



**WISCONSIN MONARCH
COLLABORATIVE**

**KEY
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
2018-2020**



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MONARCH
COLLABORATIVE**



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**KEY
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
2018-2020**

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WISCONSIN MONARCH COLLABORATIVE OVERVIEW



The Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative (hereafter “the Collaborative”) was formed in 2018 to catalyze voluntary planting of native milkweed and native wildflowers to benefit monarchs and help reverse their decline. ■ Since then, we have grown our partnership to over 40 organizations, significantly increased outreach through creating a website and communications toolkit for partners, and collected data from across the state for the US Fish & Wildlife Service Monarch Conservation Database (MCD). We’ve developed a Wisconsin Monarch Conservation Strategy and started implementing its goals and strategies. ■ **Most importantly, consortium partners have added over 487,600 new stems of milkweed since 2014**, mainly since 2018, and farmers have more than 200,000 acres enrolled in USDA Farm Bill conservation programs. We’re just starting to collect monarch habitat data from private individuals and organizations. Collectively, we’ve made a solid initial down payment on our **STATEWIDE GOAL OF ADDING 119 MILLION MILKWEED STEMS BY 2038**. We expect a significant acceleration toward that goal with data collection tools now in place to capture recent and future milkweed and nectar plant additions and a strong foundation for the next 20 years. ■ **While the estimated milkweed stem numbers are what are being tracked at the regional level through the MCD, Collaborative members understand that ecosystems thrive with diversity**, and thus support diverse habitat including native milkweed, forbs and grasses that can support monarchs and other pollinators from early spring to late fall.

MONARCH GAINS AT A GLANCE

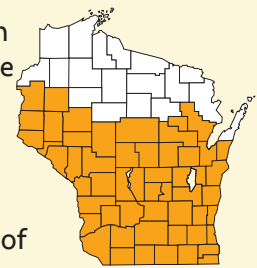
- **488,000** new stems of milkweed added to partner lands
- **105,000** new or enhanced acres of habitat
- **205,268** acres enrolled in CRP
- **822** monarch specific projects using Farm Bill Biologists
- **6 major** demonstration sites to teach and inspire
- **32,653** website views
- **85,000** copies of Wisconsin plant list for monarchs sent directly to Wisconsin homes
- **184** Wisconsin organizations and individuals have taken the pledge to help monarchs

The monarch butterfly, often called a ‘flagship species’ for conservation efforts, has declined by a staggering 80 percent over the past 20 years (Xerces Society 2020).

The primary cause of the massive decline in the eastern monarch population is loss of breeding habitat in Wisconsin and other Midwestern states, according to the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Mid-America Monarch Conservation Strategy (2018). Other causes include overwintering habitat loss, climate change, pesticide use, natural enemies, and other anthropogenic concerns (Monarch Joint Venture 2020).

Wisconsin is in the core breeding ground for the eastern migratory population of these iconic black and orange beauties. Our milkweed feeds and produces several generations of monarchs each spring and summer before

a final wave gorges itself on wildflower nectar and embarks on a 1,700-mile journey to central Mexico. Wisconsin holds an important piece of the puzzle to reversing monarch butterflies’ decline.



Map of Wisconsin illustrating the Wisconsin portion of the North Core Monarch Conservation Unit, a priority area for monarch conservation.

DIVERSE INTERESTS WORKING TOWARD ONE GOAL

The Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative is part of a regional commitment to stemming the monarch's decline by committing to voluntarily adding 119 million milkweed stems to the Wisconsin landscape by 2038, a number agreed upon by all Working Groups after being presented with quantitative habitat scenarios developed at the regional level. It is also the first Wisconsin consortium dedicated to focusing on creating and improving habitat that benefits monarch butterflies.

Our partnership provides an important forum to share ideas, knowledge and approaches to help monarchs and other pollinators and leverages individual member progress to reach the statewide goal.

The Collaborative is comprised of six Working Groups and a Coordination Team to support and guide the Working Groups and ensure the Wisconsin Monarch Conservation Strategy is implemented effectively and efficiently. Representatives on the Coordination Team include Collaborative Working Group co-leads, a representative from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin (NRF), plus agency representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Working Groups are the following, each with two co-leads:

- Agriculture
- Communications & Outreach
- Protected Lands
- Research & Monitoring
- Rights-of-Way
- Urban & Greenspace

More information about the Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative can be found at wimonarchs.org.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION TO ACCELERATE SUCCESS IN 2021 AND BEYOND

In 2018, the Working Groups formed and began meeting to develop a statewide stem goal and begin working on a Strategy document. By the end of 2018, the Working Group co-leads had put together their goals and strategies, with approval from Working Group members.

Early 2019 focused on finalizing the Collaborative Strategy and disseminating it through various communication outlets, including at tabling events, via email and at partner offices. Additionally, the six Collaborative Working Groups focused on different land types and topical areas and continued meeting to discuss implementation of the Strategy goals. DNR Collaborative team members participated and helped coordinate Working Group meetings as well as continued to build partnerships with organizations and individuals interested in helping monarchs.

A Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative Summit planning team assembled in mid-2019 began planning an in-person summit for all Collaborative partners. Originally planned for June 2020, the summit was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Although we couldn't meet in 2020, we look forward to an online meeting in 2021 to give people an opportunity to share knowledge, ideas and their passion for monarchs toward more progress on the ground.**

As the Collaborative continues to evolve, grow, and expand its reach, we hope Wisconsinites can continue to appreciate the incredible value monarch habitat brings to our ecosystems and that small contributions like planting a native pollinator garden can really make a difference.

