

# Backyard Habitat Certification Program

*Plant roots, create a habitat, transform the world... one yard at a time...*

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&  
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# Backyard Habitat Certification Program



Mission: To provide tools, resources and recognition for gardening sustainably and creating wildlife habitat.



# Things We Can Control

- Making up for loss of habitat (ex: plant native plants)
- Taking steps to reduce climate change (ex: plant trees!)
- Reduce man-made hazards (ex: don't use pesticides)





# How Does the Program Work?



- Sign-up (sliding scale)
- 1 Hour Site Assessment w/staff Technician
- Resource Packet & coupons
- Site Report
- Native Plant Discounts!
- Cool sign
- Certification Visit (volunteers do these!)
- Certification sign, recognition and “benefits”
- Upgrades and renewals



# Certification Levels



**Easiest**

**Hardest**



# Certification Criteria



**1. Remove  
Priority Weeds**



**2. Native Plants**



**3. Pesticides Reduction**



**4. Wildlife  
Stewardship**



**5. Stormwater  
Management**



# 1. Remove Priority Weeds

4,600 acres of natural areas are out competed **every day** by non-native plants that alter native ecology.



From this



To This



## 2. Naturescape with Native Plants



- **Native Plants = Insects!**
  - **90% of insects depend on native plants to survive**
  - **96% of land birds feed on insects**
  - **100% of adult amphibians (and most reptiles) eat insects**
- 
- **Silver = 5% of plantable area**
  - **Gold = 15%**
  - **Platinum = 50%**





# 3. Pesticides Reduction



Education about toxicity of pesticides being used and how to select least toxic products or garden without products.

<http://www.growsmartgrowsafe.org/>





# 4. Stormwater Management

## Menu of Options

*1 for silver, 2 for gold, 3 for platinum:*

- Large canopy tree (30'+)
- Disconnect downspouts
- Raingarden
- Remove grass and/or impervious surfaces
- Ecoroof
- Naturescaping 10% above certification level
- Restore soils
- Water conservation
- Eco-friendly maintenance practices



**Remove impervious surfaces**



**Leave the leaves**



# 5. Wildlife Stewardship

## Menu of Options

*1 for silver, 2 for gold, 3 for platinum:*

- Water feature
- Bird/bat nest boxes
- Beneficial insect nesting habitat
- Snags/nurse logs
- Reduced outdoor lighting
- Reduce bird/window strikes
- Native pollinator meadow
- Cats safe at home



**Nest Boxes**



**Provide Water**



**Cats Safe at Home**





**What's the  
result?**





- Increased awareness of impacts of actions
- Increased knowledge of natural alternatives
- Decreased toxins entering waterways
- Decreased quantities of priority weeds
- Increased landscape permeability & wildlife corridors
- Increased support for broader environmental efforts



# Unique Partnerships

80+ community projects, including:

- Verde: Living Cully - free enrollment & plants
- Centro Cultural: naturescaping of campus, Spanish-language videos, youth justice program becoming Emerald Ash Borer experts
- Community sites: apartment complexes, schools, culturally-specific organizations, community gardens.





# Regional Accomplishments

- 13,000+ properties enrolled
- 3,000+ acres of enrolled properties
- 4,000 properties certified
- 14,000+ volunteer hours
- 80,000 native trees and shrubs planted





# City of Tualatin Accomplishments

- 83 properties enrolled as of March 2025
- On track to meet our new annual goal of 16 site visits
- 23 properties certified!
- 16+ acres enrolled
- 2,178+ native trees and shrubs planted





# City of Tualatin Community Engagement

## 24/25

### Community Sites Enrolled

- Tualatin River Keepers
- Tualatin High School

### Outreach events:

- Presentation to PEO (Philanthropic Education Organization) - women's education chapter in Tualatin
- Arbor Day Planting Event
- Presentation at Tualatin Public Library



