

Colchester is certified as a **Community Wildlife Habitat** through the National Wildlife Federation since 2010; the first community in CT with this certification



*Do you care about Wildlife locally to help Colchester remain certified as a **Community Wildlife Habitat** by certifying your own property through the **National Wildlife Federation**?*

**Components of a Wildlife Habitat:  
Food, Water, Cover,  
Places to Raise Young, and  
Sustainable Practices**

Complete online application  
<https://www.nwf.org/certifiedwildlifehabitat>

Cost: \$25 application fee



## **Benefits to NWF Wildlife Habitat Certification**

When you certify you will become a member of the National Wildlife Federation's Garden for Wildlife™ community and receive the following benefits:

- Personalized certificate
- A one-year membership in the National Wildlife Federation and subscription to National Wildlife® magazine
- 10% off the National Wildlife Federation catalog merchandise, including nesting boxes, feeders, birdbaths, and other items to enhance your wildlife garden
- Subscription to monthly Garden for Wildlife e-newsletter with gardening tips, wildlife stories, and other resources
- Exclusive option to purchase attractive garden signs designating your garden as a Certified Wildlife Habitat® with the National Wildlife Federation

## Thinking Ahead to the Holidays and a Live Christmas Tree?

**Christmas Tree Farms generally open Thanksgiving weekend.**

It is important to check their days and hours before your head out.

- The History of Christmas Trees *Timeline provided by The Rocks Christmas Tree Farm, Bethlehem, NH.* <https://realchristmastrees.org/education/history-of-christmas-trees/>
- National Christmas Tree Association, Types of Evergreen Trees <https://realchristmastrees.org/education/tree-varieties/>
- Tree Farms in Connecticut (by county and more), Connecticut in Style <https://ctinstyle.com/tree-farms-in-connecticut/>
- Choosing and Planting a Living Christmas Tree, The National Gardening Association <https://garden.org/learn/regional/view/2642/>

### As the Cold Weather Approaches ...

“For birds and other wildlife, **water is just as important in the cold months as it is during summer**,” says [NWF Naturalist David Mizejewski](#). “If there’s no snow in your area, there is literally no water, which means birds can be in trouble.”

“Even in places with abundant snow and ice, it **costs birds precious calories and body heat to melt frozen water**. Backyards that provide fresh, clean, liquid water during winter tend to host more avian visitors than do frozen yards. In winter, “water is as big an attraction as feeders,” says [Sally Roth](#), author of *The Backyard Bird Feeder’s Bible*.

Here are some **tips for easily—and safely—providing water** for wildlife during the cold months:

1. Before the cold sets in, replace delicate solar or fountain birdbaths with sturdier, winter-ready water features. Because ice can cause cracks and leaks, concrete baths should be stored or covered in winter.
2. Place baths in a sunny area to make them more visible to birds and to help keep the water liquid.
3. While birds are unlikely to submerge themselves in very cold weather, you can help them stay dry and drink more easily by adding several stones to the bath or placing a few sticks on top that the animals can use as perches.
4. Even during winter, birdbaths (as well as feeders) should be cleaned regularly.
5. To keep water from freezing, consider adding an immersion-style water heater. More recent models will turn off if the water in the bath dries up.

6. If using a heater, add a ground-fault interrupted circuit (available at hardware stores) to prevent electric shorts. Check that cords and outlets are sheltered from snow or ice buildup.
7. As a homemade alternative to a heater, place a light bulb in a flower pot and put a small water basin on top of the pot.
8. A simpler option—particularly if you have no outdoor electric outlet—is to buy several heavy-duty plant saucers that will not be cracked by ice and replace frozen baths with fresh ones each morning.
9. Avoid adding glycerin to a birdbath as antifreeze; if birds ingest too much, it can dangerously elevate their blood-sugar levels. Glycerin solutions also may mat birds feathers, decreasing insulation at a time when the animals need it most.