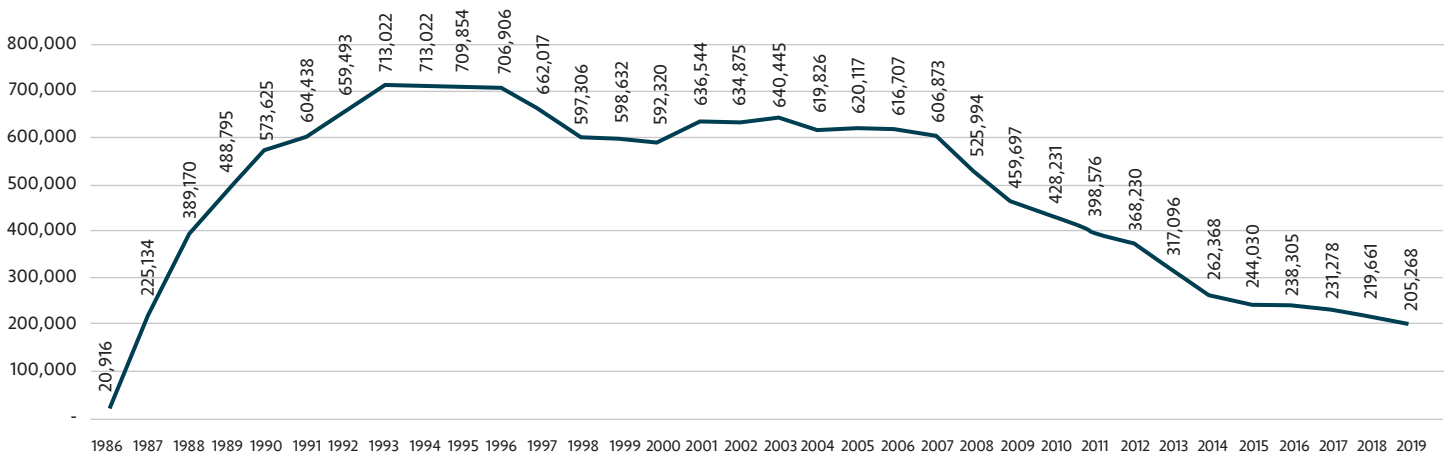
KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP



Eighty-five percent of Wisconsin land is in private hands and farmers, ranchers and foresters play a significant role in meeting the Collaborative’s statewide stem goal. Members worked to promote incentive, cost-share, and technical assistance programs, such as the Farm Service Agency (FSA) administered Conservation Reserve Program, that benefit monarchs, pollinators, water quality, and other wildlife. **(Strategy 2.2)**

WISCONSIN CONSERVATION RESERVE ACREAGE ENROLLMENTS FROM 2014-2019



Source: USDA FSA Conservation Reserve Program Statistics.

Between 2014 and 2020, **2,551 acres of land** were enrolled in a conservation program created by the FSA and pollinator experts to specifically enhance and restore habitat for pollinators. Enrolled land in the **CP42-Pollinator Habitat practice** must include at least nine species of pollinator-friendly wildflowers, legumes or shrubs (optional) with a least three species in three bloom periods. For more information, visit: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/pollinator_fact_sht.pdf

Another conservation program created by the FSA, the **Prairie Strips Program**, or CRP-43, had **90.13 acres enrolled in 2020**. The Prairie Strips Program’s

primary purpose is to enhance water quality and reduce soil erosion but it also benefits monarchs and other native pollinators through creating

native perennial vegetation. For more information, visit: <https://www.fdcenterprises.com/what-to-know-about-the-new-cp-43-prairie-strip-practice/>



Chilton, Wisconsin FFA members creating monarch habitat.

SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

**PARTNER
SPOTLIGHT**

**SAND COUNTY
FOUNDATION**

Sand County Foundation continued seeding prairie filter strips on farms in 2019 and 2020, benefitting water quality and pollinator/monarch habitat benefit with support from the Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. **(Goal 2)**

The foundation also used a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant in 2019 to plant **20 acres of seeding** on four farms in the Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association's Healthy Grown Potato program. Jeb Barzen coordinated the work and growers matched the dollars and offered their land. In the future, Monarch Joint Venture may conduct Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program monitoring on the land.

**PARTNER
SPOTLIGHT**

**PHEASANTS
FOREVER**

Pheasants Forever **analyzed over 10,000 acres** and estimated between 3-15% of fields in Wisconsin can become more profitable through management change that also benefits monarchs. Farmers were willing to make management changes that supported their operation and pollinator habitat including full season flowering cover crops, honeybee friendly hay, prairie strips and traditional pollinator prairie plantings.

To capitalize on this interest, Pheasants Forever added a **Precision Agriculture and Conservation Specialists (PACS)** to serve northwestern Wisconsin in April 2020. The position was made possible by support from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin through the Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection via the Producer Led Watershed Protection

Program working with the Buffalo Trempealeau Farmer Network, NRCS, and Pheasants Forever.

Promotion of success stories through social media pictures, video, newsletter blogs, oral presentations, and word of mouth advertising has created a backlog of clients interested in having precision agriculture business plans developed in Wisconsin. By the numbers, they have influenced management on over **1,000 acres** (both direct and indirect benefits to pollinators) through the analysis of over **10,000 acres**, are currently working with **more than 20 farmers** to refine precision ag business plans. They have also hosted workshops, outreach events, and business meetings with over 13 different groups, and created 12 unique public relations media for distribution.

A PACS position in southeastern Wisconsin begins in March; the position was made possible by support from NRF and the Pollinator Protection Fund, Clean Lakes Alliance, American Society of Agronomy, the NRCS, and Pheasants Forever.

In 2019, the Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist program, working in conjunction with Wisconsin DNR and Wisconsin Natural Resource Conservation Service, provided technical and program assistance in multiple counties, working out of NRCS field offices.

- Since 2018, the Farm Bill Biologist team worked on **949 projects** that had pollinator benefits in general, with **822** of these projects specifically for monarchs. The 822 monarch specific projects covered **6,476** acres through a mix of Farm Bill programs.
- Pheasants Forever sponsored and tracked **three outreach/field days** related to pollinator/monarch habitat reaching **62 attendees**. They assisted on at least six other outreach events specific to pollinators/monarchs and hosted many other landowner workshops where pollinator/monarch habitat is often addressed.