Tualatin Heritage Center, 2021



# City of Tualatin Participants

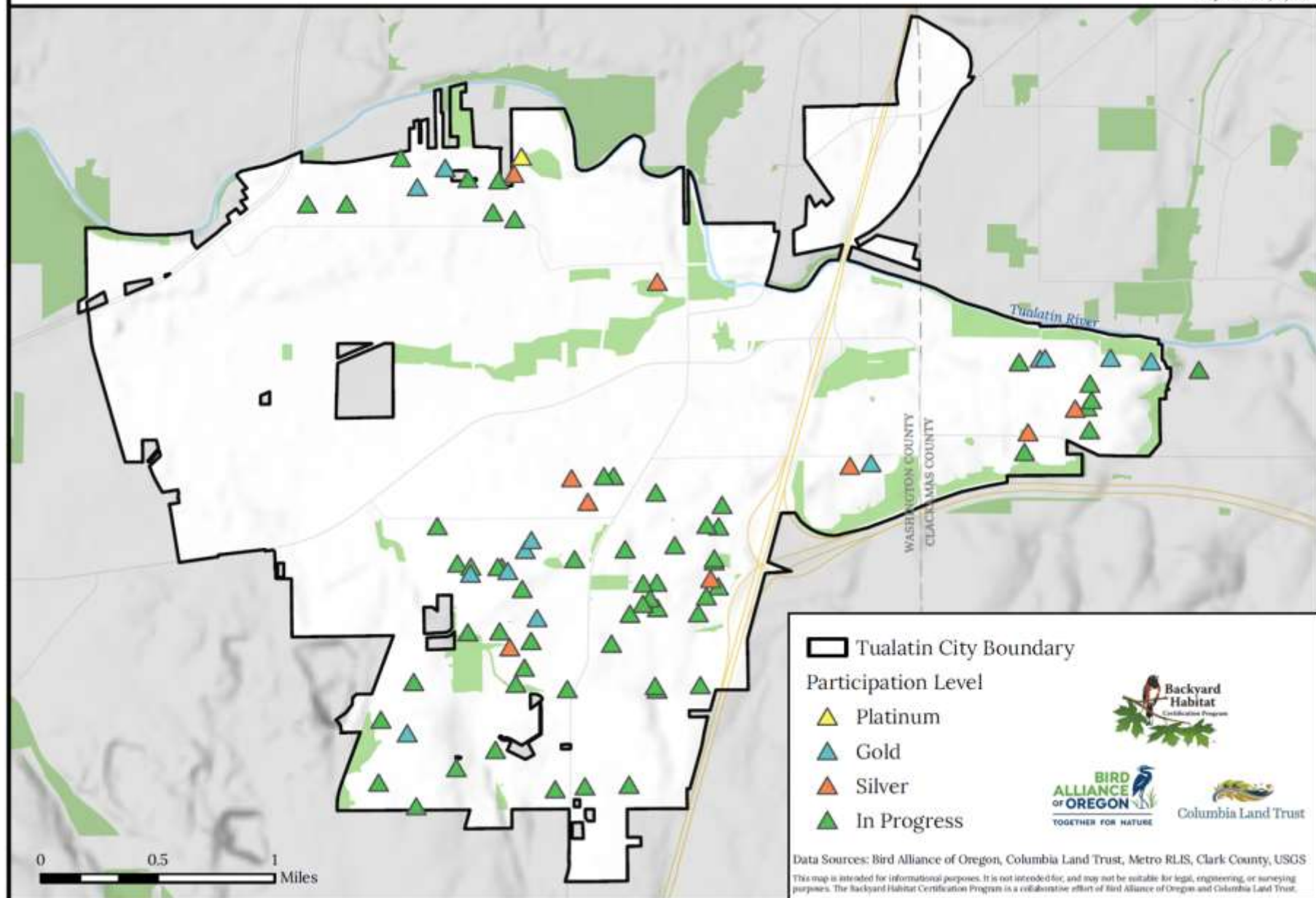




# Backyard Habitat Certification Program Site Inventory

Tualatin - All Years

Map Created: 1/21/2025





# Thanks to our program partners!





# Questions?

*"A year after being Backyard Habitat Certified, we are seeing results. Yesterday it was both Northern Flicker and Downy Woodpeckers . Last week it was Townsend Warbler, Solitary Verio, Towhee, and Varied Thrush" - Dave*



*"This project has been a great learning experience, one that perhaps I have obsessed over. This spring has been particularly fun, watching most of the 200 some plants leaf & bloom.*

*Since you were here last, neighbors were inspired & removed their fence for the view & friendship; probably the greatest compliment." - Gwen*