



Northeast Region Monarch Update

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Monarchs are best known for their beauty and impressive 3,000 mile migration for the cold winter months. While they can live in a variety of habitats, monarchs rely on milkweed for survival. Less commonly known is that monarchs and other pollinators are ecological indicators and a vital component to crop production and plant pollination across the country. In the last 25 years, monarch populations have declined by 90 percent due to habitat loss from pesticide and logging in overwintering sites. The Region 5 Monarch Team has been working since September 2014 to reach the community and get actively involved in monarch conservation and monitoring. With the team's leadership, Region 5 has made great strides. This update provides detailed information about that work, and opportunities for the future.



Joanna Gilkeson/USFWS

Monarch flexing its wings after hatching

The National FWS Monarch Initiative

The Service provided \$1.2 million to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to establish a Monarch Butterfly Conservation Fund. NFWF will leverage additional funds from other federal agencies, state and local partners, and the private sector. The Service also allocated an additional \$2 million to restore and enhance more than 200,000 acres of habitat for monarchs while also supporting over 750 schoolyard habitats and pollinator gardens. For more detailed information on the fund, projects and on what the Service and partners are doing for monarchs, please visit www.fws.gov/savethemonarch.

Region 5 Receives \$135,000 Award for Monarch Work

Region 5 submitted proposals to Headquarters for monarch conservation funds. Two of our proposals were successful:

- \$100,000 to work on monarch conservation on States lands. A notice of funding availability has been issued, and states are in the process of putting together proposals, which are due August 1. We anticipate projects hitting the ground sometime this fall.
- \$35,000 was used to hire a youth monarch intern as part of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps. The 9-month position is based at Heinz Refuge in Philadelphia, and will help us connect other youth with our conservation efforts. Leah Hawthorn has started as the regional monarch intern. She's from the greater Philadelphia area and will be working to communicate the plight of monarch butterflies and other pollinators, what the Service is doing to help and how people can get involved.

Pollinators Focus of NEAFWA Special Session

We coordinated a special session at the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies annual conference in Rhode Island in April. The session educated participants on the threats to monarchs and other pollinators and provided participants with tools they need to begin planning and implementing pollinator habitat projects.

Monarch Inventory and Monitoring

We are exploring the best way to implement inventory and monitoring work on refuges using a standard protocol and emphasizing citizen science to engage volunteers. We will likely use the Journey North protocols as a starting point, but will also stay apprised of any additional national monitoring efforts. A term tech working with Refuges will be assisting with this and will lead training sessions for Refuges and volunteers that want to participate.



A family at a Philadelphia Phillies game makes a pledge to help pollinators.

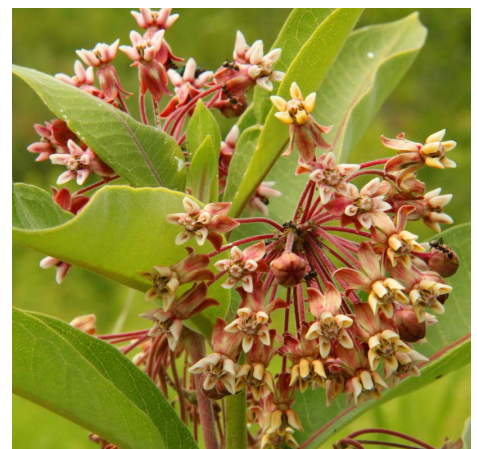
We have also applied for funding through the Science Support Partnership Program for monarch research to identify high priority migratory stopover areas. This information would be used to inform conservation strategies, including restoration.

Four Ways To Stay Up-to-Date on Monarch Activities

1. Visit our collaborative workspace on the LCC website. This site is accessible by the general public and serves as a one-stop-shop resource for all regional staff: <http://northatlanticlcc.org/groups/monarch-butterflies>. The site will be regularly updated as new information becomes available.
2. We will also communicate monarch news and updates through the North Atlantic LCC e-mail newsletter that David Eisenhauer sends out each quarter to the region.
3. Join the conversation and stay engaged on social media. We joined the Midwest Region in a campaign to encourage people to share photos of monarch butterflies to help raise awareness about the dangers monarchs face. The campaign will run through October 31. If your site has a social media page, join us and encourage people to #shareyourmonarchs. https://www.facebook.com/USFWSMidwest/app_451684954848385?ref=page_internal
4. Continue to [visit www.fws.gov/savethemonarch](http://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch). As we continue our efforts to help monarch butterflies, we will communicate and share our successes on the national monarch website.

Milkweed Seed Available

The Delaware Bay Estuary Program has made the following seeds available to all field offices in Region 5: Common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), Butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*) and *A. incarnata* (Swamp milkweed – an obligate wetland species). Seeds will be provided upon request while supplies last. Contact Flavia Rutkosky at flavia_rutkosky@fws.gov or 302/653 9152 to make the request.



Common milkweed



Monarch butterflies during migration

2015 Monarch and Pollinator Challenge

The Director recently issued the Monarch and Pollinator Challenge, which runs retroactively from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015. This year you can earn points in three categories: habitat restoration and enhancement; monitoring and research; and education and outreach. A region will be recognized as the national champion in each category. In addition, one field station in each region, with the highest combined point total, will be named the regional champion.

You can find all of the details, including the Director's memo and an attachment outlining point values for each activity at your station, at <https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/go/post/EC-Pollinators>.

2014 Pollinator Challenge Results

Congratulations to the New Jersey Field Office, the Region 5 winners of the 2014 pollinator challenge!

<https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/ceshandler/entry?id=338779E3-F121-08AC-269FF4DAC01DB2E8#more>

2015 Pollinator Posters

The 2015 Pollinator Poster is available from Denver Publications Center. You can view an image of the poster at: <http://www.pollinator.org/posters.htm>. Service offices should order through the Publication Center. The order form and price list is under "USFWS Publication Ordering Information" at <http://www.fws.gov/external-affairs/marketing-communications/printing-and-publishing/>

If your order is time sensitive you can contact Jesse Mason at jtmason@blm.gov. The posters are shipped FedEx Ground and orders are generally processed the same day. The price will remain the same as last year – \$25 + shipping and handling for a box of 50.

Resources

The Handy Bee Manual: <http://bio2.elmira.edu/fieldbio/beemanual.pdf>

Conservation Status and Ecology of the Monarch Butterfly in the United States: http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/NatureServe-Xerces_monarchs_USFS-final.pdf.

Monarch Joint Venture: <http://www.monarchjointventure.org/resources/links/>

The Xerces Society: <http://www.xwrcwx.org>

Research Topics

Should species cultivated varieties of native plants be used in habitat restoration projects?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTmuDcEzTOw>.

<http://ipps-srna.org/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/19B-Student-Poythress.pdf>.

What is responsible for the monarch's migratory ability?

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/10/141001-monarch-migration-genome-science/>

Are butterfly gardens an effective approach to monarch conservation?

http://udspace.udel.edu/bitstream/handle/19716/11191/Brian_Cutting_thesis.pdf?sequence=

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
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