

## 5 steps for a Certified Monarch Waystation

*Brought to you by Wild Ones Lexington Chapter and The Garden Club of Kentucky, Inc.*

**Monarchs need milkweeds.** Milkweeds are the only plants the caterpillars can eat and the only plants on which the females will lay their eggs. Monarchs in the U.S. are in serious decline because of loss of habitat due to spraying of herbicides and development, both of which destroy milkweeds.

**The good news is that we can help!** Monarch Watch sponsors a Monarch Waystation program, challenging all of us to create habitat by planting milkweeds and nectar plants in our yards. And if you create habitat for monarchs, you will also attract other butterflies and pollinators. Here's how to get started:

- 1. Determine size and location:** Butterfly plants need sun. There is no required size, but Monarch Watch suggests a minimum of 100 square feet. The total area may be split into several locations.
- 2. Plant 10 or more milkweed plants.** A monarch waystation requires a minimum of 10 milkweed plants, preferably two or more species. Milkweeds that bloom at different times increase the chances for seeing monarchs over a longer period.
- 3. Plant a minimum of 4 nectar plants.** Providing nectar throughout the growing season will increase your chances of attracting monarchs as well as other butterflies and pollinators. Nectar plants may be trees, shrubs, or wildflowers. Fall-blooming plants, such as asters and mist plant, are especially important to monarchs and other butterflies that migrate, such as buckeyes, and red admirals. Native perennials attract more butterflies.
- 4. Management practices** which are encouraged include the following:
  - Manage the density of plants – relatively close together though not crowded, in order to provide shelter for caterpillars and chrysalises from predators and the elements.
  - Eliminate the use of insecticides and herbicides.
  - Remove old growth before the growing season, preferably in spring. Caution: Some butterflies overwinter in the garden as eggs, caterpillars, or chrysalises. Fall clean-up may destroy next year's butterflies.
- 5. Complete the certification application.** Register your garden as a Certified Monarch Waystation by completing the form at: <http://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/certify.html>. Applications may be submitted online or printed to mail or fax. A \$16 processing fee is required for each certification. Your habitat will be included in an online registry of worldwide Monarch Waystations.

**NOTE:** You don't have to start from scratch. If you have an existing habitat that meets the requirements, or which can be modified to qualify, you can, and should, apply for certification.

### Additional on-line resources

- Butterflies and Moths of North America. [www.butterfliesandmoths.org](http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org)
- Monarch Migration (and to report monarch sightings) [www.journeynorth.org](http://www.journeynorth.org)
- Monarch Joint Venture. [www.monarchjointventure.org](http://www.monarchjointventure.org)
- Wild for Monarchs [www.wildones.org/learn/wild-for-monarchs](http://www.wildones.org/learn/wild-for-monarchs)
- Pollinator Partnership, [www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org)

### Books available from Amazon.com

- Burris, Judy and Richards, Wayne. The Life Cycle of Butterflies
- Gomez, Tony. How to Attract Monarchs to Your Garden and Keep Them There (Kindle Book)
- Hall, Betty. Monarch Magic
- Oberhauser, Karen, Rea, Ba, and Quin. Michael. Milkweed Monarchs and More
- Pasternak, Carol. How to Raise Monarch Butterflies