

Mayor's Monarch Butterfly Pledge

Press release: Mayor Craig Stough of the City of Sylvania Takes NWF's "Mayors' Monarch Pledge" to Help Save the Monarch Butterfly

[Sylvania, OH] - (May 1, 2017) Mayor Craig Stough took the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, committing to take at least 8 specific actions to help the monarch butterfly and other pollinators. This new, national campaign will work with mayors and local government chief executives to help save the declining monarch butterfly.

While monarchs are found across the United States — numbering some 1 billion in 1996 — their numbers have declined by approximately 90 percent in recent years, a result of numerous threats including loss of habitat due to agricultural practices and development. Degradation of wintering habitat in Mexico has also had a negative impact on the species.

"Mayors and other local government officials play a pivotal role in advancing monarch butterfly conservation in urban and suburban areas," said Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "By working together we can ensure that every American child has a chance to experience majestic monarchs in their backyards and communities."

Through the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, cities and municipalities commit to creating habitats and educating citizens on ways they can make a difference in their very own home. Mayors who take the pledge commit to at least 3 of 25 specific actions to help save the monarch butterfly. These actions include creating monarch-friendly gardens at prominent city locations, protecting monarch habitat by changing mowing practices along city roadsides, providing community outreach and educational programs designed to help citizens create monarch habitat in their own backyards and 22 other possible actions. By committing to at least 8 actions, the City of Sylvania has been certified to be a part of the NWF's Monarch Pledge Leadership Circle, demonstrating a strong commitment to helping monarch butterflies and other pollinators through city initiatives.

Candy Sarikonda, co-chair of the City of Sylvania's Tree Commission and a Conservation Specialist for Monarch Watch, will work with the Mayor and city staff to promote monarch-friendly city initiatives. Since monarch caterpillars will only feed on milkweed, the city's Forestry Department is currently working to plant a total of over 400 butterfly milkweed plants at sites at Harroun Park, along Monroe Street in front of Ciao and at area cemeteries. The Ohio Department of Transportation has installed No Mow signs along the entrance ramp on US-23 to protect a remnant prairie that contains butterfly milkweed and nectar plants for monarchs. The City Tree Commission is working to promote the use of native trees and plants to protect our native pollinators, and recent restoration work at the River Trail included the planting of swamp milkweed seeds and the removal of invasive bush honeysuckle and common buckthorn trees. Candy Sarikonda will continue to provide monarch outreach programs throughout the city and state.

If you would like to learn more, visit NWF's Mayor's Monarch Pledge at <http://nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/About/National-Initiatives/Mayors-Monarch-Pledge.aspx> and Wild Ones--Wild for Monarchs campaign at <http://www.wildones.org/learn/wild-for-monarchs/what-wild-ones-is-doing-about-it/>

For a guide about monarchs and their habitat needs, see the Ohio Department of Natural Resources booklet, entitled "Milkweeds & Monarchs"

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/portals/wildlife/pdfs/publications/id%20guides/Milkweeds%26Monarchs.pdf>