



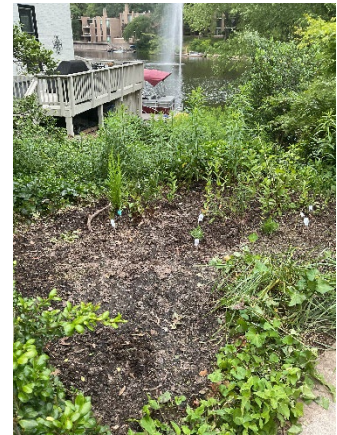
From Ivy to Abundance: A Slope in Transition

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In spring 2025, the slow and steady work of removing English ivy began. What had long been a dense, invasive ground cover was carefully pulled back, opening space—both above and slightly below the ivy line shown here—for something new to take root. By the end of that very first growing season, the reward was clear: bees arrived, Lepidoptera arrived, and even Monarch butterflies found their way to this recovering slope.

The earliest native plantings in the BFG Waterview Cluster went into the ground in early 2025, shortly after sections of English ivy were removed. These first steps marked the beginning of a larger restoration effort, turning cleared patches into intentional habitat.



After additional ivy removal, more native plants followed. In this cleared area below an ivy-covered tree stump on the slope, young plantings—including swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), Joe Pye weed, and ironweed—settled in. By their very first summer, these plants grew and blossomed, beginning to reshape the space.

Another view from May 2025 shows the slope between two townhouse clusters. Some ivy had already been removed earlier, and native



plants were beginning to knit the landscape back together, one section at a time.



By July 2025, the transformation was well underway. New plantings filled in across the slope where English ivy had once dominated, all thriving during their first summer. The area was visibly greener, fuller, and alive with activity.

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One of the most hopeful signs of success appeared just months after planting: a Monarch caterpillar on swamp milkweed planted in spring 2025. By mid to late summer, the milkweeds bloomed from July through September, drawing in bees and other nectaring pollinators—clear evidence that the habitat was working.



After the first full growing season, the slope looked markedly different. In autumn 2025, even more English ivy vines and roots were removed, and additional native plants were added. The vision continues—to extend this restoration further down the slope and keep building habitat for native bees and countless other beings.

By January 2026, the progress was unmistakable. English ivy continues to be gradually replaced with native plants, restoring habitat step by step. A sidewalk runs along the top of this slope, and many people pass by daily—often stopping to look, ask questions, and share encouragement. That curiosity and connection are one of the reasons we garden for pollinators!



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