**POLLINATOR OUTREACH TARGETS
AGRICULTURAL AREAS**

Group members used in-person and online outreach to raise awareness of monarchs' plight and programs benefitting farmers and monarchs.

- Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative/NHC staff handed out materials and talked to farmers at Farm Technology Days in 2018 and 2019. This included handing out materials created by the Communications & Outreach Working Group and just chatting with farmers who love to support pollinators on their land.
- Grassworks, Inc., a non-profit membership organization working to support on-farm research, education and adoption of managed grazing, promoted the Collaborative through their social media network.
 - Between 2019-2020 they posted **8 times**
 - **130 people** within their network were reached
 - **98 people** engaged with the posts
- In 2020, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) had 6 social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter solely dedicated to monarchs, that reached a total of **6,428** people. DATCP continues to advocate for monarchs and pollinator protection.
- DNR's Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation promoted the Conservation Reserve Program and emailed subscribers on monarch and pollinator topics in 2019 and 2020.

The Agriculture Working Group, as well as the Communications & Outreach Working Group have discussed expanding the reach of communications and outreach to specific agriculture sectors. This would include possible Collaborative field days at different types of farms, outreach tables focusing on a particular agricultural sector, such as organic farms, and tailoring communication messaging and materials for different sectors within the agricultural community. **(Goal 1 & Strategy 3.3)**

Do you or someone you know want to add pollinator habitat to a farm? Check out the resources provided here! <https://wiatri.net/projects/monarchs/pdfs/FarmerTips.pdf>



PHEASANTS FOREVER

Wisconsin land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program

AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

■ CO-LEADS

Andrew Wallendal, Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association

Tyler Wenzlaff (Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation); previously Craig Ficenece (Sand County Foundation) from 2018-2019

■ MEMBERS

Steve Bertjens, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Craig Ficenece, Sand County Foundation

David Flakne, Syngenta

Paige Frautschy, The Nature Conservancy Wisconsin

Thomas Green, Integrated Pest Management Institute of North America

Liz Griffith, Door Creek Orchard

Jill Hapner, Grassworks, Inc.

Jeff Hicken, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Ian Krauss, Farm Service Agency

Tom Lochner, Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association

Anna Maenner, Wisconsin Apple Growers Association

Shelly Mayer, Professional Dairy Producers

Mike Murray, Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (Communications & Outreach Working Group Liaison)

Kara O'Connor, Wisconsin Farmers Union

Otto Oemig, Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

Sara Schoenborn, Wisconsin Corn Growers Association

Sara Stelter, Wisconsin Soybean Growers

Scott Stipetich, Pheasants Forever

Nichole Wagner, Wisconsin Corn Growers Association

Amy Winters, Capitol Strategies

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

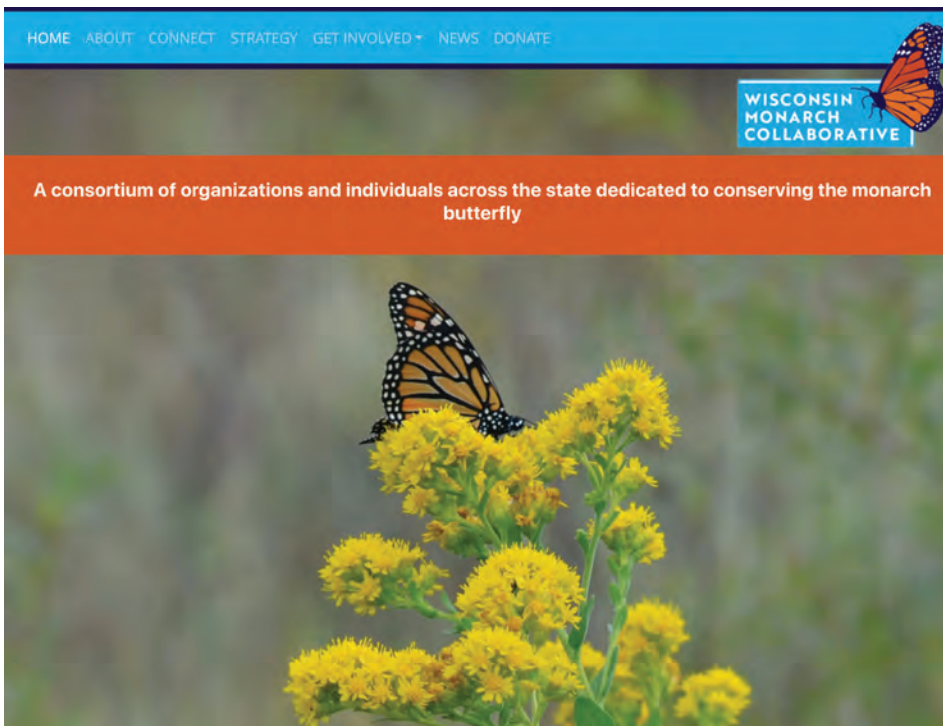
COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH WORKING GROUP



NEW WEBSITE ADVANCES STEM GOAL 24/7

The Communications & Outreach Working Group led development of content and layout for a new website, creating a foundation for multiplying Collaborative outreach, awareness and action efforts. Members reviewed draft content and pages designed by the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation's web developer, Jill Rosenberg, and promoted the website using the Communications Strategy developed for the Collaborative in 2018.

Easy to find and remember — **wimonarchs.org** — the website is optimized for different devices and gives collaborative partners and interested parties 24/7 access to Wisconsin-specific resources about monarchs, their decline, and how to help them. Its existence and display of partner logos provides credibility for the Collaborative, peer pressure and inspiration, and success stories partners can use with their respective audiences to spur addition of more stems. This platform enables cost effective outreach on social media and traditional media platforms.



