



## Healthy Habitats at Home

**Watch, learn, & share!** Encourage families to observe their local habitats and connect with nature right in their own yard or safely at a local park. Share information about these programs and apps that can help them identify and learn about local wildlife and become citizen scientists.

**FrogWatchUSA** – Join volunteers across the United States in listening and recording what frogs are in your community. Learn and practice the proper protocol for listening and identifying species and share your data with scientists to help track and better understand frog species. Learn more and find a chapter near you at <https://www.aza.org/frogwatch>.

**iNaturalist** - A joint initiative by the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society, this popular nature app helps you get connected to a community of over 750,000 scientist to identify plants and wildlife around you.

**Seek by iNaturalist** - Seek uses image recognition to assist you in identifying the plants and animals around you. It's easy! Get outside, point camera at the wildlife and habitat around you. The app will help you identify what you're seeing and even give you fun facts about the organism.

**Merlin Bird ID** - Looking to hone in on your bird watching skills? Solve the mystery bird with Merlin Bird ID. This app will ask you to describe what you're seeing in a few questions, narrow it down, and make you a backyard bird expert. You can download regional bird packs and scroll through all the birds that frequent your area.

**eBird** - eBird was created by Cornell Lab of Ornithology to record and track bird watching data. Become a citizen scientist providing researchers with real-time data about the birds in your backyard to support education and conservation.

**Leafsnap** - Are you curious about the flowers and trees you see in your community? Take a picture of the plants you see and Leafsnap will identify them for you so you can learn more.

**Project FeederWatch** - Set up a bird feeder outside your window to help wildlife and add some family fun. Experiment with different types of seeds and nuts to see who visits. Record your observations at home or on this app to help scientists know when birds are appearing across the country during peak migration periods, along with setting trends of populations that may be staying in areas longer than in the past.



**Create a wildlife habitat!** Families can help native wildlife right at home. Share one or more of these ways for families to make their front or backyards a healthy habitat for bees, birds, butterflies, and more.

**Build a Bee condo.** Visit our partner National Wildlife Federation for instructions for a project you can do with items you have around the house:

<https://blog.nwf.org/2019/06/buzzworthy-mason-bee-condos/>

**Add water!** Provide a birdbath in your yard to give birds a place to drink and bathe. Add a pollinator bath for bees and butterflies by placing a shallow bowl with rocks and water in a protected area near native plants.

**Make your garden count!** For tips to make your yard and garden most friendly to native wildlife and pollinators, learn from our partners and then certify your Wildlife Habitat <https://www.nwf.org/garden-for-wildlife/certify> and register it as part of the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge <http://millionpollinatorgardens.org/>

**Choose sustainable products!** Whether families are getting delivery or safely visiting local stores, they can still support healthy habitats by making sustainable choices with the food and other products they buy. Share these apps and logos to look for to help make sustainable choices easier to make.

**Seafood Watch App** - The Monterey Bay Aquarium and their team of scientists are the experts in knowing what seafood is sustainable to buy. This app helps you make sound decisions in selecting seafood that helps support a healthy ocean.

**Sustainable Palm Oil Shopping App** - Created by The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, this app helps you make Orangutan-friendly choices at the grocery store. Scan the barcode and learn if the company has committed to certified sustainable palm oil. If you chose an item that isn't sustainable, the app makes suggestions for selecting alternative products to purchase.

**Look for the FSC-certified logo** - All species of great apes are endangered, and their continued existence depends on the conservation of rainforests. Small actions can have a large impact overtime – using FSC products means you are supporting responsibly managed forests.



**Make your morning brew bird friendly** – Growing coffee can sometimes mean the destruction of habitats critical for migratory birds and other wildlife. Choose coffee with the Bird Friendly seal from Smithsonian to help you protect birds and other wildlife every morning.

**Make your choices even more sustainable and start composting** – Choosing food that was grown or harvested in ways that keep habitats healthy is a great start, but what happens at your house? Composting at home means food scraps or yard waste can be turned into dirt that enriches soil instead of ending up in a landfill. Using compost in your yard and garden can also help you reduced the use of chemical fertilizers, making it safer and healthier for wildlife. Start here to learn more about ways to compost at home and check out resources in your community, <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>. You may have local organizations that will accept items you've gathered for compost at home and provide composted dirt in return.

**Connect with nature!** Now is a perfect time to help families reconnect with each other and the natural world. Time in nature has so many benefits to keeping families happy and healthy. Share the resources below to help families feel comfortable and confident exploring nature and staying safe.

**Get outside!** Social distancing is important, but that doesn't mean your family is stuck inside. Make sure you are getting outside each day by playing in the yard or taking a family walk around your neighborhood. Looking for more? Check the National Wildlife Refuges and National Parks in your area. Some parks and refuges are open during this time with reduced or suspended fees. Just be sure to practice social distancing, as always leave no trace

**Find nature right at home.** Visit AZA partner, the Children & Nature Network for resources to connect to nature safely during the pandemic. Find ways to build nature into your home schooling, bring nature inside, and other resources to help your family connect to nature. <https://www.findingnature.org/>

**COME TOGETHER VIRTUALLY!** While we will have to wait to gather together in-person, we can still come together live through virtual platforms. If your organization will be hosting a special Party for the Planet event live stream, share the details at <https://www.aza.org/livestreams-and-activities>

Join AZA partners as they take their Earth Day celebrations digital:

- Earth Day Network's Earth Day Live - <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-live/>
- Smithsonian's Earth Optimism Summit Digital Event - <https://earthoptimism.si.edu/>