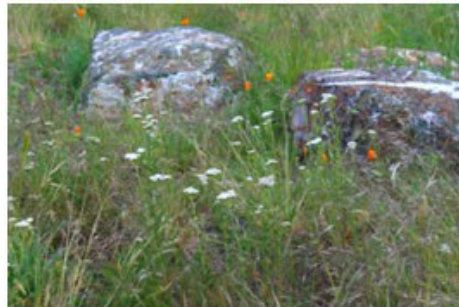


PROGRAM GOALS

Our purpose is to build a community of like-minded residents who make an effort to preserve or re-create the natural spaces that allow our native flora and fauna to thrive. This program aims to achieve that by honoring successful applicants who pursue the following goals:

- To preserve and re-create wildlife habitat throughout Portola Valley on privately owned property.
- To create conditions which allow wildlife to move within and through our town safely in order to access existing or newly created habitat and to travel between our Open Space preserves.
- To encourage the preservation of stream corridors, creeks and wetlands in an open natural condition, recognizing the important role they play in providing connectivity, habitat, water and corridors for wildlife.
- To promote a more judicious use of pesticides, fertilizers and household chemicals to protect local water.
- To educate residents about ways to create a balance between preserving wildlife habitat and fire safety regulations.
- To maintain a natural environment that will increase soil permeability, water retention, ground water resources and reduce the potential of erosion, landslides and flooding.



CREATING A BACKYARD HABITAT

A successful habitat relies on native plants, allows less-used areas to revert to their native state, protects riparian environments, and minimizes fencing. By adhering to a few simple principles you can create an environment that will be accessible and attractive to wildlife:

- Concentrate more intensive gardening and landscaping near the house.
- Landscape with Bay Area native plants, such as those on the native plant list on the PV Town website, while eradicating invasive nonnative species including Scotch and French Broom, Pampas Grass, Vinca, Ivy, Slender False Brome, Star and Italian Thistles, and Bermuda Grass. Local wildlife thrives on native vegetation.
- Consider replacing lawns with sheltering meadows of native grasses that require little water or maintenance and that recycle organic materials to enrich the natural environment.
- Let little used areas remain in their native state, particularly near streambeds where open access and natural riparian vegetation is critical to wildlife.
- In areas at some distance from the house, foster native shrubbery and brush piles that will provide cover for small creatures.
- Leave habitat areas unfenced, or use wildlife-friendly fencing such as open post and rail.
- Work with your neighbors to create adjoining bands of open space.

Award evaluations will consider the extent to which each of these factors is achieved.



PORTOLA VALLEY BACKYARD HABITAT PROGRAM

Portola Valley is home to a wealth of diverse flora and fauna, including some endangered species. In a time of shrinking open space habitat, residents of the town have an opportunity to protect and benefit from this ecosystem and its inhabitants. By keeping our properties in as natural a state as possible and making them accessible to wildlife we help our native flora and fauna thrive. Natural backyard habitats benefit the community as a whole, increasing soil permeability, reducing flood potential, increasing ground water resources, and reducing danger from erosion, landslide and fire. These sanctuaries protect our wildlife and bring untold pleasure to the residents of this beautiful community.

To encourage creation of backyard habitats, the Portola Valley Conservation Committee has created a program that will honor successful applicants with a marker to designate their property as a friend to nature.



PORTOLA VALLEY'S VISION

Two goals included in the Town's General Plan are *“to preserve and enhance the natural features and open space of the planning area because they are unusual and valuable assets for the planning area, the Peninsula and the entire Bay Area,”* and *“to conserve the rural quality of Portola Valley and maintain the town as an attractive, tranquil, family-oriented residential community for all generations compatible with the many physical constraints and natural features of the area...”*

Section 4204 of the General Plan's Conservation Element recognizes the importance of *“individual efforts for the conservation of natural resources on private sites”* and adds that *“private groups can, through the dissemination of conservation information, educate those unaware of environmental problem areas and, more importantly, values to be conserved.”* By encouraging the creation of backyard habitats, we can further these environmental goals.

HOW TO WIN AN AWARD

Application forms for this award are available on the Conservation Committee page linked from the Town's website: www.portolavalley.net.

Completed forms should be submitted to the Conservation Committee, c/o Town of Portola Valley, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028, or dropped off at Town Hall during business hours.

The Conservation Committee will review the application, with particular emphasis on the criteria listed in *“Creating a Backyard Habitat.”* If you wish, a team of Conservation Committee members will be happy to visit your property and help brainstorm ways in which you can create an optimal habitat.



Keeping Portola Valley Natural



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