

MAKE YOUR GARDEN MONARCH FRIENDLY



Monarch populations are in decline. By growing food sources for butterflies (flower nectar) and caterpillars (milkweed), **you can help to reverse this trend** while being able to enjoy a beautiful and iconic visitor to your garden.

MORE MILKWEED, PLEASE!

Including at least a few milkweed plants in your garden is essential if you are trying to attract monarchs. The reason? **Monarch caterpillars feed exclusively on milkweed.** Unfortunately, milkweed populations throughout North America have been impacted by climate change, development, and pesticide use. There are two species of milkweed found in New Brunswick:



Common Milkweed



Swamp Milkweed

Milkweed Myths:

- Milkweed will take over my garden. ✗
There are two native species of milkweed in NB - Common and Swamp Milkweed. Common Milkweed has a reputation of being invasive in a garden setting, but Swamp Milkweed stays where you plant it. If you want to incorporate Common Milkweed into your garden, but don't want it to spread, try planting it in a raised bed and remove the seed pods before they open.
- Milkweed will make my pets sick. ✗
*The sap is toxic in **large quantities**, and tastes absolutely horrible. Most animals will avoid it, but aren't in danger if they have a little nibble first.*

Handle with care

Milkweed contains toxic alkaloids in the sap that help protect the monarchs from predators. It can cause eye and skin irritation. Take appropriate precautions and wear gloves, long sleeves, and long pants when working with these plants. Wash hands immediately after handling and take care to avoid touching your face.



Wild Flowers

In addition to milkweed, monarch butterflies drink nectar from many different flowering species. We suggest planting wild flower species for several reasons:

- They are more resilient to pests.
- They are adapted to our environmental conditions, making them hardier and less work intensive (many are perennials, or self seeding).
- They will attract a wider array of beneficial wildlife including other butterflies, bees, and birds.

Here is a list of wild nectar species that you can incorporate into your garden, and which species they will attract.

Nannyberry 🦋 🐝 🐦

Bee Balm 🦋 🐝 🐦

Canadian Aster 🦋 🐝 🐦

Goldenrod 🦋 🐝 🐦

Lilac 🦋 🐝 🐦

Black Eyed Susan 🦋 🐝 🐦

Liatris 🦋 🐝 🐦

Joe Pye Weed 🦋 🐝

Lupins 🦋 🐝

Fireweed 🦋 🐝

Yarrow 🦋 🐝



Non- Native Nectar Flowers

You can't go wrong with a garden entirely made up of native plants, but here are a few non-native species that will also attract monarchs.

Purple Coneflower 🦋 🐝 🐦

Bellflowers 🦋 🐝

Butterfly Bush 🦋 🐝 🐦

Shasta Daisy 🦋

Butterfly Weed 🦋 🐝

Common Marigold 🦋 🐝

Hollyhocks 🦋 🐦

Phlox 🦋 🐝



← This is a non-native species of milkweed that behaves well in a garden setting

OTHER TIPS!

- Avoid using pesticides! They don't discriminate against the insects you want from the ones you don't - you can inadvertently kill the butterflies you are trying to attract.
- As a rule of thumb, if you let your garden grow a little unkempt and "wild" it will be more attractive to wildlife. So, feel free to skip the mowing on occasion!
- Leave a bare patch of soil amongst your flowers. Many butterflies take in salts and minerals by sipping mud puddles.
- Include a water feature so your butterflies stay hydrated. A shallow dish on the ground with a couple inches of water and a few flat rocks for basking will do. Don't forget to change the water and clean out any algal growth periodically.
- Bunch like-coloured blooms together. Monarchs use sight to find nectar flowers, so patches of uniformly coloured flowers are easier for them to spot from above than lone blooms.
- Plan your garden to stagger the emergence, growing season, and blooming of wild flowers. This ensures a steady food supply. More blooms = more butterflies.
- Ensure any new plants you purchase are not grown with neonicotinoids. These can persist in the plant for years and will harm pollinators. Check with the producer or nursery.

Want to learn more?



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