

# How To Make a Monarch Habitat

## MID-ATLANTIC



Monarchs arrive in the mid-Atlantic region in summer to breed. Monarchs need two types of plants: milkweed for the caterpillars and nectar-producing flowering plants for adults. **The milkweed is critical, since the caterpillars will only eat milkweed.** Adults will eat many types of nectar-producing flowering plants, but you must ensure that the plants in your garden are flowering when the monarchs are flying over your area. Choose native plants that will attract other pollinators, as well.

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### - Example Nectar-Producing Plants -

**Joe-Pye Weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*)**

- partial sun

**Asters (New England variety)**

- full sun

**Goldenrods (Seaside variety)**

- full to light sun
- drier soil

**Blue Mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)**

- full to partial sun
- moist soil



### - Milkweed Plants -

**Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)**

- Full sun to part shade; good for urban soils

**Swamp or Pink Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)**

- Up to five feet tall
- Full sun, moist

**Clasping Milkweed (*Asclepias amplexicaulis*)**

- Up to three feet tall
- Drier or sandy soil

**Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)**

Full sun, moist to dry; good for urban areas

**Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)\***

- Up to three feet tall
- Sandy or drier soil

\*Not to be confused with Butterfly Bush, an invasive that you should not plant.

Do **NOT** use Tropical Milkweed; it is an invasive and might be bad for monarchs.

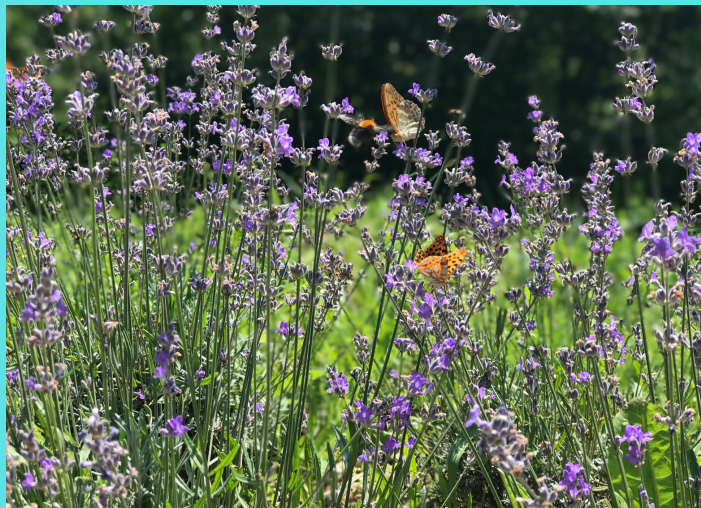
# Example Habitats

There are several ways to make an inviting garden for Monarchs. And even a small space can work! If possible, try to plant at least 6 milkweed plants so there is enough food for the caterpillars. Here are some ideas to get you started. For all of them, never use pesticides.

## CONTAINER GARDEN

If you live in an urban area, a container garden might be best. Pick a few pots or other containers at least 18 " wide. In one, plant one or two kinds of milkweed. In another, choose one or two pollinator plants. Be sure to check soil moisture regularly, as containers dry out faster than the ground. Overwinter your plants either in an unheated garage or a shed.

See [here](#) for more tips on creating a monarch container garden.



## LARGER MONARCH HABITAT

If you have the space, you can plant a larger Monarch garden in the ground. First, you need to remove the grass or other plants. Never use pesticides. Add one or more types of milkweed depending on the sun and soil condition and how much space you have available. Then also add a few nectar plants from the list on the previous page, paying attention that they will be flowering when the monarchs are in your area. Especially in the drier months, add a butterfly bath with a shallow dish since they also need water.

See [here](#) for more information on creating a larger habitat.

## Places to buy milkweed

Note: We suggest buying small milkweed plants. Milkweed is difficult to grow from seed, as they require cold stratification, meaning they will not germinate unless exposed to cold temperatures that slowly warm.

[Prairie Moon](#), will ship nationally

[American Meadows](#), will ship nationally

[Earth Sangha Wild Plant Nursery](#), Springfield, VA

[Good Host Plants](#), Philadelphia, PA

[Mid-Atlantic Native Plant Farm, Inc.](#), Cobbs Creek, VA (will ship)

[Nature by Design](#), Alexandria, VA

[Yellow Springs Farm](#), Talbot County, MD

[Cultivate Garden and Goods](#), Ellicott City, MD

[Milkweed Market](#), online ordering