



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

P.O. BOX 495

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Thomas F. Cooke - Director of Administrative Services

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING AGENDA SUBMISSION FORM

1. **Title of submission:**

MILKWEED FOR MONARCHS

2. **Date of submission:**

April 4, 2014

3. **Date of Board Meeting:**

April 14, 2014

4. **Individual or Entity making the submission:**

Joan R. Miller

5. **Action requested of the Board of Selectmen (Acceptance of gift, creation of reserve, approval of contract, information only, etc. Be as specific as possible with respect to the desired action of the Board.):**

The Individual or Entity making the submission requests that the Board of Selectmen:

Approval of a milkweed and nectar perennials planting project for Helen's Way which will benefit monarch butterflies, as well as other pollinators.

6. **Individual(s) responsible for submission (Please include complete contact information. The identified individual(s) should be prepared to present information to the Board of Selectmen at the Board Meeting.):**

Joan R. Miller
304 Firetown Road, Simsbury CT 06070
(860) 651-7386 home

7. **Summary of Submission** (Include in your summary (i) relevant dates and timelines; (ii) parties involved; (iii) a description of financial terms and conditions specifically identifying the financial exposure/commitment of the Town of Simsbury; (iv) whether or not contracts, licenses and other legal documents have been reviewed by the Town's counsel; and (v) other information that will inform the Board of Selectmen's consideration of your submission. Include any additional information in an attached memorandum.):

(i) the milkweed needs to be ordered ASAP in April. They are currently on reserve. In early May the milkweed plugs will arrive from the out-of-state supplier.

(ii) myself and four volunteers will do the planting (4 are from Beautification Committee)

(iii) \$568.48 for eleven flats of milkweed plugs (\$51.58@)... a total of 352 plants. The extra funds already approved are for the nectar-rich perennials to be purchased and planted throughout the summer.

(iv) N/A

(v) At least 167 million acres of monarch habitat has been lost since 1996 due to housing developments, shopping malls & roadways, excessive mowing & use of herbicides along roadsides & the increase of acreage for corn/ soy. Most of these acres formerly contained milkweed, monarchs, pollinators & other forms of wildlife. The monarchs' numbers have never been lower. They are now on the World Wildlife Fund's 10 Most Threatened Species To Watch list. This project hopes to help restore vital milkweed and native nectar flower habitat.

8. **Description of documents included with submission** (All documents must be in final form and signed by the appropriate party.):

The following documents are included with this submission and attached hereto:

BROCHURE: "Bring Back The Monarchs" by me and some text by Monarch Watch

OUTLINE of the planting project

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES (2)

GOOGLE MAPS aerial view of the large open field at end of Helen's Way which is off of Iron Horse Blvd

PROJECT: "MILKWEED FOR MONARCHS"

OBJECTIVE: To restore milkweed to open spaces, areas bordering roads and fence lines. Milkweed is the only food source for the monarch caterpillars.

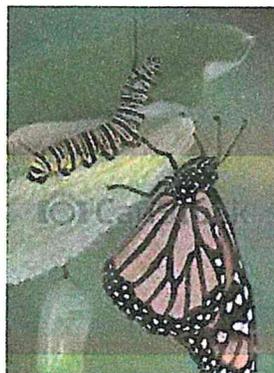
WHY: At least **167 million acres** of monarch habitat has been lost since 1996. This includes shopping malls, housing and roadways. Included are habitat losses due to excessive mowing and the use of herbicides along roadsides. The increase of acreage used for the planting of corn and soy. The ethanol mandate of 2007 made the planting of corn very lucrative. The adoption of HT (herbicide tolerant) crop lines and the use of Glyphosate has all but eliminated milkweeds from these habitats. Most of these acres formerly contained milkweed, monarchs, pollinators and other forms of wildlife. **Monarch numbers have never been lower.**

WHERE: The large, sunny open field at the end of the Helen's Way boardwalk. It is currently just a grassy field and probably doesn't support much wildlife other than deer. I have been instructed to also plant nectar-rich flowers among the milkweed.

HOW: Milkweed plugs are available for sale through Monarch Watch which is located at the University of Kansas. They may easily be ordered through their website www.monarchwatch.org

WHEN: Milkweed plugs are going to be shipped in early May. The plugs are 3 to 5 inches upon arrival and should be planted immediately. Monarchs usually begin arriving by late June. July is when I really start seeing them scouting out milkweed on which to lay their eggs.

PRICE: There is a 15% discount on 7 or more flats (32 plugs per flat). I have calculated that this area will easily take 11 flats. The normal price is \$60.80 each. With the discount they are **\$51.68 each**. For eleven flats the **total price is \$568.48**. There is no extra shipping charge. These plants will cover approximately four 4x6 beds (planted in clusters of 3 at one foot apart).





Leaders Urged to Restore Monarch Butterfly's Habitat

By ELISABETH MALKIN

MEXICO CITY — Hoping to focus attention on the plight of the monarch butterfly at a North American summit meeting next week, a group of prominent scientists and writers urged the leaders of Mexico, the United States and Canada to commit to restoring the habitat that supports the insect's extraordinary migration across the continent.

