

# Urban Wildlife Vocabulary List

**Accessible** - easy to get to

**Algae** - simple green water plant which often covers rocks, sticks and other plants with a slimy coating or strands

**Altricial** - animals born with their eyes closed, weak, naked, and helpless

**Annual** - a plant that lives only one year

**Aquatic** - living in water

**Arboreal** - living in trees

**Basal rosette** - a circular ground level ring of leaves on a plant

**Brood** - group of young hatched at the same time, or the act of sitting on eggs in order to hatch them

**Cavity nester** - animal that uses or builds a nest in a hollow area of a tree or earthen bank

**Chrysalis** - life stage between caterpillar and butterfly when pupae is in a rigid cocoon

**Clutch** - a group of eggs produced or incubated at one time

**Cold-blooded** - animal whose body temperature is the same as, or nearly the same as, the animal's surroundings

**Crustacean** - animal related to shrimp that have a hard, jointed outer shell covering a soft body

**Diurnal** - active during the daytime

**Diversity** - wide variety of plants and/or animals occurring in one place

**Edge effect** - occurs at the edge of two or more different types of habitat. This area has the greatest diversity of plants and animals. It contains species not only from the bordering habitats but also organisms that are unique to the edge area.

**Evergreen** - a plant that keeps its leaves all year long

**Forbs** - low growing wide leafed plants

**Forage** - search for food

**Generalist** - organisms that can use a wide variety of food, water sources and living spaces, many successful introduced species are generalists

**Gestation** - length of pregnancy, time it takes for eggs to hatch

**Graminivore** - seed or grain eating animal

**Habitat** - place where an animal or plant naturally lives or grows

**Heliotrope** - any plant that actively turns toward the sun, tracking it over the course of the day

**Insectivore** - insect eating animal

**Layering** - masses of vegetation consisting of distinctly different levels, i.e. grasses, shrubs and trees

**Mast** - the fruit of certain trees, hard mast consists of acorns and other nuts

**Migratory** - seasonal movement sometimes covering great distances

**Nectar** - sugary fluid produced by a plant to attract pollinators

**Nocturnal** - active at night

**Node** - thickened part of a plant stem, normally where a leaf is attached

**Omnivore** - animal that eats both plants and other animals

**Perennial** - a plant that lives more than 2 years

**Pollinator** - an animal that carries pollen from one flower to another

**Precocial** - animals that are born with their eyes open, covered with down or fur, active, and able to seek their own food

**Predator** - organism that feeds on other animals

**Root Division** - cutting one plant's roots into a number of pieces, each of which will grow into another plant

**Salmonella** - a bacteria that causes food poisoning

**Scutes** - large bony plates

**Sexual maturity** - the age at which an organism can begin to produce offspring

**Shrubs** - medium sized long lived bushes

**Specialist** - organisms that have very specific requirements for food, water sources or living spaces. They often utilize a very specialized food source or living space and are very successful as long as the food or space is available. Endangered species are often specialists that have lost their unique food or homes

**Taproot** - main root of plant, generally grows straight down

**Territoriality** - defense of an area against other animals of the same or different species

**Torpor** - state of suspended activity or dormancy during bad weather

**Travel Corridor** - a pathway used by animals to travel back and forth from food to water to shelter

**Upland Hardwood Forests** - Forest of oak, pecan and other nut producing trees found away from rivers and streams

**Vertebrate** - animals with backbones

**Waterfowl** - a water bird such as a duck or goose

**Weaned** - when a young animal starts feeding on something other than its mothers milk

**Xeriscape** - landscaping with plants adapted to grow under dry conditions

**Xerophyte** - plant that can grow under dry conditions

