



It has been 51 years since Earth Day was established in 1970. Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement and this year's focus is **Restore our Earth!** While EarthDay.org is organizing three days of climate action, consider some steps that you can take in your yard to help restore our Earth!

The goal of ecological restoration is for humans to assist in the recovery of disturbed ecosystems that have been damaged, disturbed or degraded by environmental changes. These environmental changes include logging, damming rivers, construction, hurricanes, floods, and fires. Some occur naturally and others occur as the result of human interaction. Restoration activities may be designed to replicate a pre-disturbance ecosystem or to create a new ecosystem where one had not previously occurred.

So what can you do?

There are many projects that you can complete in your own yard to contribute to restoring our Earth by prioritizing native plants and animals.

How you manage your yard and the habitat that you establish or restore will benefit the native wildlife, as well as the human community.

Habitat Remediation

Replant a native plant species to improve an ecosystem's functions, such as pollination or erosion control.

Replant native vegetation on sites where it has deteriorated or been destroyed. Before you replace a tree on your property, research some native choices for that location. Eastern white pine thrive in sunny moist sites and shagbark hickory prefer shady, dry sites.

Replace an area of your grassy lawn with a flower garden. This will add beauty and reduce mowing!

If you have a creek on your property, plant native seedlings near the bank, such as river birch or black willow, to provide erosion control and add riparian cover.



Habitat Enhancement

Create or enhance a habitat for some desired native animal species.



Set up nesting boxes for blue birds. Bluebirds require a cavity for nesting and their population has been reduced by the loss of nesting sites and from competition with non-native birds such as house sparrows



Plant native plants to provide nectar, fruits and seeds for insects, birds and mammals. By choosing the right plants, you can create a food chain!



Add dense shrubs to provide shelter for wildlife. Shrubs like winterberry will provide food and shelter for native birds through the winter or choose arrow-wood viburnum for its creamy white flowers that bloom in the late spring.



For more information on wildlife home plans like bluebird boxes or purchasing native trees visit
www.pgc.pa.gov/InformationResources/GetInvolved/HowardNursery/Pages/default.aspx

