



## Stokes Select® Spring To-Do Tips by Don & Lillian Stokes

Spring is here and it's the perfect time to enjoy the great outdoors! Here are a few to-do's to welcome your backyard friends:

- \* Make sure all your bird houses are cleaned out.
- \* Put up new bird houses because hole-nesting birds like bluebirds, chickadees, titmice, wrens and tree swallows are actively choosing houses now. Plus there will be houses available for later arrivals.
- \* Try offering new foods, such as mealworms, oranges for orioles, other fruit and jelly.

\* Plant shrubs that provide nesting structure for birds, such as lilacs, alders, dogwood shrubs, evergreens and willows. Plant them in groups.

\* Get up your hummingbird feeders now (at the latest by Mother's Day if you live in the most northern sections of the country). Make sure to clean hummingbird feeders every two to three days in hot weather.

\* Plant red tubular flowers to attract hummingbirds, such as red salvia, red impatiens, trumpet honeysuckle vines, red bee balm and red fuchsia.

\* Plant composite-type perennials and annuals such as Purple Coneflower and Rudbeckia; the seed heads will attract finches and sparrows. Butterflies will come to Purple Coneflower when it's in bloom.

\* Make sure you have several bird baths filled with fresh, clean water all summer.

\* Clean your bird feeder regularly with a mild bleach solution, then rinse well. Keep them filled with sunflower seeds and other quality mixes.

\* Put a bench or Adirondack chair in your backyard where you can sit with binoculars and enjoy the show. That could be your summer vacation!

