

CREATION CARE GREEN TIPS - SEPTEMBER

1. The results of a newly released survey by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) show a strong interest in **growing native plants that benefit wildlife**. In 2019, **36.8 million Americans purchased native plants, and 23.1 million transformed parts of their yards into natural landscapes**. NWF's Garden for Wildlife program saw an **increase of six times its usual traffic on its website, with 247,000 registered certified wildlife habitats, up more than 10,000 sites since last year**. THE FALL SEASON is a great time to find solace in wildlife gardening, where you can plant with a purpose. **Visit: nwf.org/outdoors** for more information on how you can **create eco-friendly green space to relax and rejuvenate outdoors**. Another source of information: **Native Plant Society of Minnesota**, whose website dispenses information about plants specific to your ecoregion, how to garden with those plants and where to purchase them. More help: your **county extension office**, which has lists of trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals native to the local area, as well as Master Gardener volunteers who can do **site visits and provide help with other gardening questions**.

2. According to the Minnesota-based Land Stewardship Project analysis of the scientific literature related to soil health and climate change, **agriculture is a major contributor to emissions that impact climate change - accounting for 9% and 24% of U.S. and Minnesota greenhouse gas emissions, respectively**. The study, "Farming to Capture Carbon & Address Climate Change Through Building Soil Health," finds that **humans must act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 25% by 2030 to limit global average temperature increases to less than 2 degrees centigrade**. Since **58% of organic matter is carbon**, the more organic matter in soil, the greater its potential to store greenhouse gases. Carbon-rich soil can be built up in a matter of a few years by having **managed rotational grazing of cattle (instead of factory farms), annual cover crops (to keep soils healthy), diverse crop rotations and reduced tillage**, which would potentially lower Minnesota crop and livestock net greenhouse gas emissions by 30%. READ THE REPORT at www.landstewardshipproject.org/carbonfarming.

3. Earlier this year, The Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act was introduced in the U.S. Congress, a sweeping attempt to hold the **plastics industry, beverage makers and other petrochemical companies financially responsible for dealing with the waste they create**. While these companies have encouraged recycling, **waste collection is paid for by taxpayers, with the vast majority of used plastic ending up in landfills or incinerated or shipped to other nations**. When China closed its ports to most plastic trash in 2018, the American Chemistry Council proposed **sending U.S.-made chemicals and plastics to African countries such as Kenya**, even though the country passed a stringent law in 2017 against plastic bags and importing plastic waste. The U.S. already **consumes 16 times more plastic than many poor nations, and in 2019 exported more than 1 billion pounds of plastic waste to 96 countries, much of which ends up in rivers and oceans**. Trade negotiations between the U.S. and Kenya are in the early stages, but the nonpartisan Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy warns that corporate lobbyists often convince our government to take up their proposals, which would also **make it harder to regulate plastics in the U.S., since a trade deal would apply to both sides**. BE AN ADVOCATE for the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act.

4. For the past 50 years, a number of laws have been in place to safeguard birds and other wildlife: **the National Environmental Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and the century-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)**. But according to the Audubon Society, in just **three years these bedrock conservation laws have been gutted**, removing the process by which long-term impacts of individual projects and actions are understood. The gutting of our major environmental protections **leaves birds and other wildlife vulnerable, while efforts to address climate change through renewable energy infrastructure may "set the stage for the sacrifice of nature in the name of climate action."** Audubon fully supports renewable energy, but its own science about the future of birds in a climate-changed world (audubon.org/visualizer) also leads the group to fight to REINSTATE COMMONSENSE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS AND CHANGE COURSE ON CARBON POLLUTION. **Trading one tragedy for another is not the answer**, so urge your representative to help protect birds at audubon.org/defendMBTA.