Launched on November 2, 2018, wimonarchs.org has served **25,285 visitors** and has had **32,653 page views** by Jan. 1, 2021. 'Create Habitat in Wisconsin' drew the most views with **9,564 visits!**

TOOLKIT EASES PARTNER OUTREACH

To help provide consistent messaging and resources for the Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative, members developed an online "toolkit" to serve as a repository of WMC-branded materials (hosted on the Madison Audubon website: **madisonaudubon.org/wmc-toolkit**). This toolkit includes WMC logos, fonts, presentation templates, factsheets, a photo library, promotional material and ready-to-go social media content. By having a single consolidated location for these materials, WMC members can easily access, use and share high quality outreach materials. **(Strategy 1.4)**

All Collaborative partners are encouraged to use the 'toolkit' content for their e-newsletters or social media communications!

- Track your number of milkweed stems
- Promote availability of materials in your communications
- Share members success stories!
- The sky's the limit!

PHOTO LIBRARY MAXIMIZES VIEWER ENGAGEMENT

Communications & Outreach members created a library containing high quality photographs with clear rights to the images, making it easy for members to images for their social media, website and other outreach needs. The library fosters use of images, which research has shown grabs reader attention and promotes message recall. (available at **madisonaudubon.org/wmc-social-photos**).



PAUL SKAWINSKI

A monarch butterfly in a backyard garden.

PLUG-AND-GO SNIPPETS MAKE GETTING SOCIAL EASY

Members develop and send to Collaborative members every month social media snippets with suggested text and photographs. (Available in the WMC Toolkit: madisonaudubon.org/wmc-toolkit). These snippets include relevant information about monarch butterflies during every month of the year and make it easy for partners to share and amplify consistent WMC messaging. Members are encouraged to share the snippets on their social media platforms for that particular month. To increase the overall reach of this effort, each snippet has been customized for three different social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

SUPPORTING OUR MONARCHS

Turn your yard into a monarch oasis! These 12 species are some of monarchs' absolute favorites. Three species of milkweed, a plant on which monarchs 100% depend (denoted by *), are included. Learn how you can help monarchs at wimonarchs.org.

<p>ANISE HYSOPP (<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>) Blooms July-September</p> 	<p>SHOWY GOLDENROD (<i>Solidago speciosa</i>) Blooms August-October</p> 	<p>PURPLE CONEFLOWER (<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>) Blooms June-October</p> 
<p>BUTTERFLY WEED* (<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>) Blooms July-September</p> 	<p>COMMON MILKWEED* (<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>) Blooms June-August</p> 	<p>NEW ENGLAND ASTER (<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>) Blooms August-October</p> 
<p>MEADOW BLAZING STAR (<i>Liatris ligulistylis</i>) Blooms August-September</p> 	<p>AROMATIC ASTER (<i>Symphotrichum oblongifolium</i>) Blooms September-October</p> 	<p>RED (SWAMP) MILKWEED* (<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>) Blooms July-August</p> 
<p>SWEET BLACK-EYED SUSAN (<i>Rudbeckia subtomentosa</i>) Blooms July-October</p> 	<p>ORANGE CONEFLOWER (<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>) Blooms July-September</p> 	<p>RAIRIE PHLOX (<i>Phlox pilosa</i>) Blooms April-June</p> 

Similar in appearance

Many of these flowers need a period of freezing in order to germinate. Scatter seeds in your yard just before a snowfall, or cold stratify and germinate them indoors to give them a jump-start in spring!
Bloom times provided by Wisconsin State Herbarium, UW-Madison.
Learn more about how you can create monarch-friendly habitat in your yard and community at wimonarchs.org.



Designed by Madison Audubon, WMC Member & Supporter

The Urban & Greenspace Working Group picked these native species that could be added to gardens to attract monarchs and other pollinators.

NUMBERS TAKE FLIGHT

Key accomplishments from a few Collaborative partners (**Strategy 1.4 & Strategy 2.2**):

- Wisconsin DNR 2020 and 2019 articles in Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine on the Collaborative and “12 plants for monarchs” reached **85,000 subscriber mailboxes** and had a pass-around circulation of **300,000**. Ten monarch-related social media posts between 2019-2020 used WMC Toolkit content, earned **5,493 social media “reactions,” 418 comments,** and **1,714 shares**.
- Madison Audubon played an instrumental role in developing the Collaborative Communications & Outreach strategies and sharing

messaging developed for their audience. They featured the WMC logo in each quarterly newsletter reaching over **3,000** Wisconsinites and showcased the 12 Plants for Monarchs graphic in each one; promoted **16 social media snippets** to its **15,000 social media followers**; and launched a campaign to encourage citizens to collect and donate their milkweed seeds to allow distribution to companies, organizations, and individuals seeking to plant more milkweed in 2021. Over 100 pounds of seed were collected!

- The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin shared **48 Facebook** posts promoting monarch conservation, education, and

volunteer opportunities; a 2019 press release covering the new Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund; highlighted the work in their e-newsletters which go out to over **6,000 members** and supporters and over **1,600 conservation partners**; featured an article on Wisconsin’s native pollinators in the member newsletter mailed to over **4,000 members,** and offered **16 in-person** and one virtual field trip focused on pollinators.

- DNR’s Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation increased subscribership for its monarch email subscriber list by **38%** in 2019-2020, with Collaborative promotion driving the increase.

