



Nature And Your Yard

CLARK COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Create, Conserve, & Protect Monarch Habitats

Each fall, hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the United States and Canada to mountains in central Mexico where they wait out the winter until conditions favor a return flight in the spring. The monarch migration is truly one of the world's greatest natural wonders yet it is threatened by habitat loss at overwintering grounds in Mexico and throughout breeding areas in the United States and Canada.

Monarch Waystations are places that provide resources necessary for monarch butterflies to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. Without milkweeds throughout their spring and summer breeding areas in North America, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall. Similarly, without nectar from flowers, these fall migratory monarch butterflies would be unable to make their long journey to overwintering grounds in Mexico. The need for host plants for larvae and energy sources for adults applies to all monarch butterfly populations around the world.

Milkweeds and nectar sources are declining due to development and the widespread use of herbicides in croplands, pastures, and roadsides. Development in the U.S. consumes habitat for monarchs and other wildlife at a rate of 6,000 acres a day, 2.2 million acres per year.

To offset the loss of milkweeds and nectar sources we need to create, conserve, and protect monarch butterfly habitats. You can help by creating "Monarch Waystations" (habitats) in home gardens, at schools, businesses, parks, zoos, nature centers, along roadsides, and on other unused plots of land. This can be as simple as adding milkweeds and nectar sources to existing gardens or maintaining natural habitats with milkweeds.

By creating and maintaining a Monarch Waystation you are contributing to monarch butterfly conservation. Your efforts will help ensure the preservation of the species and the continuation of the spectacular monarch migration phenomenon. Find more information on monarchs, and become a certified waystation at www.MonarchWatch.org.

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Clark County SWCD Calendar

Monthly Board Meeting, June 3
Water Quality Workshop, June 8
Monthly Board Meeting, July 1
4th of July Holiday, July 5
Clark County 4H Fair, July 9-17
Indiana State Fair, August 7-22

Which Plants Attract Birds, Bees and Butterflies

There are several species of native wildflowers and grasses that will attract particular birds, bees, and butterflies.

For Song Birds: sunflowers, blazing star, white prairie clover, compass plant, prairie dock, big bluestem, little bluestem, sideoats grama, switch grass, prairie dropseed, downy serviceberry, hackberry, dogwood, juniper, elderberry and hawthorn.

For Hummingbirds: columbine, jewelweed, native phlox, native honey-suckle and cardinal flower, bee balm, lobelia, salvia, delphinium, and trumpet creeper.

For Bees: bee balm, black-eyed Susan, cardinal flower, clover and other legumes, cosmos, crape myrtle, goldenrods, lupine, mallows, milkweeds, mints and sunflowers.

For Butterflies: milkweed, butterfly bush, aster, purple cone-flower, blazing star, black-eyed Susan, dogbane, New Jersey tea, coreopsis, joe-pye weed, goldenrod, vervain, ironweed, Phlox, azalea, and zinnia



Drought Stress to Trees and Shrubs



Drought is a meteorological term for lack of precipitation over a long period of time. During dry summers, drought can be an issue through the months of June to mid October.

Plants can suffer from drought stress any time they receive less water than they need. Water is essential to the normal maintenance and growth of all plants. It moves into the plant roots from the soil and is transported up through the water conducting vessels in the branches, stems and foliage to all the plant cells. Eventually, the water evaporates from the tiny breathing pores in the leaves.

When plants don't receive adequate water, the water pressure in the cells can drop. Plants will begin to wilt, stop growing, become discolored and stunted, drop their leaves and fruit, or eventually starve and die. Other visible signs are discoloration to the edges of the leaf and the size of the leaf can be smaller than normal. Also, insect and disease problems are attracted to drought stressed plants, and plant dieback or death can occur more rapidly during this period.

Most plants in our area need water in the summer and early fall. Proper irrigation is the most common method to correct drought situations. Mulching the drip-zone of trees and plants will help conserve the soil moisture and it will also improve the soil structure. Proper irrigation can be accomplished any time of the day, but it is more efficient to water early in the morning or later in the evening, because evaporation is less. The rate of application should be no more rapid than the rate at which the soil can absorb it. Give your plants the equivalent of 1 inch of water per week during dry periods. When temperatures rise to about 90 degrees you will need to water more. Remember to conserve water where possible, because it is a valuable resource which is becoming more scarce.