Source: <https://blog.nwf.org/2014/12/dont-forget-water-for-birds-in-winter/>

Black plastic saucers help birds stay hydrated in the cold



Source: <https://www.housedigest.com/2009871/bird-bath-freeze-winter-affordable-alternative-saucer/>

### ***Park Outside? Something sleeping on your car's engine?***

If you park your car outside in colder months, be aware that warm engines often attract cats and small wildlife, who may crawl up under the hood for warmth and shelter. **Make it a habit to bang on your car's hood before starting your engine to scare any animals away**

### ***Be Bear Aware...***

The CT DEEP says “*All residents should take time to become “BearWise” and learn about best practices to both reduce the likelihood of an encounter with a bear and know what to do in the event of an encounter.*” Start here:

<https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/bears/the-basics-of-living-with-black-bears>

# Get to Know Our Connecticut Wildlife

The CT Department of Energy and Environment Protection (CT DEEP)

The Wildlife Division is part of the [Bureau of Natural Resources](#) within the [Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection \(DEEP\)](#). The Bureau is charged with managing the state's natural resources (particularly fish, wildlife, and forests) through a program of research, management, public education, and regulation. The Wildlife Division is comprised of several programs that work together to conserve and manage Connecticut's wildlife.



CT DEEP has an extensive listing of Wildlife Fact Sheets for Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians, and Invertebrates.

PDF versions of these fact sheets are available to download and print. The fact sheets may be copied and used for educational purposes only. Illustrations and photos are copyright protected and may not be used in any other format.

<https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/learn-about-wildlife/wildlife-fact-sheets>



The official publication of CT DEEP Bureau of Natural Resources is **Connecticut Wildlife Magazine**. You can review the current and archived editions at <https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/connecticut-wildlife-magazine> Or you can subscribe to receive a mailed copy of the magazine by writing to: Connecticut Wildlife, Sessions Woods WMA, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013. The current subscription rate is \$8.00 for one year.

**Wildlife Highlights** is a free electronic newsletter for anyone interested in Connecticut's wildlife and the outdoors! [Subscribe to Wildlife Highlights](#) (external website). To view current and archived editions:

<https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/wildlife-highlights-newsletter>

## For Parents:

- CT Fall Daytrips Guide: Orchards, Festivals and Family Getaways 2025 <https://mommypoppins.com/connecticut-family/fall-activities/fall-fun-guide-for-connecticut-kids>
- A list of fun activities for families to do together at home that also promote an awareness of wildlife [25 Wildlife Activities You Can Do at Home](#)
- Just for Kids Activities - With planning, these projects can each be completed in less than 2 hours [Family-friendly Projects to Improve Backyard Habitat for Wildlife](#)
- View the winners of CT DEEP's 2025 Connecticut Junior Conservation (Duck) Stamp Art Contest. Encourage your child to submit an entry in 2026.  
<https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/stamp/connecticut-junior-duck-stamp-art-contest>



**GREENHOUR™**  
Powered by L.L.Bean

Encourage your children to spend time outdoors in nature every day; the National Wildlife Federation's Green Hour has an abundance of activity suggestions. <https://thegreenhour.org/>



*Help children learn, play, grow through gardening.*

See activities at <https://kidsgardening.org/>

### **Visit Cohen Woodlands and Colchester's StoryWalk**

Ruby and Elizabeth Cohen Woodlands is a 206 acre open space park with so much to offer to view and get close to nature and wildlife – two ponds, large fields, three hiking trails, picnic tables and pollinator demonstration gardens developed and maintained by members of the Colchester Garden Club with many native plants supporting pollinators through the seasons. For a map of the park and brochure about the pollinator garden: <https://www.colchesterct.gov/parks-facilities/pages/ruby-and-elizabeth-cohen-woodlands>.

## Do you know your Pines? How to Needle ID....

Source: <https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2019/02/arent-they-all-just-pines-how-to-id-conifer-trees/>



From the top: Red Pine, Eastern White Pine, Spruce, Fir, Cedar, Hemlock, Larch