

A photograph of a backyard habitat. In the foreground, there are tall, brownish grasses and a wooden utility pole with a small wooden box. To the right, there are yellow flowers. In the background, there are green trees, utility poles, and a building with a yellow roof under a cloudy sky.

# Backyard Habitats

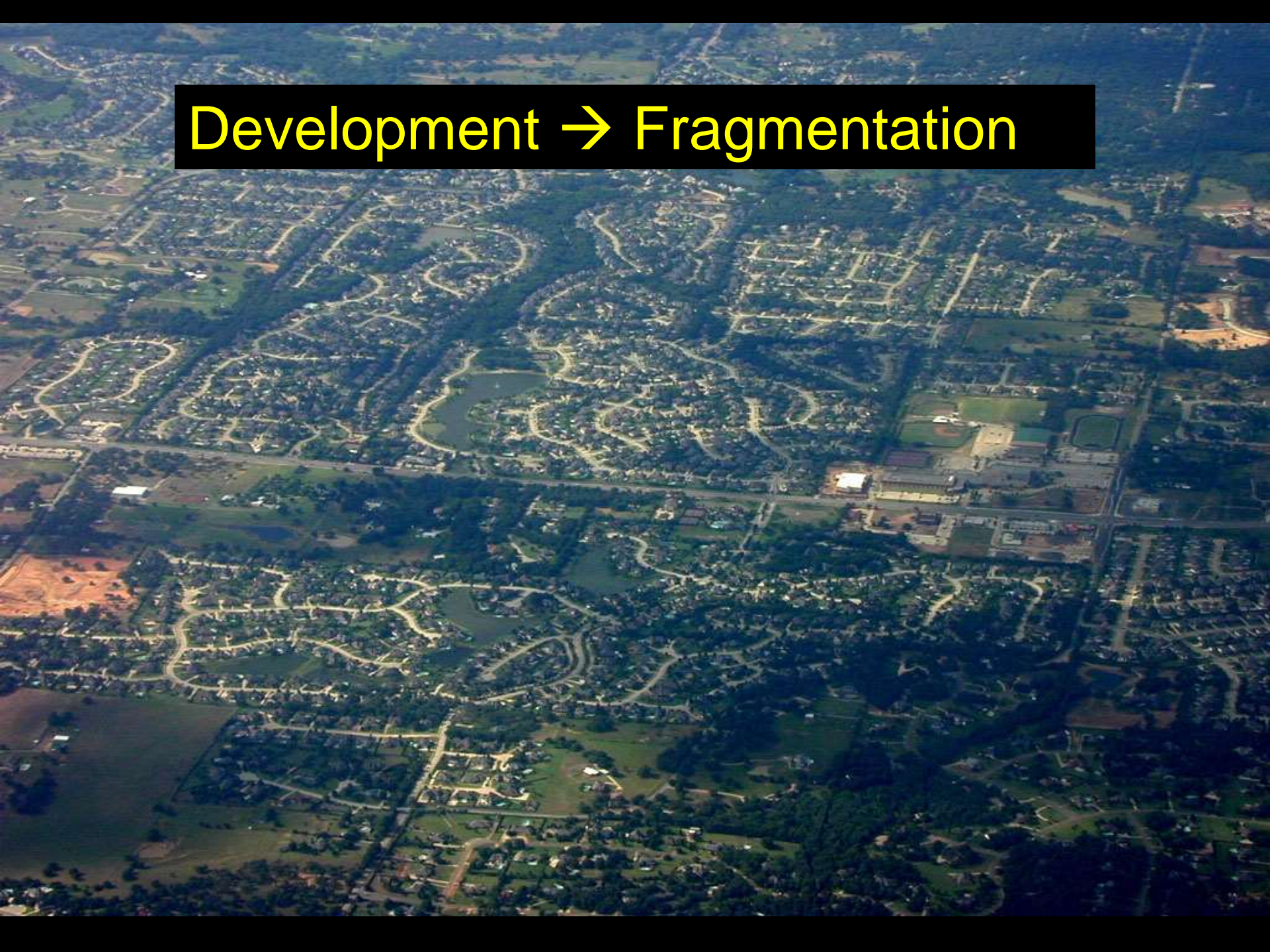
Presented by Ellen Powell,  
Virginia Dept. of Forestry

# Why do we need backyard habitats?

*Coming Soon!* TO THIS 20 ACRE SITE  
**ANOTHER BIG SHOPPING CENTER**  
*Compliments of... Larry & Ted*

