



## Wildlife Window: Wildlife That Love Our Pond Plantings. Plants Provide Shelter, Food, and Nesting Benefits.

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[Woodlands Word – August 2023]

**Wandering around Rivendell's ponds and preserves is a never-ending lesson about Florida wildlife.** Visit any lake, river, or wetlands, and you are almost certain to see some type of bird in the water, whether it's a duck searching for food in the shallows or a heron stalking prey along the shore. Rivendell has made a significant commitment to installing low-maintenance zones (LMZs) and shorelines plantings to help control erosion and absorb excess nutrients, to improve water quality and attract more wildlife.

These plants serve as primary food producers for plant-eating (herbivorous) animals, who in turn become food for flesh-eating (carnivorous) animals. In addition, pond plants increase much-needed wildlife habitat in the urban landscape by providing a seed source and foraging areas for waterfowl and wading birds along with a safe haven for small fish and other aquatic life.

**Creating a complex and healthy habitat, shoreline aquatic vegetation provides food and shelter to many of our wildlife friends.** Let's learn more about the wildlife animals that use our Rivendell ponds to live, mature, and grow their families.

**Wading birds & Waterfowl feast on many freshwater invertebrates that live amongst the shoreline plants. Roseate Spoonbills, Herons, Egrets and Ibis, etc., eat small fish, crabs, shrimp, and crayfish.**



(Photos: Bob Frank)



**Ponds with aquatic plants attract amphibians and reptiles providing food sources and breeding habitat.**

**Alligators, Turtles, Frogs eat fish, snails and other invertebrates, along with birds, frogs and mammals that come to the water's edge.**

(Yes, alligators do eat turtles.)

**At the top of the food chain, Birds of Prey, such as Eagles, Hawks & Ospreys, will eat anything they can get their hands — or talons — on. This includes many small mammals, reptiles, fish, amphibians, and insects.**



(Osprey: Allie Sandow)

Click here to visit the Ponds & Preserves website at <https://www.rivendellcommunity.com/ponds>.