

Guide to Help Save the Monarch Butterfly



Introduction:

The monarch butterfly is disappearing: Scientists estimate the number of monarchs has decreased by 90% over the last two decades. Like many other groups who wish to save this iconic insect, Monarch Maniacs of Northern Illinois are trying to reverse this alarming trend. How? By educating our neighbors about what's happening and what each of us can do to help.

Factors Contributing to Monarch's Decline:

1. Habitat Loss: Millions of acres that were once home to the monarch on its epoch migration route are now paved over with cities, super highways, parking lots, and single crop mega-farms.
2. Invasive and non-native plant species compete with native plants that the monarch depends upon for survival.
3. Deforestation in Mexico, where the monarch overwinters.
4. Indiscriminate/overuse of herbicides.
5. A warming climate.

The monarch is an amazing insect and deserves to be protected; here's what you can do to help:

- Schedule a movie/discussion program at your local library, civic group, scouts, schools, men/women's club, garden club, etc. using the resources listed here.
- Plant milkweed in your own yard or business.
- Lessen or eliminate the use of pesticides and herbicides in your yard.
- When planting, use native plants and valuable nectar and pollinator plants.
- Encourage your mayor to sign the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge
- Learn more (watch the movies, visit the websites, join an environmental group, garden group, or local nature center, become a citizen scientist)

List of movies:

- The Incredible Journey of the Butterflies (PBS Nova 2011)
- Flight of the Butterflies (2012, 40 min)
- Kay MacNeil's YouTube video (45 min)
- TED Talks: How Monarchs Self-Medicating (google TED Talks, search monarch)

List of websites for more information:

National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, Xerces Society, Garden Clubs of Illinois, Monarch Watch, Save Our Monarchs

Contact us: MonarchManiacs2018@gmail.com