Create a Backyard Wildlife

Habitat Brush Pile

Create a backyard habitat for wild animals with a backyard brush pile! Dense cover benefits wildlife by providing:

...A place to hide from predators,
...A place to seek shelter from bad weather
...A place for ground nesters to nest
...A place in winter to find hiding places once leaves are gone.
...A habitat for all strands of the ecosystem web -- good microbes, insects, fungi, birds, and mammals

Placement

1) Choose an area with good drainage, near a forest edge, along a stream or at the back edge of a property, close to existing food sources. Isolated piles are not likely to be used, so create three to four different piles per acre.
2) Ideal piles are 4-8 feet tall and 10-20 feet in diameter.
3) Brush piles are flammable, so don’t build them near buildings or under trees.
4) After a few years of decay, check to see if a new brush pile should be started. Leave the old piles to further compost which attracts more insects, and thus, more birds.

How to Create a Great Brush Pile

Method 1: Log Cabin Pallet Style

Stack two to three layers of six-inch diameter logs at right angles to each other, log-cabin style, in a square. Logs should be about six feet long and placed about 10" apart between layers. Several tree stumps or 12-inch rocks can also act as pallet bases. Stack layers of vegetation stalks, Christmas trees, limbs, leaves, and twigs on top in layers.

Method 2: Teepee Style

Use about eight six-to-eight foot untrimmed branches arranged in teepee fashion, either standing alone or over a tree stump. Lean smaller brush against the “teepee” frame, leaving some open space in the center. Dump leaves and small debris over the whole cone.