MONARCHS IN THE NEWS

From 2018-2020, the Collaborative was mentioned in 18 different articles, including coverage from Wisconsin Public Radio, Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News, the National Audubon Society Magazine, Brava Magazine and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Collaborative partners Caitlin Williamson (NRF) and Owen Boyle (DNR) participated in live on-air interviews about how Wisconsinites can be engaged in monarch conservation. Find articles about the Collaborative here: <https://wiatri.net/Projects/Monarchs/news.cfm>

IN-PERSON OUTREACH BLOOMS

Collaborative Coordinator Brenna Jones attended **over a dozen** conferences and events to give presentations, staff educational displays and hand out promotional materials created by Communications & Outreach members. Additionally, Coordination Team members brought promotional materials to conferences and events and added information about the Collaborative to their presentation slides. The conferences and events where the Collaborative had a presence include:

- Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education (2019)
- Butterfly Action Day at Olbrich Botanical Gardens (2018 and 2019)
- Farm Technology Days (2018 and 2019)
- The Nelson Institute/Community Conservation sponsored "Nature's Guardians" event (2019)
- Pheasants Forever Private Lands Meeting (2019)
- Wild Ones meeting in Stevens Point (2019)
- Southeast Wisconsin Conservation Summit (2018)
- Madison Bird and Nature Festival (2019)
- Nelson Institute Earth Day (2018 and 2019)
- Monarch Joint Venture/Midwest Association for Fish and Wildlife Agencies (2018)

- Wisconsin Public Television's Garden Expo (2019 and 2020)
- Fox Valley Wild Ones "Toward Harmony with Nature" (2019)
- Wisconsin Wetland Science Conference (2019)
- Wisconsin Lakes Convention (2019)
- Gathering Waters Annual Meeting (2019)
- Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service Annual Meeting (2019)
- The Prairie Enthusiasts Annual Meeting (2020)



COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH WORKING GROUP

To maximize effectiveness and persuasiveness of monarch conservation by sector, the Communications & Outreach Working Group will collaborate with each working group to create sector-targeted messaging and materials. **(Strategy 1.5)**

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH WORKING GROUP

■ CO-LEADS

Brenna Marsicek, Madison Audubon Society

PJ Liesch, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Entomology; Previously Caitlin Williamson, Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, from 2018-2019

■ MEMBERS

Ruth Ann Lee, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

Jessica Miller, Mosquito Hill Nature Center

Moya Mowbray, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center

Mike Murray, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Jim Price, Friends of the Monarch Trail

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PROTECTED LANDS WORKING GROUP



DEMONSTRATION SITES ADD HABITAT AND INSPIRE OTHERS

Two partners initiated monarch demonstration sites in 2020 in three locations to add more high-quality monarch and pollinator habitat to the Wisconsin landscape and inspire others to do the same. Partners are documenting the process from site preparation to site maintenance and allow others to visit the site, enjoy all of the plants, pollinators, and wildlife they see, and gain ideas and inspiration to try something similar.

■ **Madison Audubon Society: Peter Fissel Pollinator Garden at Goose Pond Sanctuary**

In early June 2020, volunteers, summer interns, and staff planted and mulched a 1,600 square foot demonstration pollinator and monarch garden with 1,624 plants at Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary one mile south of Arlington in Columbia County. Agrecol Native Plant and Nursery designed the species list and calculated the number of plants in shortgrass and tallgrass plots. Overall, six species of prairie grasses and 39 species of flowering plants were planted, including butterflyweed, common, showy, and whorled milkweeds for monarch butterflies. The garden was named for Peter Fissel, a long-time Madison Audubon member and volunteer who was passionately interested in butterflies, birds, and in making the world a better place. Funding was provided by the Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative through the Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, donations to Madison Audubon in memory of Peter Fissel, and in-kind donations from Agrecol. The garden will be monitored by Goose Pond Sanctuary volunteers and staff to assess use by pollinators including monarch butterflies. – *Mark Martin and Susan Foot-Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary Resident Managers*



Planting prairie grasses and flowering plants at Goose Pond Sanctuary.

MARK AND SUE MARTIN, GOOSE POND
SANCTUARY RESIDENT MANAGERS

■ **DNR's Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation (NHC) added demonstration sites at two state natural areas.**

At Coon Fork State Natural Area, NHC crews are restoring 400 acres of barrens and adjacent lands to improve Species of Greatest Conservation Need and pollinator habitat, including the monarch butterfly and the Karner blue butterfly. The restoration, which began in fall 2020, includes reducing tree and brush overstory, eradicating invasive plant species, preparing seeding sites, and seeding to establish a broad variety of native barrens and savanna wildflowers that bloom throughout spring, summer, and fall. This restoration will be documented from the initial site prep, through years of site maintenance, and will potentially be used as a teaching site about barrens pollinator habitat during fields trips or other events. The work is funded by a Competitive State Wildlife Grant and Chelsea Weininger is coordinating the grant.



Prescribed burn in 2020 at Coon Fork State Natural Area demonstration site.

JACOB TUMM, EAU CLAIRE COUNTY FORESTER

■ At Ottawa Lake Prairie in Southern Kettle Moraine Forest, the monarch habitat demonstration site will convert 12 acres of cool season grass/brush into a diverse native prairie, install interpretive signage and promote visitation to the site by land managers and members of the public who are interested in creating monarch habitat on their own lands. The planting will include milkweeds, diverse nectar plants and other species that support monarchs and other pollinators across the growing season. In 2021, NHC staff will clear and burn brush, purchase seed, contract herbicide application, conduct prescribed burns on herbicide areas and broadcast frost seeding on snow.



PETER DUERKOP

The Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest site where monarch habitat restoration will take place.

This demonstration site is funded by the Pine Barrens Pollinator State Wildlife Grant and the site restoration work is being coordinated by Pete Duerkop.

FUTURE PLANS **PROTECTED LANDS WORKING GROUP**

The Protected Lands Working Group is finishing a suggested seed list for monarchs and pollinators that will carry the Collaborative branding and will be distributed through Collaborative communications channels.

Group members are also creating a list of sites with large geographic area and high potential for monarch habitat and will begin outreach to encourage the landowners to create or enhance habitat or collect data about existing monarch habitat.



PHEASANTS FOREVER

A Farm Bill Biologist talks with a landowner about pollinator habitat creation and maintenance.

