

Protecting Monarch Habitat Recognized

Pablo Jaramillo López has seeded the soil for successful monarch conservation in Mexico. For this reason he has been honoured as the recipient of the 2014 Pollinator Advocate Award for Mexico. Dr. Jaramillo's work protects monarchs from the base of their habitat – the soil that sustains the trees, which provide overwintering habitat for hundreds of thousands of butterflies in the Oyamel Fir Forests of Mexico.

Dr. Jaramillo works with local community members through the Monarch Butterfly Fund to protect and preserve monarch habitats by ensuring the viability of communities and ecosystems surrounding these forests. Rather than erecting barriers and preventing locals from interacting with the landscapes that support monarchs, Dr. Jaramillo works with locals to support the natural function of the forest. He works with various communities to transform marginal agricultural land back into productive forest using mini-grants. To his credit, more than 30 hectares of forest have begun to regenerate to monarch habitat this past year– quite a feat when only 0.67 hectares (1.65 acres) were occupied by monarchs last year during the lowest migration numbers yet.

Many factors impact monarchs as they take their famed migration from southeastern Canada and the northeastern United States into the mountains of Mexico. In the breeding and migratory part of their range the lack of milkweed has severely impacted numbers making it down to overwintering sites in Mexico. Once in Mexico, monarchs face serious issues with deforestation resulting from illegal logging, grazing, and farming activities. Keeping the forest as a forest is the key for supporting monarchs as they overwinter – but keeping the forest as a forest means working closely with local communities to ensure that conservation goals are institutionalized and achieved.

Anyone can provide funding to restore and conserve monarch habitat, but this funding does not always result in lasting change – or change at all. Dr. Jaramillo has worked closely with the funding of local communities conservation efforts to ensure that the financial resources dedicated by governments and donors to monarchs are used appropriately. For Dr. Jaramillo this was the regeneration of a forest that had been degraded.

The natural regeneration process at the San Juan Zitácuaro forest began in 2012 with members of the community, led by local community member Mr. Nazario Archundia, the group completed several tasks that foster natural regeneration in various patches of their forest. The Monarch Butterfly Fund (MBF) initially agreed to support this community by providing them with enough money to foster natural regeneration in 10 hectares. Because this community has vast experience in forest management, and since they have administered their funds more efficiently, they have been able to foster natural regeneration in 35 hectares. That's three times the return on investment. Dr. Jaramillo is early in his conservation career but is already making significant impacts for pollinators. For this reason he has been singled out and recognized as a true pollinator advocate.

None of the work that Dr. Jaramillo has promoted and coordinated would have been possible without the collaboration of the local NGO Alternare. The working scheme that Alternare's collaborators promote has enabled them to gain trust from local land owners in the Reserve. This is how Alternare has been able to work with local communities to help them develop eco friendly technologies to improve their livelihood. Because of Alternare's involvement, Dr. Jaramillo has been able to develop this ongoing habitat conservation project and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come.

The Pollinator Advocate Award recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to pollinator protection, conservation, and issue outreach resulting in increased awareness of the importance of pollinators and pollination. Dr. Jaramillo will be sharing this international honour with Canadian Pollinator Advocate Award winners Sustainable TO who developed a series of bee condos in the Toronto area and Julie Zahniser of The American Bee Project (USA) who works to leverage agricultural tax initiatives into partnerships that benefit bee forage.

Without pollinators we would lose one third of our diet, nearly all of our high-nutrient food, most terrestrial ecosystems would collapse, important plant species that provide the raw materials for medicines would die out, and the biosphere would stop filtering air and freshwater for us and other wildlife. The world as we know it

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depends on pollinators. Pollinators depend on healthy clean habitat and factors such as uncontrolled development, agricultural intensification, chemical misuse, and pathogen introduction are decimating their populations. Some species have seen a 90% decline in their populations over the last decade.

The Pollinator Partnership (P2), as the world's largest organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of pollinators, hopes to encourage environmental stewardship and to catalyze future actions that benefit pollinators by identifying individuals that have taken on advocacy. P2 manages NAPPC and coordinates pollinator conservation outreach with over 120 stakeholders.

For more information about the Pollinator Advocate award and about the Pollinator Partnership and NAPPC please visit www.pollinator.org or contact us at 415-362-1137.

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NAPPC is a collaborative effort of over 120 organizations in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico whose common goal is to promote awareness of the essential role that pollinators play in food systems and ecosystems, and to provide the public with simple, effective ways to engage in environmental stewardship.

The **Pollinator Partnership**, the largest organization in the world dedicated to the protection and promotion of pollinators and their ecosystems, is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization headquartered in San Francisco. Pollinator Partnership has offices and activities in Washington D.C., Louisiana, Nebraska, Iowa, Montana, Ohio, Arizona, Washington, and Canada.

To learn more about the NAPPC and the Pollinator Partnership visit www.pollinator.org or contact info@pollinator.org for more information or call 415-362-1137.



The Pollinator Advocate Award designed by acclaimed artist James Randolph.