

Certifying Your Wildscaping Efforts

The Oklahoma Wildlife Diversity Program coordinates a certification program to recognize Oklahomans who have made a commitment to create and maintain habitat for wildlife. Approved properties are issued an official number that is entered into the Oklahoma Wildscapes Registry maintained by the program. The property owner receives an official number on a frame-able certificate and a sign that can be placed in the habitat to let everyone know that the area is part of a statewide network of Oklahoma Wildscapes.

The process of applying for Wildscape certification is simple. First, purchase the OK Wildlife Department's book, *Landscaping For Wildlife*. (Order form enclosed.)

Information about the book can be viewed at www.wildlifedepartment.com/landscape.htm. Send in the voucher at the back of the book to the Oklahoma Wildlife Diversity Program and an application form will be returned to you. When you are ready, complete and return the application. You do not have to achieve a mature habitat before seeking certification.

Your application is reviewed by program biologists to determine that your habitat plan is meeting the needs of the wildlife you wish to attract. Following the certification guidelines will ensure a positive evaluation, upon which you will receive a numbered certificate and sign. Certified Oklahoma Wildscapes are recognized in *The Wild Side*, the newsletter of the Oklahoma Wildlife Diversity Program.

Certified Oklahoma Wildscapes must provide habitat, which contains elements of food, water, and shelter or cover. Applicants can strive for one of two different types of certification based upon the percentage of property dedicated to wildlife habitat:

- *Wildlife Garden Certification* (less than 50% of your property), or
- *Wildlife Habitat Certification* (more than 50% of your property).

People just beginning their wildscaping efforts are encouraged to apply for Wildlife Garden Certification, because initial efforts are valuable to many types of wildlife and deserve recognition. Later on, if you decide to increase the area dedicated to wildlife on your property, you can apply for Wildlife Habitat Certification.

To receive your free Oklahoma Wildscapes application form, photocopy and fill out the voucher located in the back of the book (one per household), then send it to:

Oklahoma Wildlife Diversity Program
Wildscapes Application

P.O. Box 53465
Oklahoma City, OK 73152

If you have additional questions, call 405/424-0099. Good luck and thanks for providing a home for wildlife!