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## Bee Friendly Gardening™

May 2023

### Shedding Light on the Importance of Shade (Part 1)

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When most people imagine pollinator-friendly habitat, it invokes images of bright, sunny gardens bursting with vivid blooms, or prairies crowded with colorful wildflowers, blazing in full sun. While these sun-drenched expanses do provide excellent resources for foraging pollinators, it certainly isn't the only type of habitat used by pollinators. Shady habitat is ecologically unique and can provide necessary food resources and shelter for pollinators. Whether your yard has shade or not, there is something that everyone can do to create new, or enhance current, shady areas for pollinators. **Read more by clicking [HERE](#) and check back next month to see the second installment of this article!**



[READ ARTICLE](#)

### Track Your Impact with the BFG iNaturalist Member Project

# iNaturalist

[iNaturalist](#) is a social network of citizens and scientists built on the concept of mapping and sharing photographic observations of biodiversity. **One way to track the impact your Bee Friendly Garden is having is to document the wildlife visiting and benefiting from your habitat project and upload your observations to iNaturalist.** All you have to do is grab your camera and start photographing pollinators visiting your garden! You will then select your best images and upload your observations into the project we have created especially for BFG Members. Don't have an iNaturalist account? Don't worry, [we have you covered](#).

[LEARN MORE](#)

### We've Got Your BFG Member Number!



You are going to be receiving a new digital welcome packet in the coming weeks which features your unique BFG member number. Be sure to flag it and record this number. As we roll out fun new perks, such as a Members only webpage, to enhance your membership experience, this number will be your ticket to a host of member benefits, such as the BFG Facebook page. Thank you for being here with us.

### Take the Pollinator Communications Survey



Support pollinators TODAY by taking the Pollinator Communications Survey. Your answers will help conservationists better understand your pollinator knowledge and any questions you might have about how to protect them. We will use your anonymous responses to determine what areas of pollinator conservation need more focused attention and educational resources. By filling out our survey, Adults 18+ can also enter for a chance to win fun pollinator-themed prizes. [Take the survey](#) and share with your friends, family, and colleagues. This survey was created by the Pollinator Communications Task Force as a part of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC).

[TAKE SURVEY](#)

### How You Can Help Monarch Butterflies

Depending on where you live, you likely are geographically located in the vicinity of a monarch population at some point in their life cycle. That means most of us are in a position to do something positive for the monarch butterfly in landscapes we have influence over. Annual monarch counts reflected declines in both western and eastern population counts in 2022/2023. We have a long way to go to reach numbers in the millions representative of what we saw in the 80s and 90s. The monarch remains vulnerable due to a myriad of factors, including habitat loss/lack of milkweed, pesticide use, and climate change/frequent severe weather events. You can help.



#### Take Action:

1) Plant milkweed. Milkweed is the monarch butterfly's host plant - their caterpillars must have milkweed to eat. If the adult monarch cannot locate milkweed she cannot lay her eggs and perpetuate the species. It has been estimated that, to maintain sustainable levels of monarchs, we need an additional [1.6 billion milkweed plants](#) on the landscape. Visit the BONAP North American Plant Atlas's [Asclepias page](#) to find milkweed appropriate for your region, and Monarch Joint Venture's [Vendor Map](#) to find plants near you.

2) Plant a variety of [flowering plants](#) that bloom across the growing season. It is important that monarchs can locate food resources no matter the time of year. As a migratory species they are on the move, and need to be able to locate nectar as they move around the landscape. (If you live in the Northeastern US [this guide](#) will be helpful for you.)

3) Reduce and limit the use of [pesticides](#).

4) Raise awareness within your community about the plight of the monarch and other pollinators. Purchasing and installing a [Bee Friendly Garden sign](#) can get the conversation started with your neighbors. Host an event for [Pollinator Week](#) within your city (we have a [toolkit](#) to support your efforts). [Email BFG](#) photos of your monarch habitat/milkweed patch to showcase to others what can be done in their own space.



#### More Fun Ways to Support Monarchs:

1) Walk, run, hike, bike, swim, paddle - or just generally move to show your support for monarchs. [Register](#) for the Monarch Joint Venture's "Miles for Monarchs" and join the spring (May 22-June 25) or fall (August 28-October 1) "migration".

2) Brush up on your monarch knowledge by watching this [series of webinars](#) by the Monarch Joint Venture and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center.

3) Check out Monarch Watch's "Bring Back the Monarchs" campaign. You may be eligible for free milkweed for your [habitat restoration project](#) or [school/non-profit](#), or you can simply [purchase milkweed](#) appropriate for your region via their Milkweed Market. There is a minimum purchase of a flat (32 plants), so this is a wonderful opportunity to share with others in your community if that is too much for your space. Not available in all areas.

4) Visit [journeynorth.org](#) to report your monarch sightings and track their annual migration. You are sure to spend some time at their site once there, as they track all kinds of phenology within our natural world. Thanks to Journey North I knew when to put out my hummingbird feeder this year.

### Order Limited-Edition Pollinator Week Shirts



Back by popular demand! The limited-edition Pollinator Week Shirts are now available to order. This year's design features artwork from the 2023 Climate Change is in Our Hands Poster by Carol Schwartz. Order yours today and show your support for pollinator conservation. Don't forget to show off your new shirt during Pollinator Week from June 19-25 to help raise awareness for pollinator health and well-being!

[ORDER SHIRTS](#)

#### Notable Dates:

**May 19** - World Plant a Vegetable Garden Day

**May 19** - Endangered Species Day

**May 20** - World Bee Day

**June 3** - National Prairie Day

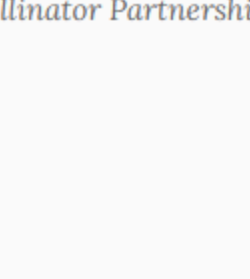
**June 4-10** - National Garden Week

**June 18** - Father's Day

**June 19-25** - [Pollinator Week](#)

**June 21** - Summer Solstice

Brought to you by BFG - be a part of the Bee Friendly movement!



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