

## **Pollinator Dynasty for the Southwest Region!**

### **Region 2 Finishes First for the Second Year in a Row in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Pollinator Challenge**

Region 2, with over 20 field stations participating in the 2012 Pollinator Challenge, has once again won this Service wide competition. Regions 4 and 8 followed closely behind for second and third place. Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona tallied the most points in Region 2, followed closely by the Texas Partners Program based in the Corpus Christi & Austin Ecological Services Field Offices.

During **2012**, Region 2 benefitted pollinators by:

- conducting 133 educational events, 19 pollinator inventory and monitoring projects, and 5 grade-school teacher workshops on pollinators;
- creating 5 new schoolyard habitats (including new garden way-stations for migrating monarch butterflies and hummingbirds), 3 new pollinator gardens, 7 long-term signs about pollinators, 13 educational displays or exhibits, 4 pollinator art exhibits, 2 new pollinator brochures, 1 podcast interview, 7 webpage postings, 12 new-media posts on seasonal information about pollinators, and 10 articles in southwestern newspapers covering pollinators and local conservation;
- enhancing 9 existing pollinator gardens with host plants, nectar plants, permanent water sources, bee nesting blocks, bat houses, and weed removal; and
- restoring over 915 acres in 16 projects by removing exotic plants and re-planting with native wildflowers to benefit pollinators on private lands with the Partners Program.

Service-wide activities reported in the Pollinator Challenge included: 79 habitat enhancements; 49 pollinator garden enhancements; creation and/or consultation on 42 pollinator gardens and schoolyard habitats; 28 native bee surveys (most on National Wildlife Refuges); 32 surveys for butterflies and moths, and 31 surveys of other or multiple pollinators. In addition, over 300 outreach events featured or included pollinators, 55 educational brochures and exhibits were developed; 31 articles were published in print or on the web; 9 pollinator workshops and 6 art contests and/or gallery exhibits were held. Wow!

This is an amazing feat! It demonstrates that pollinator conservation can weave into our mission very well, and it can be fun and achievable. Everyone is invited to participate!

Thanks again to all who participated and get ready for the **2013 Pollinator Challenge!** It will run from **March 15 – September 30, 2013**, and the theme will be **Connecting Youth to Nature**. For more information contact our pollinator guru Julie McIntyre at 505-248-6507, [Julie\\_McIntyre@fws.gov](mailto:Julie_McIntyre@fws.gov).

THIS DESCRIPTION IS FOR THE COLLAGE OF ARTWORK PASTED BELOW FROM CHAD STINSON OF TEXAS PARTNERS PROGRAM IN CORPUS.

In May, under the guidance of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Martin Middle School conducted a pollinator event. During this event 217, 7<sup>th</sup> graders researched and wrote about the significance of pollinators and their contribution to the environment. In addition, a poster contest was held focusing on pollinators. The posters were displayed within classroom and hallways. (See poster below) Science teacher Duke Boonille stated, "The learning experience was invaluable and the students learned much".