Calling the situation facing the butterfly "grim," the group issued a letter that outlined a proposal to plant milkweed, the monarch caterpillar's only food source, along its migratory route in Canada and the United States. Milkweed has been disappearing from American fields over the past decade as farmers have switched to genetically modified corn and soybeans that are resistant to the herbicide glyphosate that kills other plants. At the same time, subsidies to produce corn for ethanol have increased, expanding the amount of land planted with corn by an estimated 25 percent since 2007.

"We can't ask farmers to change their habits," said Homero Aridjis, the Mexican poet who wrote the letter, which was to be released on Friday.

Instead, the proposal encouraged planting milkweed on roadsides and between fields, and suggested subsidies for farmers to set aside land that is free of herbicides.

"This is a viable proposal. It is

not impossible," said Mr. Aridjis, who signed the letter with Gary Paul Nabhan, a conservationist and writer at the University of Arizona. "Otherwise, we face an ecological genocide, because if we take away the monarch's plants we kill the monarchs."

On Wednesday, President Obama is scheduled to meet President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico and Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada in the Mexican city of Toluca, about an hour's drive from the volcanic mountains where the butterflies winter after flying thousands of miles.

This winter, the area that the butterflies cover dropped sharply, to 1.65 acres, the smallest ever. In 1996, the butterflies covered 45 acres across the oyamel fir forests, where they form giant fluttering colonies.

The Mexican government has proved successful over the past five years at halting most of the large-scale illegal logging that was long seen as the biggest threat to the monarch. But smaller logging continues.

"As Mexico is addressing the logging issues, so now must the United States and Canada address the effects of our current agricultural policies," the letter said.

About 20 leading butterfly specialists signed the letter, along with conservationists, writers, artists and filmmakers from Mexico, the United States and Canada.

traits

The Monarchs' Final Seasons

In the long, cold nights of Connecticut winter, the mind's eye wanders. It sees past the winter solstice of Dec. 21 toward monarch butterflies flitting in a summer sunbeam.

Few creatures are as emblematic of summer here. The butterfly's delicate orange and black wings rival the finest stained-glass window. Their journey from our northern climes to winter in Mexico is an evolutionary marvel.

But reports from the south confirm what observant Connecticut residents noticed earlier this year: Monarch butterflies are dying off.

Not so many years ago, hundreds of millions of them occupied their ancestral mountain forest in Mexico in the winter. Last year, 60 million arrived. This year, fewer than 3 million showed up, and they were more than a week late.

The monarch butterfly population fluctuates yearly as weather events affect migration and reproductive cycles, but it has taken a catastrophic turn toward extinction.

Biologists identify a handful of contributing factors that are mostly humanity's fault. The monarch's habitat is disappearing in America and Mexico. South of the border the problem is rampant deforestation. Here, a resurgent construction industry devours undeveloped land.

Farmers also deploy herbicides that kill native plants. The loss of milkweed in particular has been devastating. Monarch butterflies need it as a food source and a place to lay their eggs.

A decade ago, we wrote in an editorial titled "The Monarchs Will Return" that "the gentle and delicate creatures ... are strong and resilient, given half a chance to reheat themselves." Now we're not so sure.

NY Times International
Feb 14, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glassman called the Regular Meeting of the Open Space Committee to order at 4:35PM on Wednesday, April 2, 2014. The meeting was held in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices located at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. In attendance was Mary Glassman, First Selectman as well as the following committee members: Helen Peterson and Majorie Winters. Members Ed Pabich and Robert Pomeroy were absent.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

There was no one to speak at public audience.

HELEN'S WAY – BRING BACK THE MILKWEEDS

Joan Miller, 304 Firetown Road, discussed bringing back the Milkweeds along Helen's Way on Ironhorse Boulevard. Ms. Miller stated that the Milkweed plugs come in flats of 32 and are generally 3-5 inches high at the time of delivery. She would expect the plants to be shipped in early May. There would be a 15% discount if seven or more flats were ordered. Ms. Miller stated that the cost would be \$568.48 if approved by the Town. The flats can contain Swamp Milkweed or Common Milkweed. Ms. Miller stated that she has some volunteers to assist her in planting these plants. She also stated that she is going to donate about 35 of her own home grown Orange Butterfly Weed to plant as well.

Ms. Peterson made a motion to endorse the project and appropriate \$650.00 to fund this project. Ms. Winters seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Ms. Glassman noted that she will put this on the Board of Selectmen agenda for the April 16, 2014 meeting.

ETHEL WALKER WOODS PROJECT

Ms. Glassman stated that the Town has had conversations with Ethel Walker regarding the next step to take after the final phase, which is recommended in the Capital Improvement plan. She is requesting the endorsement of the Open Space Committee to support the final acquisition phase.

Ms. Glassman noted that the Town has to go to referendum to complete the final 43 acres purchase. The purchase figure is \$1,100,000; however, with \$500,000 in grants, the final cost to the Town would be \$600,000.