

Designing Firefly Habitat

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Fireflies need a habitat that is **moist**. Areas that retain water and areas near a small creek or other water source are attractive to fireflies. Females lay their eggs in **moss** or in small holes or cracks of **rotting logs**. Larvae will move around the soil surface, in **leaf litter**, and in rotting wood. Pupae can attach themselves to vegetation or leaf litter. Include **moss, leaf litter, and rotting logs** in your habitat.



Big Dipper Firefly (*Photinus pyralis*)



Embrace the messiness of firefly habitat!

Flowering plants should also be included as many firefly varieties consume nectar. Some species will consume **milkweed** (*Asclepias* spp.) vegetation. The milkweed glycosides help protect the insects from predators. Research plant varieties before putting your landscape plan together. How do the plant heights work together? How much sun does the plant need?



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Perennial Plant Suggestions for Georgia:

Cardinal Flower (*Lovelia cardinalis*)

Goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.)

Late Boneset (*Eupatorium serotinum*)

Swamp Sunflower (*Helianthus angustifolius*)

Scarlet Rosemallow (*Hibiscus coccineus*)

Ironweed (*Vernonia* spp.)

Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*)

Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

Include native grasses:

Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*)

Inland Sea Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)

Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)

Shrub Suggestions:

Summersweet (*Cleythra alnifolia*)

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)

Tree Suggestions:

Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*)

Pine (*Pinus* spp.)

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

References:

- Conserving the Jewels of the Night by the Xerces Society
- Guide to Propagation and Characteristics of Favorite Georgia Natives: Part 1 – Thirty Perennials for Pollinators by Heather Alley
- Native Plants for Georgia Part IV: Grasses and Sedges By Dr. Bodie V. Pennisi



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