PROTECTED LANDS WORKING GROUP

■ **CO-LEADS**

Mark Martin, Madison Audubon Society

Vacant, Previously Chris Kirkpatrick (The Prairie Enthusiasts) from 2018-2019

■ **MEMBERS**

Armund Bartz, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Charles Carlin, Gathering Waters (Interim)

Brad Herrick, University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum

Jeni Klein, Woodland Dunes Nature Center

Marty Moses, Pheasants Forever

Todd Trapp, US Department of Agriculture

Jay Watson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Jessup Weichelt, Department of Defense, Fort McCoy

Robert Welch, Waupaca Biological Field Station

Research & Monitoring Liaison: Thelma Heidel-Baker, Riveredge Nature Center

Communications & Outreach Working Group Liaison: Brenna Marsicek, Madison Audubon Society

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RIGHTS-OF-WAY WORKING GROUP



SHARING MONARCH INFORMATION AND INITIATIVES

Partners conducted education and outreach to spread awareness about monarch and pollinator conservation along Wisconsin rights-of-way. One example is an article titled "Monarchs Still Need Help," published in the Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News on March 28, 2019. Partners shared information about their ongoing pollinator conservation initiatives as well as activities that their employees, partners and the public can do at home to benefit monarchs and pollinators. **(Goal 4)**

HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS BLOOM

Partners implemented pollinator and monarch habitat restoration projects across the state, restoring areas with pollinator-friendly seed mixes. **(Goal 2)**

Partners implemented pollinator-friendly best management practices (BMPs) on their projects and routine operations to minimize impacts on pollinators. **(Goal 1)**

CONSERVATION AGREEMENT ADVANCES PROACTIVE CONSERVATION

Several partners participated in a significant effort to develop a Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCA) for Monarch Butterfly on Energy and Transportation Lands, which was finalized in March 2020. Through the agreement, Energy and Transportation partners agree to implement proactive conservation efforts for monarch butterflies in exchange for

certain regulatory certainties under the Endangered Species Act if the species is listed in the future. To learn more, visit the Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group website: <http://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/national-monarch-ccaa/>



XCEL ENERGY

Xcel Energy is becoming a leader in pollinator conservation in Wisconsin and the Midwest! They maintain 44 active pollinator sites ranging from 0.25 to 800 acres, covering over 2,100 acres of pollinator habitat in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin. The sites are located on company properties including under transmission lines and around substations, generating plants, office buildings, community solar gardens and a wind project.

In 2019, Xcel Energy conducted several pollinator-friendly projects, including:

- Partnering with the Chippewa Valley Beekeepers to dedicate

RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS

In 2019, the Rights-of-Way Working Group engaged a new right-of-way partner, ITC Midwest ITC Midwest is a transmission company operating in the Midwest. **(Goal 2)**

34 acres of land for community beehives outside their Eau Claire substation.

- Xcel Energy's Day of Service drew more than 50 employees and community volunteers planting a pollinator garden around a solar panel at YMCA Camp St. Croix. Maintenance activities also took place at project sites including mowing and removing invasive species by hand in Wisconsin.
- Partnering with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the City of Little Canada, Minn., to plant a pollinator site on transmission right-of-way adjacent to city parks.



New pollinator habitat seeded outside a new substation in Turtle Lake, Wis.

REST AREAS SHOWCASE PRAIRIE POSSIBILITIES

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has partnered with the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin (NRF) through its Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund, to implement a pilot project that restores five acres of prairie at two rest areas along Interstate 39/90/94 west of Madison. These demonstration sites are at two of the most heavily visited rest areas in the state and are highly visible to the traveling public, making for a great public education opportunity to showcase pollinator and monarch conservation along Wisconsin rights-of-way. Following restoration, WisDOT will work with the facility managers and other partners to implement pollinator-friendly BMPs during future site management activities.



ALYSSA BARRETTE, WISDOT

Pollinators at a rest area demonstration site.



RIGHTS OF WAY WORKING GROUP

Partners are excited to continue their efforts into 2021. Although the global pandemic may affect plans and budgets, partners hope to maintain momentum and continue their pollinator conservation efforts in 2021 and beyond including:

- Implementing pollinator-friendly BMPs
- Implementing pollinator and monarch habitat restoration projects across the state
- Conducting education and outreach activities related to monarch and pollinator conservation
- Several partners are planning to enroll in the Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for Monarch Butterfly on Energy and Transportation Lands, which will encourage proactive monarch conservation efforts on rights-of-way across the state and nation
- The Right-of-Way Working Group also plans to begin compiling best management practices specific to Wisconsin rights-of-way to share with current and future partners. This effort may lead into education and outreach opportunities for the sector group.

- *Rights-of-way section contributed by Alyssa Barrette, Wisconsin Department of Transportation*

RIGHTS OF WAY WORKING GROUP

■ CO-LEADS

Alyssa Barrette, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Cindy Burtley, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Matt McFarlane, Xcel Energy
Staci Pieper, Dairyland Power Cooperative

Ashley Pike, Alliant Energy

■ MEMBERS

Jeanne Burns-Frank, Madison Gas & Electric

Stacy Rowe, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Christa Schaefer, Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Dan Fedderly, Wisconsin County Highway Association

Susan Schumacher, WE Energies & Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

Brad Foss, Dairyland Power Cooperative

Johanna Sievwright, American Transmission Company

Steve Freese, Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association

Communications & Outreach Working Group Liaison: Moya

Deb Frosch, Alliant Energy

Mowbray, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center

Becky Haase, Enbridge Energy

Thomas Hillstrom, Xcel Energy

Jeff Jaeckels, Madison Gas & Electric

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

URBAN & GREENSPACE WORKING GROUP



Using all the land that's fit for milkweed planting in the entire urbanized northern and northeastern U.S. could support 15 percent of the stems needed to stabilize the eastern monarch population, according to research by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Keller Science Action Center. Member outreach and innovative partnerships with community and other partners significantly expanded monarch habitat over the last two years to help urban areas do their part.

