

## Strategy for Attracting Birds – Al Kyte

I have used specific plants (e.g., Toyon), water features, bird houses, and supplemental food to attract birds to our yard. I now believe that the overall design of the plantings may be the most important element. A design that provides a wide variety of nesting sites, cover, and feeding options has the potential for bringing in the most species. Such a design might include everything from tall trees to small plants and from dense shrubbery to open ground. To provide this, I have decided to work to develop a backyard concept of an oak/pine woodland with some areas of open space.

Oaks and pines each attract species that might not otherwise come, dense shrubbery offers protection from predators and weather and draws reclusive birds, such as spotted towhee and hermit thrush. The berries from certain shrubs attract additional birds, including cedar waxwings and robins. Low flowering plants bring hummingbirds (or bees or butterflies) as well as ground-feeding birds. Providing some open ground is critical to quail, doves and bluebirds. Including riparian and chaparral areas adds to the potential.