

Beyond the Nursery *Partners and Rescues*

Our efforts often lead us afield to distribute and rescue milkweeds:

- Wakulla Springs State Park
- Wakulla area school gardens
- Gardens at Florida State University, the University of Florida, and the University of North Florida
- The City of Panama City Beach
- Ted Turner Foundation
- Mounts Botanical Gardens
- Bok Tower Gardens
- Numerous County Extension offices and Master gardener programs
- More!



Working with private landowners and the Florida Department of Transportation we have rescued many milkweeds and other pollinator plants from areas that face development.

Keep up with us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/StMarksMilkweeds/>

Our work continues because of the generous and enthusiastic financial support of the Friends of St. Marks Wildlife Refuge.



Your donation to the Friends for this project is greatly appreciated!

<https://www.stmarksrefuge.org/support.htm>



St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 68
St. Marks, FL 32355
850-925-6121
www.fws.gov/saintmarks/
Collecting or taking any plants, animals, or artifacts from federal lands is prohibited.

Facts About The Monarch-Milkweed Initiative

St. Marks

National Wildlife Refuge *Where Wildlife Comes First!*



The migration of the tiny monarch butterfly from their summer breeding habitat in the central and eastern U.S. and Canada to their overwintering grounds in central Mexico, is one of nature's most spectacular natural phenomena.

The eastern population has declined significantly over the past decade. Loss of milkweed, the monarch's sole larval food source, due to urban development and shifts in agricultural practices; frequent mowing and herbicide applications along roadsides and rights-of-way; use of insecticides; and severe weather events likely related to climate change.



Cover Photo credits:
Monarchs by Karen Willes
Red-ring milkweed by Gail Fishman

On June 20, 2014, President Obama signed a Presidential Memorandum “Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators,” outlining an agenda to address the devastating declines in honey bees and native pollinators, including the monarch butterfly.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service immediately responded to the emergency by asking refuges to find ways to increase milkweed populations, conserve

habitat, and inform the public about the importance of pollinators.

The St. Marks Refuge Visitor Services Staff eagerly accepted the challenge and applied for “seed” money to begin our native milkweed nursery.

Since then our project and outreach continues to grow!

The Monarch-Milkweed Initiative at St. Marks grows 21 species of milkweeds native to Florida including specific ecotypes.



Milkweed nursery volunteers

—Gail Fishman

Our first greenhouse built with help from FSU Environmental Service Program volunteers.

—Gail Fishman

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT VOLUNTEERS!



Rescuing velvet-leaf milkweed with landowner permission.

—Gail Fishman



Aquatic milkweed.

—Scott Davis



Catching monarchs for tagging.

—Refuge files



In August 2017, volunteers rescued milkweeds and other pollinator plants from a construction area on U.S. 98.

—Gail Fishman



Swamp milkweed.

—Scott Davis



Left, velvet leaf milkweed
Below, Butterfly milkweed.

—Gail Fishman



Few-flowered milkweeds increased on St. Marks Refuge after a fire.

—Gail Fishman