

BACKYARD ANIMAL FARMING

AGES

Adults

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A guest speaker teaches participants how to care for backyard animals such as chickens, rabbits, ducks, goats, or bees. If possible, they bring live creatures for demonstration. Check with local regulations (zoning, animal welfare, public health, and nuisance laws) to confirm what types of backyard animals are allowed within your municipality or county. Remember the book display on small animal farming and/or homesteading! Suggested runtime: 90–120 minutes

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

You will need:

- Hand sanitizer
- Copies of local laws and regulations
- Containment methods for guest animals

UNIQUE SPACE AND PERSONNEL NEEDS

To find someone knowledgeable about small-scale animal farming, consider local farmers, 4H groups, agricultural colleges, or educational associations, such as the American Poultry Association.

RESOURCES

Web

4H group locator: <https://4-h.org/find/>

American Poultry Association: <http://amerpoultryassn.com/>

American Beekeeping Association: <https://www.abfnet.org/>

The Honeybee Conservancy: <https://thehoneybeeconservancy.org/>

TIP:

Provide hand sanitizer to patrons before and after handling live animals.

ADAPTATION:

For farming communities, you might consider more technical presentations on the best methods for raising larger animals.

Homesteading Nonfiction

The Backyard Homestead Book of Kitchen Know-How: Field-to-Table Cooking Skills (2015) by Andrea Chesman

The Encyclopedia of Country Living, 50th Anniversary Edition: The Original Manual for Living off the Land and Doing It Yourself (2019) by Carla Emery

Start Your Farm: The Authoritative Guide to Becoming a Sustainable 21st Century Farmer (2018) by Forrest Pritchard and Ellen Polishuk

Livestock Nonfiction

The Backyard Goat (2011) by Sue Weaver

The Beginner's Guide to Raising Chickens (2019) by Anne Kuo

How to Speak Chicken: Why Your Chickens Do What They Do and Say What They Say (2017) by Melissa Caughey

A Kid's Guide to Keeping Chickens (2015) by Melissa Caughney (middle grade)

Smart Ass: How a Donkey Challenged Me to Accept His True Nature and Rediscover My Own (2018) by Margaret Winslow

Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens, 4th ed. (2017) by Gail Demrow

Temple Grandin's Guide to Working with Farm Animals: Safe, Humane Livestock Handling Practices for the Small Farm (2017) by Temple Grandin

Bee and Pollinator Nonfiction

YA

Bees: An Up-Close Look at Pollinators Around the World (2015) by Laurence Packer and Sam Droege

False Knees: An Illustrated Guide to Animal Behavior (2018) by Joshua Barkman

Where Have All the Bees Gone?: Pollinators in Crisis (2020) by Rebecca Hirsch

Adult

Attracting Birds, Butterflies, and Other Backyard Wildlife (2019) by David Mizejewski

The Bee Book: Discover the Wonder of Bees and How to Protect Them for Generations to Come (2016) by DK

The Beginner's Guide to Beekeeping, 2nd ed. (2019) by Samantha Johnson and Daniel Johnson

TIP:

For children's pollinator nonfiction, see Chapter 04: Backyard Habitats

LOW COST | OUTDOORS | OUTSIDE PRESENTER | SOLO-LIBRARIAN FRIENDLY

Beekeeping for Beginners: How to Raise Your First Bee Colonies (2019)
by Amber Bradshaw

Buzz: The Nature and Necessity of Bees (2018) by Thor Hanson

Feed the Birds: Attract and Identify 196 Common North American Birds
(2019) by Chris Earley

Handmade Bird, Bee and Bat Houses (2018) by Michele McKee Orsini

*Mason Bee Revolution: How the Hardest Working Bee Can Save the
World One Backyard at a Time* (2016) by Dave Hunter and Jill Lightner

*Our Native Bees: North America's Endangered Pollinators and the Fight
to Save Them* (2018) by Paige Embry

*The Pollinator Victory Garden: Win the War on Pollinator Decline with
Ecological Gardening* (2020) by Kim Eierman