

Maryland's Wild Acres



HABITAT - the arrangement of food, water, cover, and space - IS THE KEY.

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Printer-Friendly Version

Native Plant Profile.....Carpet Juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*)



Common Names: carpet juniper, creeping juniper, creeping cedar, creeping savin

Family: Cupressaceae

General Description: Called "carpet juniper", this evergreen plant provides a thick ground cover all year long. This juniper is usually blue in the summer, but may turn blue green in the spring and almost purple in the winter. However, there are many varieties of carpet junipers to choose from. Junipers are most useful in full sun, especially where dryness is a problem. Small cuttings require spacing of about one foot; larger mature plants require spacing of about two or four feet. Total coverage for small cuttings is about two to three years.

Foliage: two kinds of needles: awl-shaped and scale-like. Needles are green to blue-green in the summer months. Needles turn somewhat purple in the cold months. Branches form large mats.

Growth: medium growth rate. 1-2 feet tall and 4-8 feet wide.

Bark: reddish brown and peeling. Bark is difficult to see due to overlapping branches.

Fruit: 2 to 3- seeded berry-like cone

Soil: Mostly sand to mostly clay; gravelly slopes; pH 4.5 to 8.5

Sun: dappled to full sun. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water.

Importance to Wildlife: Many wildlife species including deer, small mammals, and birds feed on juniper and utilize its groundcover habitat. Makes a good nesting site and produces blue berries.

Landscaping Notes:

- This shrub is especially good for placing close to house foundations
- Carpet Juniper is also used as groundcover and is also good for general garden use and mass plantings.

Did You Know?

- This low, mat-forming evergreen is a convenient source of cuttings at Christmas.
- Juniper is extremely adaptable and hardy.



[Marylanders Plant Trees](#)

Maryland Wildlife: Beaver (Castor Canadensis)



Size: Head and body 25-30 inches, tail 9-10 inches

Weight: 30-60 pounds

General description: This beaver is the largest rodent in North America and the third largest rodent in the world. The beaver is semi-aquatic, having a large flat paddle-shaped tail and large, webbed hind feet. The un-webbed front paws are smaller, with claws. The eyes are covered by a membrane which allows the beaver to see underwater. The nostrils and ears are sealed while submerged. A thick layer of fat under its skin insulates the beaver from its cold water environment. The beaver's fur consists of long, coarse outer hairs and short, fine inner hairs and is coated with an oily substance which is used to waterproof the fur. The fur has a range of colors but usually is dark brown.

Reproduction: Beavers are monogamous and mate for life. If their mate dies they will usually find another. Males do not fight over females, but when a family unit has been established both sexes tend to be very territorial. Mating takes place in January and February.

Lifespan: Lives 11 years in the wild, 19 in captivity

Food Habits: Preferred food is aspen, poplar, birch, maple, willow, and alder; feeds on bark and small twigs; stores branches and small sections of logs underwater near lodge.

Habitat: Live in streams, rivers, ponds, and shorelines

Behavior: Beavers are usually mainly nocturnal, occasionally seen by day. Some behavior is instinctive, such as patching a dam at the sound of running water. At the age of 2 a beaver is driven out or leave the parental home to find it own territory- traveling up to 10 miles. Beavers are known for their dam-building- whose purpose is to provide water around their loges that is deep enough that it does not freeze in winter. The dams also flood areas of surrounding forest, giving the beaver safe access their food supply (leaves, buds, and inner bark of growing trees).

Vocalizations: Beaver do vocalize. The kits (young beaver) are most vocal with their cries perceptible even thru the walls of the lodge.

Similar Species: River otter, Muskrat, Nutria



Did you know?

- Beavers can spend 10-15 minutes underwater per breath.
 - Beavers are the largest rodent in North America
 - Beavers were once extirpated from Maryland. Today they have re-populated much of Maryland and have become a nuisance species in some areas.
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Homemade Bird Bath

Add a bird bath to your backyard!

You'll soon be amazed at the number of winged friends that will be visiting your home.

Materials:

- Clay pot (bird bath base)
- Clay saucer (bird bath)
- Paint and paint brush
- Superglue or Liquid Nails Adhesive (or similar product)

Steps:

1. Paint the surfaces of the saucer and the pot in any design or style desired. Make it fancy and colorful or keep it simple. Allow the paints to dry completely for several hours.
2. Invert the clay pot and stack on a sturdy, flat surface to form a cone shape. This builds the base of the bath. Top with a clay saucer. These shallow saucers are ideal for bird baths.
3. Squeeze the adhesive (superglue, liquid nails, or other appropriate adhesive) out onto the bottom of the clay pot. Place the pot and the saucer together with the bottom of the pot on the outside bottom of the saucer. Hold them together for several minutes to ensure a strong bond. Allow the glue to set for 24 hours.

Notes: You should place your bird bath in an open area of your lawn or garden. Predators such as cats like to hide in shrubs and foliage waiting for an opportunity to catch birds unaware. Birds prefer to have a clear view of the surrounding area so that they can keep an eye out for danger.





Creating a Wild Backyard- while keeping an attractive landscape!

In a backyard of less than one acre, most people prefer to have attractive landscaping, rather than farm crops! However, it is possible to include some of the plants recommended for food plots that are attractive as well as provide food for wildlife.

Sunflowers are the most popular type of food for gold finches, house finches, cardinals, blue jays, titmice, chickadees, and many other birds. The best type of sunflower to plant is the black-oil or "Peredovik" sunflower, which grows to be about 3 feet tall. Other attractive flowers that produce seeds include black-eyed susans, daisies, marigolds, and four-o'clocks.



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 - Beaver Collage, I-Stock images, beaver chew, juvenile beaver, beaver dam
 - Adult Beaver, I-Stock image
 - Photograph of backyard sunflowers, I-Stock image
 - Photograph of America Gold Finch on sunflower, I-Stock image
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We want to hear from you!

Letters, e-mail, photos, drawings. Let us know how successful you are as you create wildlife habitat on your property.

Write to Me!

Patricia Allen
Wild Acres Program
Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Service
580 Taylor Ave., E-1
Annapolis MD 21401
410-260-8537
pallen@dnr.state.md.us

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