

Monarch Conservation Fund Award to Maryland DNR

In the Northeast Region, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources partnered with the Service's Chesapeake Bay Ecological Services Field Office to establish new habitat for pollinators. Using resources from the Northeast Region's Monarch Conservation Fund, fourteen sites within the migration corridor underwent an initial evaluation of land-use and habitat conditions. Sites with open areas exposed to full sun and at least one quarter acre in size were targeted. Of these 14 sites, eight were selected for enhancement or restoration. The eight sites targeted for habitat enhancement included six State Parks and two Wildlife Management Areas. Half of the sites are located on the coastal plain and the other half are located in the Catoclin Mountain Region and vicinity. Approximately 10.7 acres received conservation actions to benefit pollinators across the eight sites. Activities included treatment for invasive plants, tilling, seeding, and planting thousands of plugs to promote growth of habitat essential for pollinator foraging and breeding.



Planting Native Flowering Plants for Pollinators at Assateague Island State Park, Maryland

Two Western States Study Monarchs to Improve Management Using State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Funds

The monarch butterfly has recently become the focus of national and international conservation concern, and unlike eastern and mid-western monarchs, little is known of monarch distribution, abundance, host plants, habitat, and threats in western states. To begin to address these critical knowledge gaps, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation is collaborating to collect information critical to assessing the status of monarch butterfly in these two western states. Funding for the project is provided by the State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Program, with additional state funds provided as match. In both states, biologists are conducting surveys for milkweed and monarchs in portions of the states where monarch breeding occurs, including hundreds of miles of road transects. Biologists are locating and collecting data on patches of milkweed covering several hundred acres. Both states' datasets are being provided to partners working on the Western Monarch and Milkweed Habitat Suitability Assessment Project. Additional activities include hosting a workshop and tagging nearly 300 adult monarchs to better understand the direction, route, and destination of their migratory movements. Information obtained through surveys by staff biologists and citizen scientists is critical for future management of this iconic butterfly species in the northwestern United States.