



Thank you for taking an interest in our annual Milkweed Pod Collection! Every year we collect Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) pods, then redistribute the seeds across Ohio. You or your agency can help us sustain our efforts through a variety of ways:

- *Contribute as a donor.*
- *Join our neighborhood program!*
- *Follow us on social media.*



**For more information and to join OPHI in our pollinator habitat mission, contact us:**

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Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative

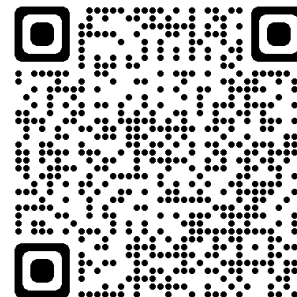


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*Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts*

## Why Milkweed?

*Asclepias* are the main host plant to the Monarch Butterfly

(*Danaus plexippus*). They visit Ohio during the summer months.

Monarch caterpillars favor new milkweed growth and eat about 17

leaves on average. After their first

instar, they search for new leaves

across plants (Fisher et al., 2020).

The adult females know this and

will instinctively lay their eggs on

freshly sprouted milkweed plants

(Fischer et al., 2015). Collecting

and planting common milkweed

seeds help support their habitat.

across the state.

*Ohio has seen a 33% drop in butterfly abundance since 2009. This is higher than the global average (Wepprich et al., 2019).*

## Collecting Seed Pods

- Wear gloves.
- Pick only when the pods are dry, gray/brown in color, and the seams pop open with gentle pressure.
- Only take up to 1/4 of the plant's pods.

### Please do not:

- Take milkweed pods without permission of the land owner.
- Remove the stem from the plant.
- Place rubber bands around the pods.
- Store when damp or in plastic bags.

## Donating

- Please follow the posted guidelines at your nearest participating Soil and Water Conservation District.

## Plant Butterfly Flower (*Asclepias syriaca*)

Last year, eastern migratory monarch butterfly abundance decreased by 59% in overwintering habitat (WWF, 2024). Plant milkweed to support their migration!

### Literature Cited:

- Fischer, S. J., Williams, E. H., Brower, L. P., & Palmiotto, P. A. (2015). Enhancing monarch butterfly reproduction by mowing fields of common milkweed. *The American Midland Naturalist*, 173(2), 229–240. <https://doi.org/10.1674/amid-173-02-229-240.1>
- Fisher, K. E., Hellmich, R. L., & Bradbury, S. P. (2020). Estimates of common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) utilization by monarch larvae (*Danaus plexippus*) and the significance of larval movement. *Journal of Insect Conservation*, 24(2), 297–307. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10841-019-00213-2>
- Wepprich, T., Adrion, J. R., Ries, L., Wiedmann, J., & Haddad, N. M. (2019). Butterfly abundance declines over 20 years of systematic monitoring in Ohio, USA. *PLoS One*, 14(7). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0216270>
- World Wildlife Fund. (2024, February 7). *Eastern monarch butterfly population declines 59% in central Mexico*. WWF. <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/eastern-migratory-monarch-butterfly-populations-decrease-by-59-in-2024>