WHAT’S THE CONCERN?

We rely on pollinators to move pollen within flowers or from flower to flower for successful seed and fruit production of plants. They include butterflies, moths, bees, and birds. There is a serious decline in pollinators due to loss of habitat and nectar-producing plants, pesticide use, and climate change. Many are federally “listed species,” meaning their populations are near threatening levels.

Increased urban development and agricultural practices in Iowa contribute to loss of habitat, especially for Monarch butterflies. They need connected corridors of habitat to move between food sources especially during migration. These and other pollinators help increase plant diversity and support nectar-flowering native Iowa prairie and woodland plants.

We can help out pollinators by creating habitat such as establishing native pollinator plant gardens in our yards. This will also improve the soil health in a yard so that it will soak up more rainfall and generate less stormwater runoff.

There are specific plant species that are desired by pollinators. Monarchs in particular need milkweed plants for their food source and for reproduction. Monarch butterflies are critical pollinators that increase plant diversity and support nectar-flowering native plants.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

You can help protect critical pollinators, like Monarch butterflies, by planting species that create habitat for pollinators. Nectar-flowering plants such as butterfly or swamp milkweed and prairie blazingstar provide excellent habitat for pollinators and produce vibrant colors in your garden. Native plant species also have the added benefit of creating deep root systems, which improve soil health by creating greater pore space.

Another simple method for helping pollinators thrive is to decrease the use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers. Ensure that you are only applying the amount of chemicals that are needed. Finally, encourage your friends and neighbors to consider planting native plants!
# Native Plants For Your Yard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Early Blooming</th>
<th>Mid Blooming</th>
<th>Mid-Late Blooming</th>
<th>Late Blooming</th>
<th>Native Shrub</th>
<th>Native Grass</th>
<th>Native Grass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wild Geranium</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Geranium maculatum</td>
<td>Height: 1 foot</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: April-July</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Butterfly Milkweed</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Asclepias tuberosa</td>
<td>Height: 2 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Orange</td>
<td>Bloom Range: June-August</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wild Petunia</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Ruellia humilis</td>
<td>Height: 1 foot</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: June-August</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purple Prairie Clover</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Dalea purpurea</td>
<td>Height: 2 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: July-September</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cream Gentian</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Gentiana flavida</td>
<td>Height: 3 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Cream</td>
<td>Bloom Range: August-September</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Button Blazing Star</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Liatris aspera</td>
<td>Height: 3 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: July-October</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Jersey Tea</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Ceanothus americanus</td>
<td>Height: 3 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: White</td>
<td>Bloom Range: June-August</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Little Bluestem</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Andropogon scoparium</td>
<td>Height: 3 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: June-August</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prairie Dropseed</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Sporobolus heterolepis</td>
<td>Height: 3 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: June-August</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Wet Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Side Oats Grama</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Name: Bouteloua curtipendula</td>
<td>Height: 2 feet</td>
<td>Bloom Color: Purple</td>
<td>Bloom Range: June-August</td>
<td>Sun: Partial/Full</td>
<td>Moisture: Mesic-Dry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Indicates plant is a host for butterflies to lay eggs and provide food for caterpillars as they grow.
- Indicates plant is a significant source of nectar for adult pollinators.