

HABITAT VS CONVENTIONAL LANDSCAPE

<https://habitat-landscapes.com/habitat-vs-conventional-landscapes>

PLANTING

In conventional landscapes, the focus is typically on the greenery where in a habitat landscape, the focus is on attracting and feeding small wildlife like **song birds**, colorful **butterflies**, **hummingbirds** and ladybugs. When you survey the plants in both landscapes, conventional plantings features green trees and shrubs where a habitat landscape will feature colorful **native plants** and trees that feed small wildlife and require less water. To achieve year round color in a conventional landscape you have to change out the plantings twice a year, where native plants will provide year round color and do not need this costly replacement.



HABITAT

- Focus: Using native plants, trees and water features to attract and feed wildlife
- Color: Native flowers and berries with year-round color and interest

CONVENTIONAL

- Devoid of wildlife
- Focus: Planting for looks without taking into account what wildlife needs
- Color: Using annuals and exotics and replacing them often

PEST & WEED CONTROL

In conventional landscaping, weed and pest control is typically provided through the use of toxic chemicals. A habitat landscape controls pests with natural predators such as lady bugs, beneficial nematodes and organic sprays. Weeds are controlled with a 3-4 layer of mulch and minimal weeding. Since one is able to avoid the harmful use of chemicals, not only is it better for the environment but it also represents considerable cost savings.



HABITAT

- Pests controlled with natural predators and/or organic sprays
- 3-4" layer of mulch applied yearly to control weeds
- Cost savings due to less labor and chemical expense

CONVENTIONAL

- Pests controlled with toxic pesticides
- Weeds controlled with toxic herbicides
- Higher costs dues to chemicals and labor

LAWN MAINTENANCE

Habitat landscapes save time, effort and money. Conventional lawns require weekly mowing during the growing season. Equipment, manpower and gas get expensive. Lawnmowers are not required to have catalytic converters and are toxic to the air, not to mention the noise pollution they produce. A habitat lawn uses native grasses that don't require mowing, or they have minimal lawn space. At most, a habitat lawn is mowed four times a year.



HABITAT

- Minimal lawn
- Use native grasses and flowers
- Eliminate or reduce mowing

CONVENTIONAL

- Weekly mowing
- Creates pollution
- Cuts down the flowers, berries and seeds that wildlife need to survive

PLANT MAINTENANCE

Plant maintenance in conventional landscapes usually require pruning to keep them looking good, whereas the **native perennials** found in habitat landscapes only require pruning twice a year to keep them healthy and looking great.

Soil condition in habitat landscapes is of a superior quality. You will find loose soil that absorbs water and high soil biodiversity. Healthy soil is full of microorganisms that feed plants and small animals. Alternatively, in conventional landscaping, you'll find water runoff from over-compacted soil and low soil biodiversity. Chemical fertilizers are typically used in conventional landscaping which are expensive as well as detrimental to soil microorganisms. Plants are much healthier when they are fed by the diversity of soil microorganisms that are so readily available in habitat landscapes. Moisture and plant nutrition is maintained by working in soil amendments at planting time, and by mulching 1 or 2 times a year - no chemicals are required!



HABITAT

- Twice a year pruning of perennials
- Mulching and hand weeding
- Using organic fertilizers and compost to improve soil and plant health

CONVENTIONAL

- Monthly pruning
- Using toxic herbicides to keep weeds out of beds
- Using salt-based toxic fertilizers to keep stressed plants blooming

WATER REQUIREMENTS

Water requirements are higher for conventional landscapes - usually twice a week watering is done by inefficient sprinklers to irrigate non-native thirsty plants. Unfortunately, when you water with conventional sprinklers, you lose most of the water to evaporation. Water requirements for native plants are lower, and since most habitat landscapes utilize drip irrigation which waters plants deeply and more efficiently, habitat landscapes can save up to 75% of water.

Habitat landscapes also utilize hardscape water features as part of the design. These provide water for wildlife through peaceful ponds, beautiful fountains or ornamental bird baths where you can enjoy beautiful songbirds bathing and thirsty creatures drinking cool water.



HABITAT

- Lower water requirements because plants are native
- Utilize drip irrigation
- Save up to 75% on water usage
- Provide clean water for wildlife

CONVENTIONAL

- High water requirements because plants are non-native and soil is compacted
- Twice weekly watering with sprinklers
- High water evaporation

GARDEN USAGE

By bringing Nature closer to you, habitat landscapes offer endless opportunities of experiencing wonder and joy. People have the opportunity to come together as friends, family, or as a team to build, maintain or simply enjoy the colorful plants and cute wildlife. Meetings and lunches, walks and exercising can take place outside in the fresh air surrounded by song birds and butterflies. They are also an interesting and fun place to host parties and corporate events, and for the garden to be rented as a venue for events providing bonus income - imagine a Monarch butterfly themed wedding! Habitat landscapes create the opportunity for you to give back to your community by spreading the word on gardening for wildlife and conservation. You can create a garden club where people can come together to share. The list of things you can do in a habitat garden is endless!

But most of all, habitat landscapes attract and feed **birds, bees, butterflies, hummingbirds** and other small wildlife which are needed to support our chain of life - and we are grateful that thru them we get to experience the wonder of Nature. Because these gardens attract wildlife, they can be registered and certified as **Monarch Waystations, National Wildlife Federation Habitats** and many other fun and informative certifications.



HABITAT

- Attracting and feeding birds, hummingbirds and butterflies
- Team building, wonder, creativity
- Meetings and lunches outdoors
- Walking and exercising
- Corporate events, site rental
- Training: gardening, conservation
- Garden club

CONVENTIONAL

- Gardens are under-utilized

CHOOSE HABITAT