Rain Gardens—your personal contribution to clean water

Homeowners in many parts of the country are catching on to rain gardens—landscaped areas planted to wildflowers and other native vegetation that soak up rain water, mainly from the roof of a house or other building. The rain garden fills with a few inches of water after a storm and the water slowly filters into the ground rather than running off to a storm drain. Compared to a conventional patch of lawn, a rain garden allows about 30% more water to soak into the ground.

Why are rain gardens important? As cities and suburbs grow and replace forests and agricultural land, increased stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces becomes a problem. Stormwater runoff from developed areas increases flooding; carries pollutants such as fertilizers, pesticides, oil residues and other contaminants from streets, parking lots and even lawns into local streams and lakes. This leads to costly municipal improvements in stormwater treatment structures.

A rain garden or swale is usually developed in full sun, but it can

also be developed in the shade. These gardens consist of water-loving, native plants and special soil. However, not just any soil will do. For instance, Indiana's clay soil does not drain well and may have to be removed and replaced with a mixture of topsoil and sand for better drainage.

Native plants usually are recommended for rain gardens for several reasons: they require little maintenance, cost less and attract native butterflies, birds and other wildlife. These plants also filter pollutants.

Tall prairie grasses, such as a big bluestem and other natives have deep roots. The native false indigo may be only 3-4 feet tall, but has roots that go 20 feet deep, or more. Several shrubs, including arrowwood viburnum, pawpaw and river birch are also thirsty plants for a rain garden.

While a rain garden may seem like a small thing, it provides substantial environmental benefits. Rain gardens work for us in

several ways:

- Increasing the amount of water that filters into the ground which recharges local and regional aquifers;
- Helping protect communities from flooding and drainage problems;
- Helping protect streams and lakes from pollutants carried by urban stormwater—lawn fertilizers and pesticides, oil and other fluids that leak from cars, and numerous harmful substances that wash off roofs and paved areas;
- Enhancing the beauty of yards and neighborhoods;
- Providing valuable habitat for birds, butterflies and many beneficial insects.



Check with the Purdue University County Extension office for plant recommendations and other tips on developing a rain garden on your property: www.ces.purdue.edu/

Spring has provided wonderful growing conditions for plants to put on a tremendous luxuriant growth. But as we look around the garden we quickly realize we need to do something to tame the jungle. Summer is the best time for pruning many of your flowering and ornamental trees and shrubs. The bloom is complete and the new growth is now hardening off as spring ends and summer starts.

Benefits include:

- *You get to enjoy the bloom you have waited for all year.*
- *Prepares the tree or shrub for bloom set for the following year.*
- *Has a dwarfing growth affect on specimen trees in limited growth locations.*
- *Re-gains control and open up branch structure for better visual aesthetics.*

When summer pruning:

- *Crown clean the interior of the canopy by removing deadwood and crossing branches working from the inside toward the outside.*
- *Crown thin the outer portion of the canopy to allow for more light penetration to the interior.*
- *Crown raise or Crown reduce to provide clearance around obstacles in the landscape.*

**Tips for Summer
Ornamental
Pruning**



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www.clarkswcd.org

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This newsletter
brought to you by the
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and
Plant A Tree For
You And Me



Plant A Tree For You And Me
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Mulching to Cool, Protect and Enrich the Soil

Mulching involves placing a layer of organic materials around plants. As mulch decomposes, it adds organic matter to the soil. This provides important nutrients for plants and an ideal environment for earthworms and other organisms that help enrich the soil.

Mulching can recycle yard wastes and improve your soil. Mulch protects soil from erosion, prevents weed growth, conserves soil moisture, stabilizes soil temperature, reduces compaction, and keeps clean and dry any fruit or vegetable that touches the ground.

The best place to look for mulch materials is in your own yard. Grass clippings and leaves work well for mulching if they are dry and weed

free. Avoid adding clippings to your vegetable garden from lawns that have treated with weed killer within the last two mowings.

Apply mulch when plants are established and soil is warm. First, water your garden well. Then place a layer of mulch around the plants.

You will help insulate the root zone and lower evaporation rates if you liberally apply mulch. Be careful not to smother the plants. As the mulch breaks down, add more material to the top throughout the growing season. After harvest, work the mulch into the soil to integrate the organic matter or leave it on the surface to decay naturally and be carried into the soil by earthworms.