

Bird Friendly Native Plant of the Month

SEPTEMBER 2015

NC NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

REEDY CREEK NATURE PRESERVE



Cedar Waxwing



Cedar Waxwings

**Bird
Friendly**
NATIVE PLANTS

Photos by Will Stuart

Juniperus virginiana Eastern Red Cedar

Food and Shelter

Eastern Red Cedar is a common sight in the Piedmont along farm fence lines. But did you realize it is a Mall of America for birds, providing winter food for a variety of birds and an excellent source of shelter, too.

According to William Cullina, "I would rate the tree form of *Juniper* as among the 10 essential plants to include in a bird-friendly landscape."

The nutritious wax covered cones, often called juniper berries, are a favorite winter food of many birds including cedar wax wings. In addition purple finch, bluebird, blue jay, blue grosbeak, indigo bunting, painted bunting, northern cardinal, American goldfinch, robin, mockingbird, catbird, wood thrush brown thrasher, hermit

thrush and American crow are frequent visitors to Eastern Red Cedar.

Eastern Red Cedar is also a larval plant for rusty orange, great purple, olive, brown and gray cedar hairstreak butterfly.

And the canopy provides nesting for hummingbirds, junco, myrtle warblers, mourning doves and small mammals including squirrels and opossums.

Growth Habit

Eastern Red Cedar is an evergreen that can reach 50 feet tall. The shredding bark and fluted trunk is distinctive and can offer unusual views in the landscape.

Often used in screening borders, hedges, windbreaks, Eastern Red Cedar is commonly available in nurseries. 'Burkii' is a columnar cultivar with blue foliage. 'Grey Owl' is more compact growing 3 feet tall and 6 feet wide and has gray foliage.

Be careful to water well in the first year, as conifers can die quickly when under drought stress. Eastern

Red Cedar prefers full sun and good air circulation to avoid fungus. Eastern Red Cedar is also known to be tolerant of urban pollution.

Bird Friendly Native Plant of the Month is a joint effort of the NC

Native Plant Society and Audubon North Carolina

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