ONLINE NATIVE GARDEN PLANNING WEBINAR

The Urban & Greenspace Working Group hosted a webinar titled "Planning a Native Plant Garden to Help Monarchs," led by Paul Skawinski (UW-Extension and Wild Ones Central Wisconsin Chapter) and Shannon Davis-Foust (UW-Oshkosh and Wild Ones Fox Valley Chapter). Over 100 people attended the live event and, as of December 2020, over 600 people have viewed the webinar found at https://youtu.be/_RZ1x5ycaOk (Strategy 2.5)

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

WILD ONES FOX VALLEY AREA CHAPTER (STRATEGY 1.2)

The Wild Ones chapter turned 25 in 2019 and pursued wide-ranging efforts to help add milkweed and nectar plants in urban areas, including awarding grants to several school and community groups planting butterfly-attracting and other native plant gardens.

- The chapter awarded Heckrodt Wetland Reserve a Natural Landscapes for Tomorrow Grant for their "Pollinators @ Our Schools Program," a proposal to install two pollinator gardens at Menasha's Clovis Grove Elementary School and Banta Elementary School. Heckrodt hopes to increase citizen science opportunities with these gardens.
- The chapter funded the City of Menasha Sustainability Committee's "City of Menasha Raingarden Renewal Project," which is a renewal and expansion of their high visibility raingarden in front of the East Central Regional Planning Commission and will include signage.
- Kaleidoscope Academy of Appleton was funded for "Butterfly Garden Phase I" to construct a butterfly garden to promote knowledge of butterfly-attracting plants.
- Pollinator projects were also funded at Heckrodt Wetland Reserve and the Omro Area Community Center, which were planted last year.
- Wild Ones worked with the Stevens Point Forestry Department to improve an old prairie habitat by adding about 260 native nectar plants, including over 50 stems of common milkweed and butterflyweed.
- Wild Ones coordinated a public native plant sale to make it easier for residents in Central Wisconsin to obtain native plants.
- Chapter members worked with Central Rivers Farmshed in Stevens Point to add native plants to their annual herb/vegetable plant sale. They allowed Wild Ones to grow native plants from seeds in their greenhouse; one-third of the plants were donated to their plant sale and the rest were used in local demonstration garden projects.
- Worked with Portage County Land Conservation Department and farmers in the Mill Creek Watershed to add nectar plants and swamp milkweed plugs to marginal cropland areas in difficult corners of their fields.

– Contributed by Shannon Davis-Foust, Fox Valley Wild Ones/University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

**PARTNER
SPOTLIGHT**

**WESTERN GREAT LAKES BIRD & BAT
OBSERVATORY**

The Western Great Lakes Bird & Bat Observatory (WGLBBO) has spearheaded a neighborhood habitat improvement project that could serve as a model and be replicated in other areas of Wisconsin. In 2020, they invited 1,000 households in two different pilot neighborhoods to fill out a survey about their current approaches to gardening, whether they are already incorporating native plants in their plantings and, if not, what kind of help they needed. Each respondent received a complimentary milkweed starter kit that included four species of milkweed. They hope to expand the number of participants and volunteers next year! More information can be found here. **(Strategy 1.1)**



Photo of pollinator habitat at the W.J. Niederkorn Library, part of the Neighborhood Habitat Improvement Project in Port Washington.

WGLBBO

**PARTNER
SPOTLIGHT**

**WILD ONES CENTRAL WISCONSIN
CHAPTER (STRATEGY 1.2)**

The Wild Ones Central Wisconsin Chapter partnered with the Stevens Point Kiwanis Club in 2020 to convert 300 square feet of mowed turf shoreline to a native plant butterfly garden at the YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow in Amherst Junction, Wis.



Patch Street Prairie managed by the Wild Ones Central Wisconsin Chapter and the Stevens Point Forestry Department.

PAUL SKAWINSKI

**FUTURE
PLANS**

**URBAN &
GREENSPACE
WORKING GROUP**

Urban & Greenspace Working Group representatives will continue to promote the creation and maintenance of high-quality monarch habitat across urban areas in Wisconsin. All group members are very active within their communities and have a high level of knowledge about monarch habitat, so feel free to connect with them, especially if they are in your own community!

**URBAN &
GREENSPACE
WORKING GROUP**

CO-LEADS

Shannon Davis-Foust (UW-Oshkosh/Fox Valley Wild Ones)

Paul Skawinski (UW-Extension/Wild Ones Central Wisconsin)

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Susan Carpenter, UW-Madison Arboretum

Barb Cattani, Fox Valley Wild Ones (Chapter President)

Debi Nitka, Citizen Science/Monarch Enthusiast

PJ Liesch, UW-Madison

Heide Piehler, Shorewood Citizen Science/Monarch Enthusiast

Communications & Outreach Working Group Liaison: Jim Price, Friends of the Monarch Trail

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RESEARCH & MONITORING WORKING GROUP



One of the many challenges the Collaborative faces is measuring progress toward the statewide goal of adding 119 million milkweed stems to Wisconsin by 2038. Much work was done to collect data on new and enhanced habitat in Wisconsin on land owned, controlled or managed through partners, and to bring in estimates of smaller private plots.



A monarch that has been tagged with a Monarch Watch sticker.

PAUL SKAWINSKI



Participants at a Monarch Larva Monitoring Program training at the UW-Madison Arboretum.

MONARCH JOINT VENTURE

DATA COLLECTION SHOWS PROGRESS TOWARD STEM COUNT GOAL

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service created the Monarch Conservation Database to capture information about recently completed, ongoing and planned conservation efforts for the monarch butterfly to use in its decision on whether to place the monarch on the federal Endangered and Threatened Species List. DNR's 'monarch team' created a spreadsheet for partners to easily enter their habitat data from the previous year and transferred that information into the Monarch Conservation Database. Data was collected from DNR land managers in NHC, Wildlife, and the Parks bureaus, as well as from partners in both 2018 and 2019 and entered into the database in 2020.

MONARCH CONSERVATION DATABASE WISCONSIN TOTALS 2014-2020

The MCD was created by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for use in the monarch listing decision.

