

# Get back to nature

► Birds and bees have fluttered into summer spaces, leaving hints of whimsy and signaling a love for the outdoors

## HOMES IN STYLE

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Incorporating flying or furry friends into decor can be done through practical or decorative accessories that can immediately rustle up a smile and add way-too-cute appeal to a room.

Rhonda Wolkove, founder of Toronto's RLW Creative Designs Consultant, says decorating with animal shapes and prints makes people feel calm.

"It brings them a little bit closer to nature," says Wolkove. "It's whimsical, people just like to be able to feel good about what they look at. But for the most part... we all sort of have this need to share our

inside with the outside."

Exotic animal prints in draperies, bedding or pillows emphasizes the theatrical side of decorating, chosen more for the impact of what it looks like as opposed to the warm and fuzzy feelings of communing with nature and displaying little symbols of pets.

"In some cases depending on the animal print it's more exotic and theatrical, like zebra carpeting and sheepskin rugs — a little more daring. It adds shock value," she says.

"It's different from the people who have statues of horses, lions or they collect elephants. There's a whole different philosophy behind that. It's the majestic beauty of the animal, the strength and the majesty of that particular creature."



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### 1 BALLARD DESIGNS \$49

Hand hooked of 100 per cent wool, the Bee Pillow adds a touch of whimsy to any couch, inviting all to take a load off reminiscent of the lazy buzz and clumsy flight of the bee. ballarddesigns.com

### 2 ANTHROPOLOGIE

Tiny swallows flock to the edges of this sleek place setting to hang out high above your dinner. The Birds-on-a-Wire Dinnerware ranges from \$16-\$118. anthropologie.com

### 3 URBAN BARN \$8

Move over boring salt and pepper shakers. With a simple silhouette design in glazed white ceramic, this darling Cow Salt & Pepper Set has the salt and pepper coming out of holes in the cow's nose. urbanbarn.com

### 4 BALLARD DESIGNS \$39

He will steal your heart — the Heartthrob Frog is crafted of terracotta with a weathered moss finish. ballarddesigns.com

### 5 URBAN BARN \$59

The Mongolian Sheep Skin Toss Cushion could just be your new furry best friends! Super soft and glamorous, these are a perfect accessory on a bed or a sofa. urbanbarn.com

### 6 ETSY \$30

Their infamous spines, curious nature and smiling expression are endearing and now hedgehog can have a place in your home. The quilly creature adorns a Fabric Storage Basket. etsy.com

### 7 ETSY \$28

Tea for two-hoo or more! This happy Owl Tea Cosy in turquoise will keep your teapot nice and toasty. Hand-made by Robin & Mould in Wiltshire, U.K. etsy.com.

### 8 POTTERY BARN \$49

Inspired by blackbird silhouettes, these decorative birds add a playful touch to a desk-top or bookshelf. They are detailed with oversized feet for whimsical appeal. potterybarn.ca

### 9 CANADIAN TIRE \$15

The smaller dimension of the Home Collection Rooster Clock is perfect for the kitchen, especially in country kitchen decor or the cottage. canadiantire.ca.

### 10 BRAND \$32

Elephant Bowls from A. Speer's Ceramic Studio are made from white stoneware clay and glazed in food-safe glazes in a variety of colors. etsy.com.



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# Get ready for some flower power



## HOMES IN STYLE

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Infuse a dose of summer into your home by decorating with the fresh and colourful motif of the outdoors.

Using floral prints can be intimidating for some but coordinating floral accessories with existing colour schemes can add a breath of fresh summer air to a space.

"Florals add colour, they add a very fresh summery vibe to any room," says

Jackie Glass of Jacqueline Glass & Associates, an interior design company based in Mississauga. "Adding a beautiful flower pillow can definitely warm up a space. It's really the same as a beautiful piece of artwork."

Choose a coordinating solid colour by matching it to the background colour of the floral print. Or pair different prints by matching the background colours of each piece — just remember not to over-use these patterns.

"In any room you want curvilinear and rectilinear shapes. Lines and curves in a room create balance from a design perspective.

(Florals) soften a more austere interior. Adding a little bit of curve, say in a floral pillow, adds balance ... and the room works."

Glass says the right balance of florals will add freshness and lightness to a room, a "summery fresh seasonal look."

"In the summer we do gravitate towards that type of pattern. Use in moderation, and mix other patterns with it."

Decorating with florals does add a certain touch of femininity, that might be too much for some.

"It's a pretty look (but) I don't think a guy is going to buy a floral pillow."

### 1 ETSY \$55

Each of Pleasant Ridge's Handmade Wedding Unity Candles, decorated with silk flowers, pearls and rhinestones is individually created. etsy.com.

### 2 WEST ELM \$79

Striking simplicity. Naïve botanical sketches are screen-printed in charcoal on glass. Wood frame in gunmetal. westelm.com.

### 3 CANADIAN TIRE \$3-16

The unique crackle design and floral print of the Hydrangea Garden Tableware Collection in melamine adds a boost of summer to your table. canadiantire.ca.

### 4 ETSY \$32

The Redesigned Metal Sconce is hand-crafted on lovingly recycled lamps and shades, with natural "flaws" adding to the character of the piece. etsy.com.

### 5 ETSY \$34

Antique Persian botanical designs were the inspiration for this tropical-hued handstamped linen 16" x 16" pillow case. etsy.com.

### 6 URBAN BARN \$25

Inject some life into your walls with these fun and decorative wallflowers, adhered using a tack system with flowers that snap on. urbanbarn.ca.

### 7 CANADIAN TIRE \$7

How can you say no? Small Flower Stepping Stones are available in four flower designs: sunflower, rose, daisy and petunia. canadiantire.ca.

### 8 ETSY \$35

The traditional flowers on the Rosemaling Candle Sticks are painted on one-of-a-kind wooden sticks circa-1900, in the style of folk art floral pattern. etsy.com.

### 9 URBAN BARN \$120

Nothing says summer quite like daisies. With three tiers of hanging white daisies and a gentle glow, the individually cut-out flowers on the Daisy Shade Pendant are connected with small silver circles adding a touch of sparkle. Made from white laser-cut polypropylene. urbanbarn.com.



► Reclaimed wood can have a big impact on a room.

## Reclaimed wood spouting up

People are embracing reclaimed wood and giving it new life, designer Vern Yip says.

"We realize it's not an infinite resource we can just keep exploiting," he says. "It's a natural extension of the green movement, colliding with the fact that we're repurposing a lot of things these days."

And wood adds character to a room, the designers say. Old doors, shutters, crates and

barns are being repurposed into furniture and floor or wall coverings. "It's that soul you can't buy off the showroom floor," Gorder explains.

Salvaged wood is refreshingly low-maintenance because scratches only add to its charm.

"I have two young children under the age of six," designer Candice Olson says. "So weathered finishes, they really speak to me."

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