

# Pollinated Pathways

## Anyone Can Plant a Pollinated Pathway Butterfly Garden

April/May is the perfect time to get started  
by John H. Vargo, Publisher

With the release of the first issue Feb/March 2020, of our efforts to support the serious loss of the Monarch Butterfly population due to herbicides and motorized weed whackers, we have learned a lot.

Congratulations to those boat clubs, such as Schattamuc Yacht Club in Ossining, NY, Viking Boat Yard, in Verplanck, NY and others who have been supporting the Monarch Butterfly and other pollinators for years.

We have found great enthusiasm for this project, as well as many questions from individuals and boat clubs alike.

Most importantly is the fact that anyone can start his or her own large or small Pollinated Pathway garden. It need not be an expensive undertaking.

The garden can be developed over the entire summer, include Perennials and annual flowers and will last as long as you protect it.

There are nurseries and garden centers that can supply the plants that are recommended here or if your luck enough to live within driving distance of the award winning Shades of Green, Flower Shop on Rt 6 and Strawberry Rd. Shrub Oak, NY, you can also get great help with advice as well as "plants". While you certainly can start the process by planting seeds, you can save yourself much time by purchasing young plants. Most importantly, Milkweed, the number one plant for saving the Monarch Butterfly will show results as early as August of this year if you begin with "plants".

### How to Start a Pollinated Pathway garden...

**A. Select Site for Butterfly Garden.** Choose a site that has some sun but is also sheltered from wind. It can be a large or small plot, however anyone with a little imagination can find a site!

**B. There are a number of ways to get started quickly.** You can purchase matting that will allow water to go through yet allow your plants to thrive by cutting holes only for those plants you want to grow. This will give your flowers a head start.

**C. Use a large flat rock in the sun so butterflies have a place to bask when mornings are cool.**

**D. Provide Water.** A bird bath or a shallow pan is attractive and comes in a wide range of sizes.

**. Add the Plants.** There are a number of nurseries and garden centers that can supply the plants listed here however if your fortunate enough to live within driving distance of Shades of Green Flower House on Rt 6 on the corner of Strawberry Rd. and Route 6 they specialize in these kinds of Pollinator plants. Also they have a succession of release dates of "plants" beginning in April that can provide a heads up, easily identifiable system for you to build your Pollinated Pathways garden on throughout the year. By joining their mailing list you will be kept up to the minute on what flowers are available and when to plant them. They have an ad in this issue page 20.

If your Milkweed "plants" have grown fast enough, you can expect to see Monarch Butterfly eggs on the underside of the Milkweed leaves as early as July. These eggs are from returning Monarchs from Mexico!



Monarch egg on Milkweed

A bed of just milkweed can be simple, inexpensive and effective. It is easily grown from young plants or seed. Though it will live in swampy soil, it will thrive in soil enriched with some

compost and mulched. The other two milkweeds: A. syriaca, common milkweed, tends to spread somewhat aggressively and B. Tuberosa, swamp milkweed, is shorter and does not spread. It has orange flowers and is supposedly not as attractive to monarchs (though at NY Botanic, its leaves had lots of eggs).

### PLANTING SEASONS:

#### Spring/Early Summer

Columbine (*Aquilegia canadense*)\*  
Baptisia\*  
Parsley\*  
Milkweed

#### Summer into Fall

*Monarda fistulosa*\*  
Pink coneflower  
Goldenrods  
Mountain Mint  
Black-eyed Susan  
Lobelia siphilitica  
Joe Pye Weed  
*Hibiscus palustris*\*  
\* = host plant

#### Late Fall

(migration makes this a critical time for nectar)  
Asters, Ironweed

**Grouping:** Another suggestion is to plant at least 5-8 of each kind of plant, especially the shorter ones. (The larger the plant, the fewer you need). Many pollinators do not see well and massing each species helps attract them.

There is a list of the top pollinator perennials included within this how to. You can also go for a "meadow" effect where weeds are not so noticeable but both meadows and beds need weeding, especially the first 2 years. Maintenance is always a necessity!

Butterflies in particular want two things from plants: nectar and a place to lay eggs (known as host plants). Milkweeds do both for monarchs. My list shows mostly plants that have nectar and are host plants to butterflies or moths (also in decline). They are also good-looking enough for any home garden.

Lastly, we at Boating On The Hudson/ Pollinated Pathways are always available to provide direction and help in this wonderful cause.  
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### SPECIES to PLANT:

- 'Peter's Fancy Fuschia'
- Lemon Queen Sunflower
- Milkweed
- Culver's Root
- Helen's Flower
- Aromatic Aster
- Bee Balm
- Spotted Bee Balm
- New England Aster



Monarch on Milkweed.