Second Century Investments 423-7776

Development → Fragmentation



Loss of green space =  
Loss of habitat



Dominant green  
feature? LAWN

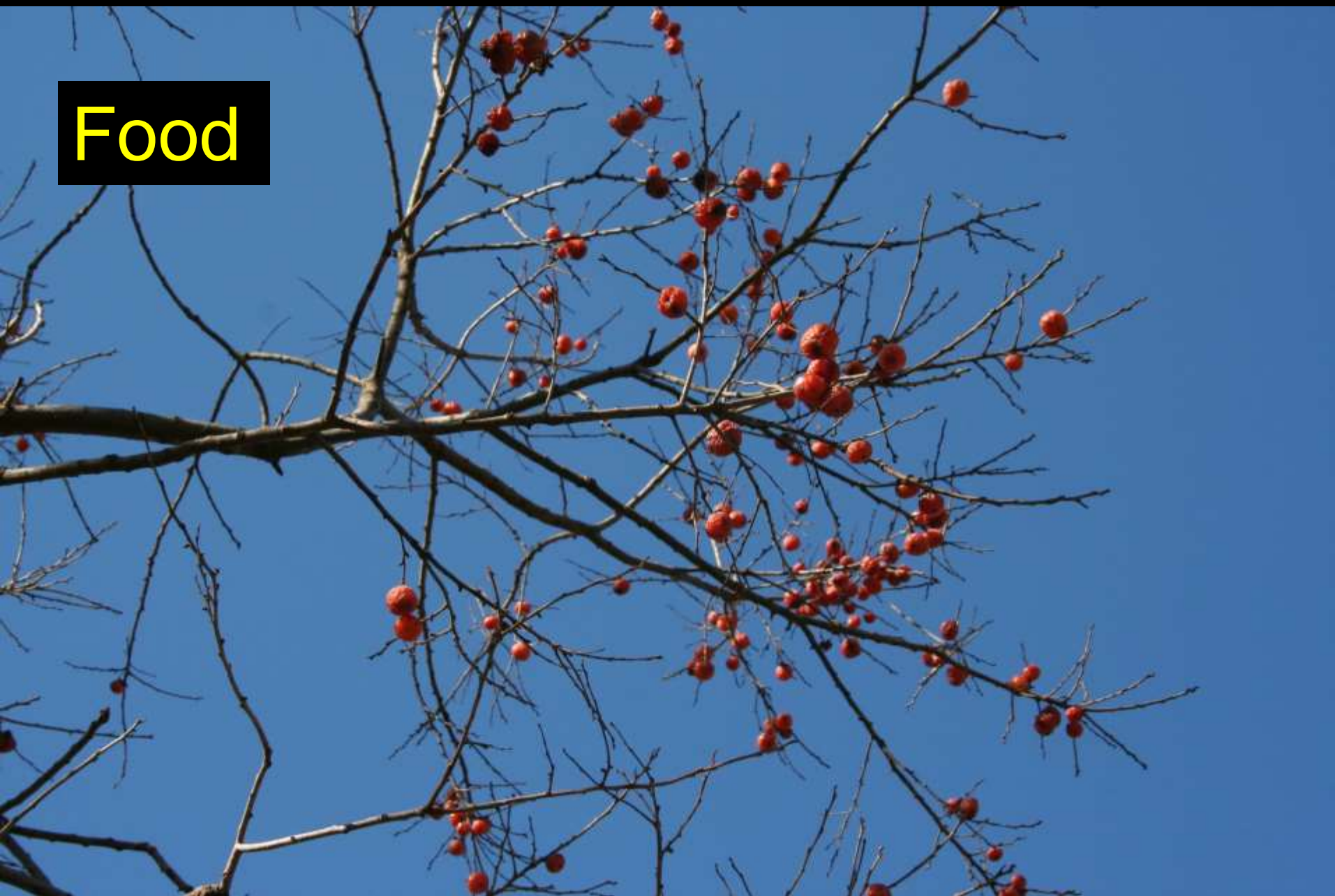


More Lawn →  
Less Biodiversity

# What Makes Good Wildlife Habitat?



Food



Water





# Cover (Shelter)



Space



A close-up photograph of a bird's nest. The nest is a dense, intricate structure of dry sticks, twigs, and dried grasses, built within the fork of a tree branch. The surrounding branches are grey and textured, with some green leaves and buds visible. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting a natural outdoor setting. A black rectangular box with yellow text is overlaid in the upper right corner.

Places to  
raise young

# Suitable Arrangement



# Backyard habitats – a matter of scale



# Which wildlife?



# Food



Choose NATIVE plants whenever possible.