TOTAL ACRES OF REPORTED NEW OR ENHANCED HABITAT

- 1,003 acres of partner land
- 103,918 acres of DNR land
- Total = 105,247 new or enhanced acres

TOTAL INCREASE IN MILKWEED STEMS REPORTED (WITH AN ASSUMPTION OF OTHER NECTAR SOURCES) IS:

- 156,199 stems on partner land
- 331,490 stems on DNR land
- Total = 487,689 new stems

**Using Thogmartin et al estimates*

TOP 5 SITES AND ACREAGE REPORTED IN 2019

- Hogback Prairies SNA (NFWF grant) – **219 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Oak Coulee Woods (private) – **196 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Fort McCoy – **190 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Rush Creek State Natural Area (NFWF grant) – **123 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Pershing Wildlife Area – **88 acres** of new or enhanced habitat

TOP 5 SITES AND ACREAGE REPORTED IN 2020

- Quincy Bluff and Wetlands State Natural Area – **350 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Lawrence Creek State Natural Area – **200 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Hartman Creek State Park – **130 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Navarino State Wildlife Area – **72 acres** of new or enhanced habitat
- Paradise Valley Wildlife Area, Menlan and Paradise Valley Area, Beaver Dam Lake – both **50 acres** of new or enhanced habitat

APP HELPS MAKE GARDEN HABITAT COUNT

Collaborative partners promoting use of the HabiTally app created by The Climate Corporation and hosted by Iowa State University engaged the public in initial efforts to add their milkweed stems to the count. Community members with smaller gardens or acres of habitat can easily use the app to enter their data, which was then submitted into the Monarch Conservation Database. Improvements to the app and continued promotion by Collaborative members are expected to substantially increase community members' reporting.

In Wisconsin, data reported through HabiTally added 326 additional acres of monarch habitat for 12,894 additional stems.

'Submit your Efforts' page on wimonarchs.org

Group members created a new web page on the wimonarchs.org site to showcase key ways individuals and groups in Wisconsin could collect data to help monarch conservation. This page includes a screenshot of the website where people can find more information, as well as information about each method of data collection.

FINDING A WAY TO COLLECT DATA THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

Since there are many ways to monitor monarch eggs, larva, adults and the habitat they occupy during their breeding season, the Working Group teamed up with Monarch Joint Venture to consolidate a list of the monitoring tools used across the eastern and western migratory routes. Members understand there are many ways to collect data and this can get confusing for the average person (or conservationist!) The handout is intended to serve as a simple way to find the monitoring program that works for people. The draft document includes:

- Interest in monitoring eggs, caterpillars, and/or adult butterflies
- Amount of time that could be spent monitoring
- Where people are geographically along the migratory path
- If people are willing to travel off-trail
- Skills desired to learn
- Kid friendly
- Program overviews

LITERATURE REVIEW PROVIDES COMMON GROUND

Member Jennifer Thieme (Monarch Joint Venture), coordinated efforts for a literature review of key recent scientific papers regarding seeding rates and establishment of various *Asclepias* species. This information gives Research & Monitoring Working Group members a comprehensive understanding of current scientific information to use when working with other Working Groups.



The Research & Monitoring Working Group will continue to expand upon the work started in 2019 and will continue to provide quality, science-based information to other Working Groups when needed.

RESEARCH & MONITORING WORKING GROUP

■ CO-LEADS

Thelma Heidel-Baker, USDA-NRCS; previously Claudio Gratton (University of Wisconsin-Madison, Entomology Department) from 2018-2019

Dave Hogg, (Wisconsin-Madison, Entomology Department) from 2018-2020

■ WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Eva Lewandowski, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Karen Oberhauser, University of Wisconsin- Madison Arboretum

Nancy Sheehan, University of Wisconsin- Madison Arboretum/ Journey North

Jennifer Thieme, Monarch Joint Venture

Sarah Warner, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Communications & Outreach Working Group Liaison: Jessica Miller, Mosquito Hill Nature Center

WISCONSIN MONARCH COLLABORATIVE



HOW TO DONATE

Does your organization want to join us in our efforts? Find out more about how you can participate in the Collaborative by visiting wimonarchs.org.

Would you like to see more native pollinator habitat and monarch butterflies across the Wisconsin landscape? If so, make a tax-deductible donation to the Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative today!
<https://wiatri.net/Projects/Monarchs/donate.cfm>

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

FUNDING

Are you looking to add more pollinator/ monarch habitat to your property, school or community?

Here are some organizations and programs that can possibly help fund your next project!

- Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin
- The Bee and Butterfly Fund
- Healthy Lakes WI
- The Plant Dane Native Plant Program

The **Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund** of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin provides critical funding to support native pollinator conservation efforts across the state. From providing capacity building support for the Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative, to supporting the creation and enhancement of habitat, research and monitoring programs, and education and outreach efforts, the Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund has helped add milkweed and other native plants to the Wisconsin landscape, while connecting people to monarchs and other pollinators. Donations to the Fund can be made online at www.wisconsinconservation.org/donate and should be designated to the "Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Fund".

DO YOU WANT TO BE A WISCONSIN MONARCH CHAMPION?!

Here are some key ways you can help Wisconsin monarchs:

- Plant a garden with native milkweed and nectar plants that bloom throughout the growing season
- Reduce/eliminate use of insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides
- Enhance existing monarch habitat
- Manage invasive species
- Volunteer to help others with monarch efforts
- Register your garden with Monarch Watch
- Participate in citizen science projects such as Journey North, the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project, or the Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program
- Teach others about monarch butterflies and their habitat

You can also take the pledge to help monarchs here:
<http://wiatri.net/Projects/Monarchs/pledge.cfm>

Ornominate a Wisconsin Monarch Champion here:
<http://wiatri.net/Projects/Monarchs/nominate.cfm>



Julie Hillary collecting milkweed seeds in the fall.



Shabazz High School Rain Garden, plants provided by the Plant Dane Native Plant Program.

DANE COUNTY LAND & WATER
RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

WISCONSIN MONARCH COLLABORATIVE



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