gov](mailto:dakota_dominguez@fws.gov), 505-328-9876

*Join us!*



# *Volunteers wanted*

to staff the new visitor center at Valle  
de Oro National Wildlife Refuge

We are looking for volunteers to help staff the welcome desk in our new visitor center starting in May. Morning and afternoon shifts are available. Come be a part of the first Urban National Wildlife Refuge in the Southwest! Contact: [dakota\\_dominguez@fws.gov](mailto:dakota_dominguez@fws.gov) if interested.

**APPLY NOW**



For more information and to apply use the QR code to visit [volunteer.gov](http://volunteer.gov) or search "Valle de Oro" on [volunteer.gov](http://volunteer.gov)

# Neighborhood Nature Festival!

¡Festival de la Naturaleza del Barrio!



**Free! Visit Anytime, Stay as Long as You Like!**

¡Gratis! ¡Visite en cualquier momento, quédese todo el tiempo que quiera!

**Saturday, 9am-12pm**

Sábado, 9am-12pm

**Phil Chacon Park—April 23, June 18, August 27**

23 de Abril, 18 de Junio, 27 de Agosto

**Alamosa Park—May 21, July 16, Sept 24**

21 de Mayo, 16 de Julio, 24 de Septiembre

**Live Music** - Música

**Paletas** - Paletas

**Storytelling** - Narración

**Children's Activities** - Actividades para Niños

**Live Birds Show-n-Tell** - Aves Vivas en Exhibición

**Bike Repair** - Reparación de Bicicletas

**Home Resources** - Recursos para el Hogar

**Language Interpreters** - Intérpretes de Idiomas

For more information scan the QR code at the top or visit

[www.cabq.gov/naturefest](http://www.cabq.gov/naturefest) - Para mas información escaneas el código de QR o visitas el sitio web



parks & recreation



**Hawks Aloft, Inc.**  
Conservation, Avian Research & Education





# WATER CONSERVATION *Workshops*

SUMMER 2022

1

## **Rainwater or Graywater: Which is Right for You?**

Online workshop

Thursday, June 9, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m., or

Saturday, June 11, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

2

## **Residential Rainwater Harvesting: Q&A with Local Experts**

Online workshop

Thursday, June 23, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

3

## **Selecting Plants for Rainwater Harvesting Basins**

Gutiérrez Hubbell House (6029 Isleta Blvd SW)

Saturday, June 25, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

4

## **Drip Irrigation Repair for Homeowners**

Gutiérrez Hubbell House (6029 Isleta Blvd SW)

Saturday, Aug. 13, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

For more information and to register:  
[bernco.gov/openspacesignup](http://bernco.gov/openspacesignup)





# Citizen Science Project Highlight

## Bee Inventory and Monitoring Lab (BIML) |

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/usgsbiml/>

We (USGS/FWS Native Bee Lab) have developed a simple Plant/Bumble Bee Survey that permits anyone to survey what plants Bumble Bees use anywhere there are Bumble Bees (literally).

We call it “Ask a Bumble Bee.”

How can I get involved? Just email <bumblebeecount@gmail.com>

Our goal is to quantify which plants bumble bees use, rank them by that use, and also identify which ones they don't use.

- You don't need to identify bumble bee species (though our goal is to get you there)
- Everything is non-lethal
- You only need a cellphone (for taking pictures of plants), pencil, paper
- You can survey any location where bumble bees occur
- Your garden, arboretums, parks, plantings, natural areas, refuges, urban, suburban, farm, wilderness, roadsides, and weedy patches are all places we would like you to survey. The richer the plant diversity, the more plants are competing for bumble bees and clearer preference will be
- You can survey a site repeatedly throughout the year.

### *Basic instructions*

- Half hour walk on whatever path you like
- Take notes about all the blooming plants to 10 feet on either side of that path
- Count all the bees along this route and note what flowers are they on
- Take pictures of all the flowering species (so we can check ids later. Note: iNaturalist.org and apps are great for insect and plant ID.)
- Take pictures of your field sheets and upload all the pictures using your phone (no apps to download!)
- Done! (but we want you to do more than one really)



American Bumble Bee *Bombus pensylvanicus*  
photo by Laurel Ladwig

start here

do you want to share your space with wildlife?



YES!

no or not sure

download our introductory guide to find out how and why to share space with wildlife!

do you have at least two native drought-resistant plants that provide food?(flowers, fruits, nuts, seeds) OR one native plant that provides food and also maintain a supplemental feeder or water source like a simple bird bath?

no or not sure

Check out our plant list or email us at abqbackyardrefuge@friendsofvalledeoro.org with questions!

YES!

no or not sure

can you do two or more of these Best Practices?

YES!

Congratulations! Your space qualifies as a backyard refuge!

apply here!



### Best Practices

#### Engagement

- Post wildlife or plant observations on citizen/community science website (Examples: iNaturalist, eBird, Nature's Notebook, etc.)
- Advocate for land conservation
- Volunteer at public lands or with environmental conservation organizations
- Attend an ABQ Backyard Refuge or program partner event
- Promote the ABQ Backyard Refuge Program at community gatherings or on social media
- Recruit neighbors, friends and/or family to seek ABQ Backyard Refuge Certification

#### Soil and Water Conservation

- Capture rainwater from roof and move overflow water to landscaped areas using a swale, basin, or other method of diversion e.g., a hose attached to a rain barrel.
  - Have xeriscape elements (water-wise landscaping)
  - Use drip or soaker hose for irrigation
- Limit water use
- Reduce erosion with mulch or contouring
- Use mulch to keep soil cool and help maintain soil moisture
- Make and use compost where plants need it
- Scoop the poop in your yard and on walks!

#### Wildlife Gardening Practices

- Keep pets indoors or in controlled areas
- Convert traditional lawn from one species to a diversity of native and drought-tolerant plants
- Add native and drought-tolerant plants to supplement or replace existing vegetation
- Prune after insect emergence in spring plants and before nesting season begins
- Trim trees and plants after wildlife nesting seasons, leaving some dead branches when possible for wildlife
- Leave leaf litter for over-wintering wildlife
- Eliminate chemical pesticides/herbicides/rodenticides and practice non-toxic methods of Integrated Pest Management
- Eliminate chemical fertilizers
- Allow plants to flower and go to seed, and leave seed heads over winter for food
- Leave some fruit on fruiting trees for wildlife
- Leave bare ground for ground-nesting native bees