# Invasive Exotic Plants = Less Biodiversity





**Do You Recognize  
These Invasives?**



# What about other non-native plants?

*“Ornamental aliens now comprise the base of the food web over much of North America.”*

Dr. Doug Tallamy, Chair, Dept. of Entomology & Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware



# BRINGING NATURE HOME



How Native Plants  
Sustain Wildlife  
in Our Gardens

DOUGLAS W. TALLAMY

<http://bringingnaturehome.net>



Caterpillars  
for young

Plant what insects will eat.



More bugs = more birds



# Water





Cover



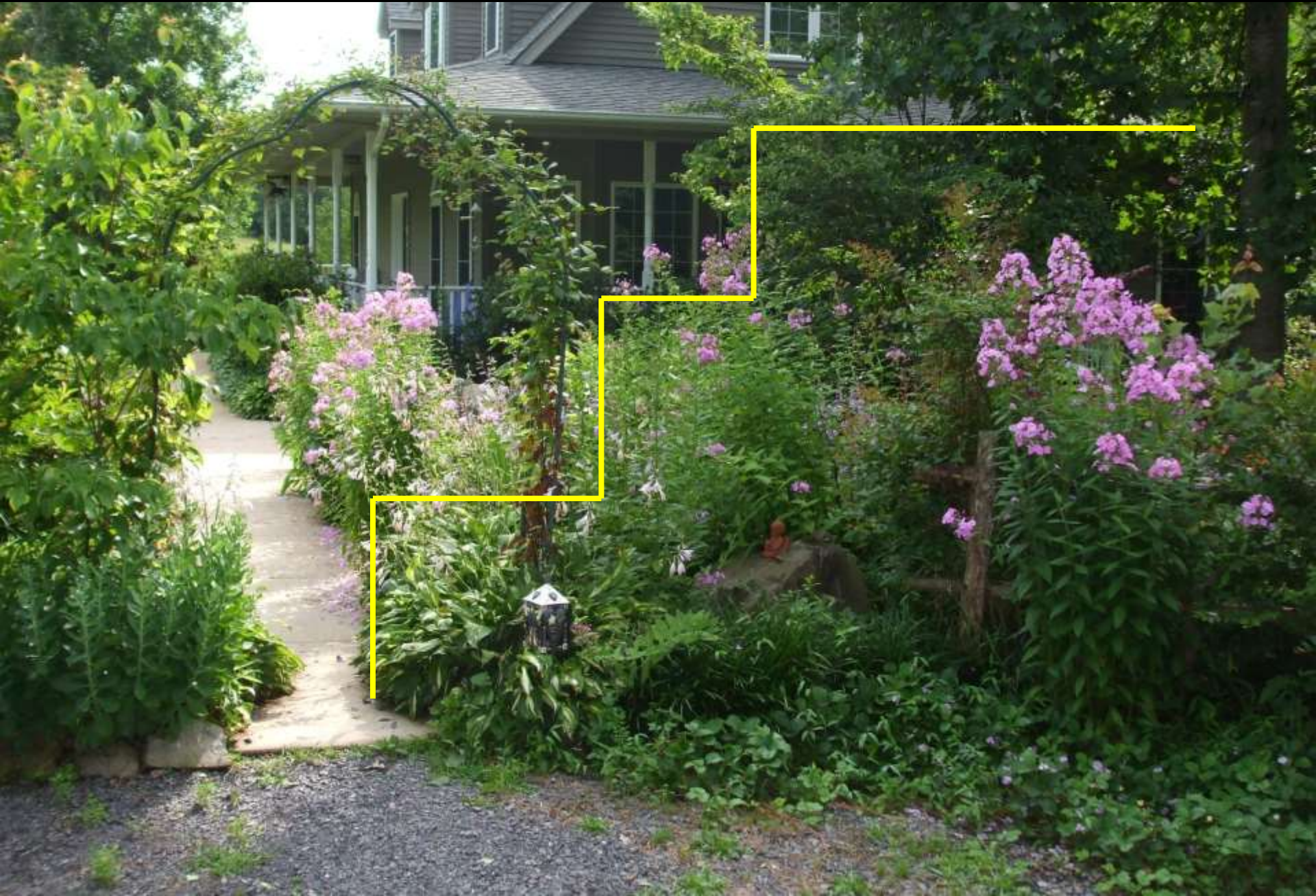
Leave dead trees standing (where safe).



Install boxes for cavity nesters.



# Layer plants for vertical structure



Soften your edges



# Buffer streams with plants.



Before...

...After!



# Naturalize steep slopes



# Naturalize drainage areas



# Rains gardens = habitat + water quality





Front yards work too!



Before...







...After!



# Deer Dilemma



Deer proof?





**Please keep cats indoors!**



# Habitat At Home<sup>©</sup>

Carol Heiser,

VA Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries

[www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov)





**Wildlife habitats can be beautiful!**