



Conservation Habits = Healthy Habitats Overview

Each of us can be good stewards of our natural resources at our home and in our communities. By learning about our natural resources we can understand how to create and maintain healthy habitats. Each of us can make a difference by starting in our own backyard, our school or in our community.

What is a habitat?

A habitat is the place where something lives because it is adapted to find food, water, shelter, and space. It could be a plant, animal or other small organism. People, plants and animals all need a place to live and food to eat.

Did you know? Wherever you are you are in a habitat.

Kinds of Habitats

There are habitats all across North America. You can find them in forests, grasslands, deserts, wetlands, the arctic tundra as well as right outside your backdoor. Your playground at school and even the grassy area along the street are all habitats for animals such as birds, squirrels, worms and insects



What is conservation?

Conservation is **wise use** of our natural resources. How can you expand or add habits to develop healthy habitats? A habit is an action or pattern of behavior that is repeated so often that it becomes typical of somebody, although he or she may be unaware of it.

Some habits are not good, like throwing litter out our car windows. By working to improve our environment you can develop good habits that will last your entire life and also inspire others around you.

TIP: Develop conservation habits so that it becomes second nature and increase healthy habitats.

Why do we care?

People, plants and animals need each other AND they all need clean water, air and soil. Plants need water and soil. Plants get minerals and other things they need to grow from soil like we get it from the food we eat. Plants need creatures like bees and beetles. Bees and beetles, birds and other creatures pollinate plants so that they can make seeds.

Most of the flowering plants we need and enjoy are pollinated by insects. When these pollinating insects start shrinking in number many plants either produce less seed or no seed at all. When pollinating animals start disappearing –plants start disappearing. We



need to protect pollinating insects. Pollinators aren't just annoying insects, they are an important part of the web of life that we depend on for our very survival.

Why do you need those flowering plants? A lot of fruits and vegetables come from flowering plants. Even a glass of milk or hamburger depended on pollinators if they came from cattle raised on alfalfa. Many medicines come from flowering plants.

Did you know? Over 80% of the world's flowering plants wouldn't survive if it weren't for pollinators.

What can you do?

There are many ways you can develop a healthy habitat area.

- Find an area at your home to plant trees or native plants. Even if you don't have to have a lot of space, you can plant at least a few native plants or trees.
- Design an outdoor classroom at your school. As you design a habitat think about food, water, shelter, and space for the creatures that will live or visit the area.
- Volunteer in your community to pick up trash or clean a habitat area.
- Participate in slough clean up
- Recycle
- Prevent the spread of invasive species
 - learn which plants are invasive in the Fairbanks area
 - don't plant a problem
 - pull and bagged invasive species