

Arkansas Wild Spaces

Certification Standards 12-6-2021

Criteria (based on <i>Nature's Best Hope</i>)	Silver	Gold	Platinum
1. Shrink your lawn (non-native turf grass that is mowed).	Shrink your lawn area to no more than 75% of the total landscape area.	Shrink your lawn area to no more than 50% of the total landscape area.	Shrink your lawn area to no more than 10% of the total landscape area.
2. Remove non-native, invasive species.	Remove non-native, invasive species from at least 25% of the total landscape area.	Remove non-native, invasive species from at least 50% of the total landscape area.	Remove non-native, invasive species from 100% of the total landscape area.
3. Restrict biomass (the "green stuff") of non-native, non-invasive species.	Limit the amount of non-native, non-invasive species to no more than 75% of the biomass.	Limit the amount of non-native, non-invasive species to no more than 50% of the biomass.	Limit the amount of non-native, non-invasive species to no more than 30% of the biomass.
4. Plant both keystone native genera (the 5% of plants that support 73% of Lepidoptera) and also species that support rarer and/or more specialized Lepidoptera species.	Restore all space created above with native species.	Restore all space created above with native species.	Restore all space created above with native species.
5. Include species that provide benefits during all four seasons and at as many canopy levels as appropriate.	Plant for three-season coverage, and at least two canopy levels.	Plant for four-season coverage, and at least two canopy levels.	Plant for four-season coverage, and at all appropriate canopy levels.
6. Plant for native bees, especially plants that specialist bees prefer.	Plant at least three species of flowering plants—one each for spring, summer, and fall—visited by native bees and other pollinators.	Plant at least six species of flowering plants—two each for spring, summer, and fall—visited by native bees and other pollinators.	Plant at least nine species of flowering plants—three each for spring, summer, and fall—visited by native bees and other pollinators.
7. Make your yard more conservation-friendly.	Do two of the following: 1. Pull shades down at night and either keep outside lights off, use motion detectors, or switch to yellow lights. 2. Set your mower height at no less than	Do five of the activities.	Do eight of the activities, if applicable.

	<p>3".</p> <p>3. Install a water feature (e.g., fountain, bird bath, drip column, bubbler, etc.) for birds and other wildlife.</p> <p>4. Install and use rain barrels.</p> <p>5. Install nest boxes for cavity-nesting birds.</p> <p>6. Leave snags (dead standing trees) for wildlife to use for food and shelter.</p> <p>7. Create a brush pile for nesting birds and bees.</p> <p>8. Don't let a pet cat loose in the yard.</p> <p>9. Install a bat house.</p> <p>10. Install window protection to prevent bird collisions.</p>		
8. Improve your environment for butterflies and moths to reproduce.	Create a caterpillar pupation site under one tree.	Create caterpillar pupation sites under all your trees.	Fulfill the gold requirements and do not dispose of leaf litter and grass clippings but instead compost or use on plant beds.
9. Improve your environment for native bees.	<p>Do two of the following:</p> <p>1. Provide bare ground habitat for bees.</p> <p>2. Leave some dead pithy stems around in winter for bees that nest in them.</p> <p>3. Leave some dead twigs and branches on the ground or on trees for bees that nest in dead wood.</p> <p>4. Install one or more bee hotels.</p> <p>5. Plant native grasses that provide nesting materials for bees.</p>	Do three of the actions listed for the silver level.	Do four of the actions listed for the silver level.

10. Do not use herbicides, pesticides, or chemical fertilizers, with three exceptions: 1) brushing herbicides onto invasive stumps and leaves, 2) using dunkers to kill mosquitoes, and 3) using a pesticide with an insect growth regulator for fire ants.	1. Do not use herbicides, pesticides, or chemical fertilizers. 2. Do not buy plants treated with systemic pesticides.	Fulfill the silver requirement, and if applicable call the local government and ask them not to spray your property with pesticides.	Fulfill the gold requirement, and compost your organic material.
11. Educate yourself and your community, and volunteer.	Join an approved group such as Audubon, Wild Ones, or the Arkansas Native Plant Society, or become a Central Arkansas Master Naturalist.	Fulfill the silver requirements and do two of the following: 1. Display your Arkansas Wild Spaces sign. 2. Inspire a neighbor or friend who has few natives to plant natives deliberately. 3. Advocate planting natives and removing invasives with your POA, neighborhood association, or local government.	Fulfill the gold requirements and do one of the following: 1. Create one or more wildlife corridors in your neighborhood. 2. Volunteer at least four times a year with a nature-oriented group (e.g., Audubon, Central Arkansas Master Naturalists, Adopt-a-Highway)
12. Plan for the next level	Develop plan to reach Gold Certification (recommended)	Develop plan to reach Platinum Certification (recommended)	

For standards 1-11, assign 1 point for each standard met at the silver level, 2 points for each standard met at the gold level, and 3 points for each standard met at the platinum level. To achieve certification at any level, at least 1 point must be earned for each standard. Silver certification requires a total of 11 points; gold certification requires 17-22 points; platinum certification requires at least 23 points.