



## Iowa IWLA Monarch Project Chapter Brief / FAQs

### Why Monarch butterflies?

- Monarchs are a **native** pollinator.
- Population is declining due to urbanization, herbicide/pesticide use, loss of habitat, and declining food supply (milkweed).

### Why are pollinators important?

- Over 80% of flowering plants in the world depend on pollinators.
- One of every three mouthfuls of food we consume is a result of pollinators.

### What is being asked of the chapter?

- Designate an area of weed-free soil (40 square feet minimum preferred) for planting milkweed seed and mixed wildflower seed. The Iowa Division has purchased seed packets for distributing to all 42 chapters.
  - Each seed packet covers approximately 40 square feet. Chapters will receive two [2] to four [4] packets. Additional packets are available from the Division office until supply is exhausted.
- Select a day (September 5<sup>th</sup> or September 6<sup>th</sup>) for sowing the seed. Seed will need to be watered until germination occurs (approximately 3 weeks). **If these dates do not work** please select another date in September or early October.
- Take pictures!! If posting to social media use the hashtag **#lowaIWLAmonarchproject**
  - Also forward pictures to the Iowa Division office for promotional purposes
  - Share information with local media
- Call or e-mail the Division office (800-957-4340 or iowaikes@qwestoffice.net) with square footage planted; include date of participation and pictures.
- Record volunteer participation for chapter 501c3 conservation activity. Each participating chapter raises awareness for the League.

### Why milkweed and wildflowers?

- Milkweed is the **only** food consumed by monarch larvae/caterpillars.
  - Each seed packet contains up to six [6] varieties of milkweed and twenty-five [25] varieties of wildflower seeds.
- Monarch butterflies will feed on nectar from native wildflowers.

### What kind of soil should chapters seek?

- Weed-free with full sunlight, so seedlings have a chance to grow. Seeds should be planted 1/8" deep.
- Shooting range berms, steep embankments, ditches, or any area which needs soil stabilization. Milkweed and wildflower roots grow deep into the soil. Planting seeds in a bed or border are additional ideas.

### What maintenance is required?

- Initially, newly sowed seed will need to be watered and kept moist. Once established, occasional maintenance may be necessary for removal of thistle and other non-native species. **Do not spray** milkweed plants or wildflowers with herbicide or pesticides. If aphids, or other bugs, are invading the area spray with a soap solution or high-pressure blasts of water.

### What if the chapter doesn't have land to plant seed?

- We suggest contacting your County Conservation Board, City, or school district, for possible planting sites.