



# Winter Wildlife Haven

Winter is a tough season for wild animals. Deep snow and freezing temperatures make finding food and shelter a daily struggle. While wildlife has adapted to the changes brought on by the season, survival is still a challenge. But you can help just by putting off your usual fall yard work and creating a winter wildlife haven!

**The Challenge:** Complete one or all of the following tasks to make your yard into a place for wild animals to thrive in the winter.



## Let it Grow!

Leave your grass unmowed for winter! Long grass can shelter overwintering insects. Come spring, the bugs will be protein-rich food for baby birds!



## Leafy Living

When raking up your leaves, leave a few piles! Piles of leaf litter can provide a place for animals such as frogs to hibernate.



## The Need for Seed

Allowing plants to go to seed can feed hungry birds. Seed heads can also house overwintering insects.

If you have a year-round bird feeder, keep it well-stocked, as birds rely on this food source.



## Let it Bee

Old plant stems make homes for a variety of insects, including bees. The dead stalks are also good materials for birds building nests in spring.



## Rock On

Rock piles, especially when positioned near water, can provide habitat for snakes, frogs and other reptiles and amphibians.



## Winter Tip!

During winter it's common for animals to take shelter in the bumper of your car, especially if the engine is still warm — that's why it's important to "think and thump" before you get in the car!



### Brush Up

Brush piles can give cover to animals such as chipmunks, marmots and hares, as well as protect insects. Check out [Canadian Wildlife Federation](#) for blueprints and tips.



### Break the Ice

Keeping a hole open in your pond can provide birds and mammals with a source of drinking water. Instead of breaking the ice, place a container of hot water on the surface to melt it through.

Remember to also remove any fallen leaves from your pond; decaying leaves can harm fish.



### Helpful Housing

During colder months many birds will gratefully take advantage of the shelter offered by a birdhouse. Birdhouses should be cleaned regularly and placed on a pole or up a tree at least three feet off the ground.



### Want to build a birdhouse?

Birdhouses should be made of untreated wood, such as pine or cedar, which is durable and porous – allowing heat to escape in the summer and include a hinged or sliding roof to clean out the house each winter after nesting season has finished!

